

Healthy Eating: A Family Affair

Family dinners in the home are becoming few and far between. Kids go from school to sports practice to music lessons to art classes etc. Parents spend all day at work and then shuttle their kids to activities. But at the end of the day, the healthy family meal does NOT have to be sacrificed!

Why are family meals SO important?

- Family members are less likely to become overweight or obese.
- Children are less at risk for developing disordered eating.
- Children achieve higher levels of academic success.
- Rates of drug and alcohol use in children decreases.



Plan Ahead

Hectic schedules? No time to cook? No worries! Try these steps to help manage time, and assure a home cooked and healthy family meal.

1. Plan meals ahead for the week and post the menus on the refrigerator or a white board.
2. Have the kids help pick out recipes that they would want to help cook and eat.
3. Plan for quick and easy-to-prepare meals on very busy nights.
4. Make a shopping list using sale items in the grocery store flyer and your menu ideas to plan the weeks' worth of meals.
5. Stick to your menu as best you can. It might seem difficult at first, but it will get easier as it becomes a new routine.

Get the Kids Cookin'!

- Assign each child a task based on age appropriateness.
- Talk to them about the food while prepping it.
- Have them help set the table, wash vegetables, make salad, etc.
- Show them how to do harder tasks.



Make the Table Welcoming

- Keep the table clean and free of clutter.
- For families with young kids, on a weekend have each family member decorate their own placemat on construction paper and laminate it so they can use it during meals.

Homemade **Black Bean Burgers**, ready in 35 minutes! Top with cheese and serve on whole wheat buns with side of tossed salad. Recipe Yields 4 burgers.

Ingredients

1 (16 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
1/2 red bell pepper, cut into 2 inch pieces
1/2 onion, cut into wedges
1 tsp garlic, peeled
1 egg
1 tablespoon chili powder
1 tablespoon cumin
1/2 cup bread crumbs

Recipe accessed from

www.allrecipes.org

Preheat oven to 375° F, and lightly oil a baking sheet.

1. In a medium bowl, mash black beans with a fork until thick and pasty.
2. In a food processor, finely chop bell pepper, onion, and garlic. Then stir into mashed beans.
3. In a small bowl, stir together egg, chili powder, cumin, and chili sauce.
4. Stir the egg mixture into the mashed beans. Mix in bread crumbs until the mixture is sticky and holds together. Divide mixture into four patties.
5. Place patties on baking sheet, and bake about 10 minutes on each side

Websites For More Information:

Kids Health

www.kidshealth.org

Meals Matter

www.mealsmatter.org

