



CONNECTING WITH YOUR KIDS ONE MEAL AT A TIME.

The Weeknight Dinner
Cookbook

9 simple
meals the
whole family
will love

Presented by



Tri-County Community Action Agency
Southern Providence County
Regional Coalition
Cranston • Johnston • North Providence • Scituate • Smithfield



Hello Families!

Ever heard the age old saying “it takes a village to raise a child?” We at the SPC Regional Prevention Coalition want to be part of that village! We share a common goal, keeping the youth in our community healthy and safe. In order to achieve that goal, our coalition’s mission is to help promote positive mental wellness and prevent substance misuse among youth. We know substance misuse can be a challenging topic, but we are here to help! Starting these conversations by age 9, and continuing to have these conversations throughout adolescence, will help to empower your child to make healthy choices.

Among the many challenges of parenting is the ever daunting question “what’s for dinner?” Food has an incredible way of bringing people together. It’s no surprise that studies show that families that eat dinner together on a regular basis have stronger, closer relationships.


Throughout this cookbook you will find fun conversation starters  to get your kids chatting. We hope these weeknight dinner suggestions and conversation starters will help ease your load and allow you to concentrate on what really matters – the people across the table from you.

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Honey Garlic Chicken

Ready in 20 Minutes

Ingredients

- 8 chicken thighs - (skinless and boneless)
- 2 tbsp cornflour - (cornstarch)
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- 1/3 cup (110g) honey
- 1/3 cup (80ml) chicken stock
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp light soy sauce

To Serve

- 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley
- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- boiled rice



What was
the best part
of your day?



Directions

1. Place the chicken thighs in a bowl and add the cornflour (cornstarch), salt and pepper. Toss the chicken in the cornflour until fully coated.
2. Heat the oil in a large frying pan (skillet) over a high heat.
3. Add the chicken thighs, and cook on one side until golden brown (about 4-5 minutes), then turn over and cook for a further 2 minutes.
4. Add the butter to the pan, let it melt, then add the garlic and stir together. Turn the heat down to medium so the garlic doesn't burn, then make the sauce.
5. To make the sauce, combine the honey, stock, rice vinegar and light soy sauce in a bowl and stir together.
6. Add the sauce to the pan. Turn the heat up and bring the sauce to the boil, then simmer for 4-5 minutes until the sauce reduces and thickens, and the chicken is cooked through (and no longer pink in the middle).
7. Sprinkle on the chopped parsley and chilli flakes and serve over boiled rice.

Ham and Scalloped Potatoes

Ready in 30 Minutes

Ingredients

- 4 medium potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/2 cup 2% milk
- 2 to 3 tablespoons onion soup mix
- 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1 cup cubed Velveeta
- 1 cup cubed fully cooked ham

What's
one thing
you want to
learn?

Directions

1. In a large skillet, cook potatoes in butter until potatoes are lightly browned. Add water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 14-15 minutes or until potatoes are tender.
2. Meanwhile in a small bowl, combine the milk, soup mix and parsley; stir in cheese. Pour over potatoes. Add ham; cook and stir gently over medium heat until cheese is melted and sauce is bubbly.



Mexican Turkey Roll-Ups

Ready in 30 Minutes

Ingredients

- 2-1/2 cups cubed cooked turkey
- 1-1/2 cups sour cream, divided
- 3 teaspoons taco seasoning, divided
- 1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted, divided
- 1-1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup salsa
- 1/4 cup sliced ripe olives
- 10 flour tortillas (6 inches)
- Shredded lettuce
- Chopped tomatoes
- Additional salsa and sliced ripe olives, optional

What's
something new
you learned
today?

Directions

1. In a bowl, combine turkey, 1/2 cup sour cream, 1-1/2 teaspoons taco seasoning, half the soup, 1 cup cheese, onion, salsa and olives.
2. Place 1/3 cup filling on each tortilla. Roll up and place, seam side down, in a greased 13x9-in. baking dish.
3. Combine remaining sour cream, taco seasoning and soup; pour over tortillas. Cover and bake at 350° for 30 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Serve with shredded lettuce and chopped tomatoes. Top with additional salsa and sliced ripe olives if desired.



Chinese Pork Fried Rice

Ready in 25 Minutes

Ingredients

- 1 boneless pork loin chop (6 ounces), cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1/4 cup finely chopped carrot
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh broccoli
- 1/4 cup frozen peas
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 large egg, room temperature, lightly beaten
- 1 cup cold cooked long grain rice
- 4-1/2 teaspoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger

Directions

1. In a large skillet, sauté the pork, carrot, broccoli, peas and onion in butter until pork is no longer pink, 3-5 minutes. Remove from skillet and set aside.
2. In same skillet, cook and stir egg over medium heat until completely set. Stir in the rice, soy sauce, garlic powder, ginger and pork mixture; heat through. If desired, garnish with additional green onions.



