Talking together makes for pleasant family meals. Work toward happy, relaxing conversation at meals to set roots for a lifetime.

**Talking Together**
- Provides a chance to share cultural and family traditions.
- Helps children learn how to take turns talking and listening.
- Gives children practice sharing their thoughts and feelings so they are more comfortable expressing themselves outside the home.

Keep conversations pleasant. Try using the ideas on the right for successful family meals table talk:

- **GUIDELINES FOR Mealtime Conversation**
  - Take turns talking. One person talks at a time.
  - Listen carefully.
  - Be open to new ideas.
  - Turn off the TV, phone, personal electronic devices, or other distractions.
Small Bites of Nutrition & Conversation

‘Nutritionally sound’ snacks can add to a child’s daily food intake. Preparing them with your child provides an opportunity to talk to your child on topics of interest.

Kebab Sparklers
(Makes 20 ‘sparklers’)

Ingredients
1 fresh pear, cored and sliced into ¾ inch pieces
20 red grapes with stems removed
1 (15-ounce) can pineapple chunks in juice
1 pink grapefruit, cut in half
20 party picks

Directions
1. Wash fresh fruit.
2. Open pineapple and drain; set aside on paper towel.
3. Slice grapefruit in half and place cut-side down on a plate.

To assemble kebabs
4. Holding party pick by the decorative end, slide one piece each of pear, grapes, and pineapple onto the pick.
5. Stick kebabs into the grapefruit until all the ‘sparklers’ are inserted.

1Toothpicks with a frilly cellophane end; used for appetizers.

This material was funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DSHS Community Service Office.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
Eat Together  Eat Better

Children get excited about eating when they help prepare food. Involve your child in planning and preparing some meals and snacks for the family. It’s fun for everyone!

Cooking Together

- Introduces children to a variety of healthy foods.
- Helps children learn and practice new kitchen skills with adult direction.

A Task for Every Age

Use the information on the right to select tasks that will help your child to be successful.

When your child helps in the kitchen, remember cleanliness and safety. Wash hands with soap and warm, running water before and after handling food or utensils. Review safety rules.

BEGINNER SKILLS
- Gather ingredients
- Scrub vegetables
- Tear lettuce
- Open packages
- Stir ingredients
- Peel eggs, oranges, bananas
- Set the table

INTERMEDIATE SKILLS
- Read recipes
- Open cans
- Measure ingredients
- Combine ingredients
- Roll dough
- Shred vegetables and cheese*
- Learn how to use the oven

ADVANCED SKILLS
- Learn how to use the knife*
- Use appliances (mixer and blender)*
- Plan meals and write shopping lists
- Prepare simple meals

*With adult supervision

Artwork courtesy of the Washington State Dairy Council
**Build-a-Salad**

**Ingredients**
For each serving prepare:
- 1 c. leafy greens
- 1 c. Vegetables & Fruit group
- 2–3 oz. Meat & Beans/Milk group
- 2 T. dressing

**Directions**
1. Wash and prepare ingredients.
2. Place each ingredient in its own bowl.
3. In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, measure all dressing ingredients. Shake well.
4. Serve family-style; each person builds their own salad.

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**Chef’s Salad**

**Vegetables & Fruit**
- Romaine or spinach
- Tomato wedges
- Cucumber slices
- Sweet onion
- Celery
- Green beans
- Leaf lettuce
- Tomato
- Whole-kernel corn
- Avocado
- Red onion
- Fresh cilantro
- Jalapeño chiles, canned

**Meat & Bean/Milk**
- Cheese
- Lean ham
- Hardboiled eggs
- Canned salmon
- Garbanzo or kidney beans
- Cheese
- Black or pinto beans
- Cheddar or Jack cheese
- Chicken

**Dressing**
- 1/3 c. olive oil
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 1 t. red wine vinegar
- 1 T. fresh parsley or chives, chopped
- 1/8 t. salt

**South-of-the-Border**

**Vegetables & Fruit**
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber slices
- Sweet onion
- Green beans
- Leaf lettuce

**Meat & Bean/Milk**
- Cheese
- Canned salmon
- Hardboiled eggs
- Black or pinto beans
- Cheddar cheese or sour cream

**Dressing**
- 1/3 c. olive oil
- 1/4 c. lime juice or vinegar
- 1/4 c. mild salsa
- 1/4 c. olive or vegetable oil
- 1/8 t. salt

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Eat Together • Eat Better

Set the table for the family...Set Roots for a Lifetime

Family Celebrations

- Help family members feel connected.
- Help children practice and share family foods and cultural traditions.
- Model and practice good manners.

Try some of the ideas on the right when planning a special meal:

RESTAURANT NIGHT
Set the table with a centerpiece.
Have one child or teen be the waitperson and serve the family.
Turn down the lights, eat by candlelight and enjoy a ‘night out’ at home.

GAME NIGHT
Make individual pizzas using English muffins, then play a family game.
Take turns choosing the game so everyone wins.

CELEBRATE THE SEASONS
Celebrate opening day at the Farmers’ Market, the leaves falling, or the first flowers of spring. Or how about an indoor picnic during winter with your favorite summer foods?

Special family celebrations are fun and create fond memories that set roots for a lifetime.
A Celebration of Meatballs Around the World
(Makes 6 servings)

Ingredients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 pound lean ground beef</td>
<td>1 pound ground chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 onion, chopped</td>
<td>2 cloves garlic, minced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (10-ounce) box frozen, chopped spinach, well drained</td>
<td>2 T. fresh grated ginger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ c. dry Italian bread crumbs</td>
<td>2 T. hoisin sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 egg</td>
<td>Salt and pepper to taste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ t. black pepper</td>
<td>2 T. oil (for browning meatballs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ c. grated Parmesan cheese</td>
<td>2 T. oil (for browning meatballs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sauce/Vegetables

| 2 T. flour | 1 c. shredded carrots |
| 1 t. Italian herbs | 1 c. bean sprouts |
| ½ t. oregano | 1 c. snow pea pods, cut into pieces |
| 1 (28-ounce) can tomato sauce | ½ c. low-sodium soy sauce |
| 1½ c. water | ½ c. water |

Directions

1. In large bowl, place meatball ingredients (except oil). Mix well. Shape into balls (about 2 T. each).
2. In skillet on medium-high heat, add 2 T. oil and brown meatballs on all sides. Remove from skillet.
3. Pour off all but 2 T. fat. Add dry sauce ingredients or cut vegetables. Stir for 1–2 minutes. Add liquid ingredients. Cook until mixture bubbles.
4. Add meatballs to skillet. Cover and simmer for 15–30 minutes or until internal temperature is 165° F. Stir to prevent sticking.
5. Serve with whole grain pasta or brown rice.

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Build-a-Salad Asian-style

**Ingredients**
For each serving prepare:
- 1 c. cabbage
- 1 c. Vegetables & Fruit group
- 2-3 oz. Meat & Beans/Milk group
- 2 T. dressing

**Directions**
1. Wash and prepare ingredients.
2. Place each ingredient in its own bowl.
3. In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, measure all dressing ingredients. Shake well.
4. Serve family-style; each person builds their own salad.

### Asian Salad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables &amp; Fruit</th>
<th>Meat &amp; Beans/Milk</th>
<th>Dressing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Napa or Savoy cabbage</td>
<td>Lean chicken, pork, or tofu</td>
<td>½ c. canola oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot, grated</td>
<td>Toasted sesame seeds, ground peanuts, or sunflower seeds</td>
<td>2 t. sesame oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumber</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 T. rice vinegar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green onion</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 T. low-sodium soy sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple or mango</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 t. sugar or honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh mint, basil, or cilantro</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 T. fresh grated ginger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Falafel – Middle Eastern 'Meat'balls
(Makes 6 servings)

Ingredients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meatballs</th>
<th>Vegetables/Grain/Milk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Falafel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (16-ounce) cans garbanzo beans, drained and finely ground in blender</td>
<td>Pita bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. finely chopped onion</td>
<td>Leaf lettuce, shredded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bunch parsley, finely chopped</td>
<td>Tomatoes, chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 cloves garlic, minced</td>
<td>Yogurt dressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 T. flour</td>
<td>1 c. plain yogurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ t. black or cayenne pepper</td>
<td>½ cucumber, seeded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 t. cumin</td>
<td>and finely chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 t. salt</td>
<td>1 small clove garlic, minced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 T. lemon juice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 T. oil (for browning meatballs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Directions

1. In large bowl, place meatball ingredients (except oil). Mix well. Shape into balls (about 2 T. each).
2. In skillet on medium-high heat, add 2 T. oil and brown meatballs on all sides (7–10 minutes). Remove from skillet.
3. Prepare vegetables and yogurt sauce.
4. Serving suggestion: Cut pita in half and stuff with two falafel, lettuce, tomato, and yogurt sauce.

For lower-fat preparation (replaces Step 2)
Omit oil. Place falafel on greased baking sheet and bake in 350°F oven for 10 minutes.

For lower-fat preparation (replaces Step 2) (replaces Step 2): Omit oil. Place falafel on greased baking sheet and bake in 350°F oven for 10 minutes.

Falafel
2 (16-ounce cans garbanzo beans, drained and finely ground in blender)