Chicken Broccoli Alfredo

Ready in 30 Minutes

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 lb chicken breast cutlets
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2-3 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp butter
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 4 cups heavy cream
- 1 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 lb rotini pasta
- 10 ounces broccoli florets



Directions

1. Season both sides of the chicken cutlets with salt and pepper.
2. Now add 4 tablespoons of olive oil into a large skillet and bring the heat to medium-high. Then pan-fry both sides of the chicken breast until fully cooked. Then cut the chicken into cubes and set aside.
3. Next, add 2 tablespoons of unsalted butter into the same skillet and bring it to medium heat. Then add 2-3 minced garlic cloves and stir for about 20 seconds or until the garlic becomes fragrant.
4. Now pour in 4 cups of heavy cream and let it come to a simmer.

Once it's simmered, turn the heat off and stir in 1 1/2 cups of grated Parmesan cheese.

5. In the meantime cook 1 lb of rotini pasta in a pot of salted boiling water. Once the pasta is cooked, pour pasta water into a bowl filled with 10 oz of broccoli florets. Quickly cover then bowl to let the broccoli steam for about 8-10 minutes.

6. Then add the pasta to the sauce. Once the broccoli is fork-tender, drain it and add it to the pasta along with the cut chicken. Serve warm with breadsticks and salad.



What
makes a great
friend?

Easy Homemade Falafel

Ready in 30 Minutes

Falafel Ingredients

- 1 (15-oz.) can chickpeas, drained
- 4 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 1 shallot, roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp. freshly chopped parsley
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. ground coriander
- 3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- Kosher salt & Freshly ground black pepper
- Vegetable oil, for frying

Yogurt Sauce Ingredients

- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. freshly chopped dill
- Kosher salt & Freshly ground black pepper

Tahini Sauce Ingredients

- 1/2 cup tahini
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 tbsp. warm water (plus more as needed)
- Kosher salt

For Serving

- Pitas
- Chopped lettuce
- Halved cherry tomatoes
- Thinly sliced cucumber

What's your
favorite thing
we do as a
family?



Directions

1. In a food processor fitted with a metal blade, combine chickpeas, garlic, shallot, parsley, cumin, coriander, and flour and season with salt and pepper. Pulse until mixture is coarse and mealy—do not over blend!
2. Form mixture into falafel balls about 2" in diameter, squeezing to compact. Transfer to chill in the refrigerator while oil heats.
3. In a pot, heat 1" vegetable oil until a drop of water added to the oil sizzles and pops.
4. Fry falafels until golden, then transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and season immediately with salt.
5. To make yogurt sauce: In a medium bowl, whisk together yogurt, lemon juice, oil, and dill. Season with salt and pepper.
6. To make tahini sauce: In a medium bowl, whisk together tahini, garlic, lemon juice, and warm water. Season with salt. (If you prefer a thinner sauce, whisk in more warm water 1 tablespoon at a time.)
7. Serve falafels in pita with lettuce, tomatoes, and cucumber and drizzle with either sauce.

Best Chicken Pot Pie Soup

Ready in 45 Minutes

Ingredients

- 1 refrigerated pie dough
- Egg wash
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped into 1/2" coins
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 cup water
- 4 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup whole milk
- 4 medium Yukon gold potatoes, chopped
- Kosher salt & Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. sweet paprika
- 1 cup corn
- 1 cup chopped green beans
- 1 1/2 cup frozen peas, defrosted
- 1 1/2 cup shredded rotisserie chicken
- 2 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Roll out pie dough to a 1/8" thickness. Brush with egg wash and bake until golden, about 15 minutes. Let cool then break into pieces.

2. In a large Dutch oven over medium heat, melt butter. Add onion, carrots, and celery and cook until the vegetables are tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute more. Stir in flour, and cook until the flour is golden, about 30 seconds.

3. Add the water, broth, milk, and potatoes. Bring to simmer, then reduce heat to simmer gently until the potatoes are tender, about 15 to 20 minutes. Season soup with salt, pepper, and paprika. Stir in corn, green beans, peas, and chicken. Cook until the peas and green beans are tender and the chicken is warmed through.

4. Garnish soup with parsley and serve with pie crust dippers.

If you could
do anything you
wanted for a day,
what would
you do?

Chicken Parm Egg Rolls

Ready in 30 Minutes

Ingredients

- 12 egg roll wrappers
- 6 chicken tenders, cooked according to package directions, halved lengthwise
- 3/4 cup marinara, plus more for serving
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan, plus more for garnish
- 2 tsp. dried oregano (or Italian seasoning)
- 1/3 cup freshly sliced basil
- Canola oil, for frying

Directions

1. Place an egg roll wrapper on a clean surface in a diamond shape. Add 1 chicken tender half, a tablespoon marinara, a sprinkle of mozzarella, Parmesan, Italian seasoning, and basil. Wet corners slightly with water, then fold up bottom half and tightly fold in sides. Gently roll and seal tightly like a burrito. Repeat to make 11 more egg rolls.
2. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat 1/4" oil until it starts to shimmer. Add egg rolls and fry in batches until golden, 1 minute per side, adjusting heat as necessary. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain.
3. Garnish egg rolls with Parmesan and serve with warm marinara for dipping.



What are
you most
thankful for?



Taco Cups

Ready in 30 Minutes

Ingredients

- Cooking spray, for pan
- 12 tortillas
- 1 tbs. olive oil
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 2 tsp. Taco Seasoning
- kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup chopped cherry tomatoes
- 2 cup shredded Cheddar
- 1 cup Shredded lettuce
- Sour cream, for drizzling



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Grease muffin pan with cooking spray. Stamp out tortillas with a 4" biscuit cutter. Place a tortilla into each cup of muffin pan, folding the edges if necessary. Set aside.
2. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat olive oil. Add onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add ground beef, breaking up the meat with a wooden spoon. Season with taco seasoning, salt, and pepper and cook until the meat is no longer pink, about 6 minutes. Drain fat.
3. Spoon cooked beef mixture into each tortillas, then top with shredded cheddar. Bake until the tortillas are golden around the edges and the cheese has melted, about 10 minutes.
4. Garnish with tomatoes, cheese, lettuce and sour cream.



If you could
pick a new color
for the sky, what
color would you
make it?

As a parent, you are the biggest influence in your child's life. Having open and honest conversations is one of the most powerful ways to connect with your kids and help them develop into healthy adults. When addressing some more challenging topics – like nicotine, marijuana or other drugs – it's not about having a one-time "drug talk," but rather tackling the subject through more frequent, organic conversations that evolve as your child gets older.

Preschool (2-4 years old)

While giving them their daily vitamins, "Vitamins help your body grow. You need to take them every day so you can grow up big and strong, but you should only take what I give you. Someone else's vitamins or too many vitamins can hurt you and make you sick."

Early elementary (5-8 years old)

Watching a family movie, "Do you think it was a healthy choice for Pinocchio to smoke? He looked very sick and uncomfortable to me. It is so important for us to be careful with what we put into our bodies."

Preteen (9-12 years old)

Invite your child's friend to family dinner. Get to know them using some of our conversation starters throughout this cookbook. It is important to know who your child is spending time with, as peers can have a big influence on their decisions during this age.

Teenager (13-18 years old)

Your child refuses the meal you cooked. "I'm glad to see your refusal skills are in tact. You are in high school now and I know you might experience pressure to drink alcohol, vape or use marijuana or other substances. A lot of people feel like this is just a normal part of being a teenager. It isn't. Most teens actually don't do those things."

Recipe For a Healthy Kid

- Set Clear Rules and Expectations
- Enforce Your Child's Self Worth
- Praise Positive Behavior
- Help Your Child Practice Refusal Skills to Avoid Peer Pressure
- Get to Know Your Child's Friends and Their Parents
- Promote Extracurricular Involvement
- Stay in the Know: Follow SPC Regional Prevention Coalition on Facebook and Join the SPC Regional Prevention Coalition's Free Text Line



The Southern Providence County (SPC) Regional Prevention coalition, coordinated by Tri-County Community Action Agency, is a federally funded regional coalition of community members that come together with a mission to develop, implement, and advocate for elective community-based initiatives to prevent substance misuse and promote overall wellness in Cranston, Johnston, North Providence, Scituate and Smithfield. To learn more about the SPC Regional Prevention Coalition, visit our website: spcprevention.org

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

An interactive display providing parents with signs of risky behavior and possible drug use and the tools needed to have constructive conversations.

Parents are the #1 prevention tool in keeping their youth alcohol and drug free.

Visit www.spc-hips.com

OPT INTO THE KNOW! TEXT MESSAGING

The Know! tips provide you with relevant, timely material that we can share with parents, caregivers, and other caring adults who interact with the young people. Scan QR code or text 401-258-7876 to opt in today!



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