

Food, Glorious Food!
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Family meals

Meal = structured eating, usually ≥ 3 foods

*Usually some thought/planning beforehand
(but not necessarily)*

One definition: some chewing involved... ☺

Survey: How often?

- A family meal together in the last week (*before Women's Conference*)?
 - >7 times
 - 5-6 times
 - 2-4 times
 - 1-2 times
 - Never

Is family dinner important?

You think it is, otherwise you wouldn't be in this session.

Generally teens & adults agree (see JADA April 06)

Benefits of family meals

◆ Health

- Better nutrition
- Better food habits

Nutrition: nutrients & food groups

Habits: eat breakfast; less grazing (less haphazard, impulse buying)

◆ Health

- More aware of ingredients & portions

◆ Economics

- Save money!

Occasional meals at fast foods – fine!

A family realized they were deeply in debt. The mom said, "we stopped eating out. I culled the supermarket flyers for bargains and made simple, nutritious meals that pleased all of us. Over one supper of homemade burgers and salad, her 8-year-old son said, "Mom, this is better than eating out," and his 6-year-old brother agreed. [Guideposts, May 2006, Mary Hunt, "The Good

Life.” Now she’s the author of the newsletter, “The Cheapskate Monthly.” They recovered from \$100,000 in debt and now live debt-free except for their mortgage.]

- ◆ Education
 - Larger vocabulary, conversation
 - Broader world view
 - Better grades in school

- ◆ Social/emotional
 - Less disruptive and risk-taking behaviors
 - Less disordered eating
 - Less substance abuse

The other side of success in school...

- ◆ Practical skills
 - Shopping, budgeting
 - Food preparation

*Preparing children and youth for survival when they grow up
College, missions, becoming parents themselves*

- ◆ Practical skills
 - Clean up, storing foods
 - Cooperating on shared tasks

Skills, values, unity established not just by EATING together, but also by the doing things together with a common purpose

- ◆ Strengthen families
 - Create traditions, memories
 - Security, sense of belonging...

- ◆ Strengthen families
 - Communicate values

Teach the gospel -- doctrines and practices

- ◆ Family unity

Assuming family meals aren't a source of contention...

You already know the main ideas we're talking about today, and many of them are summarized so well in this recent article.

We encourage you to reread it – perhaps often, to remind you of the value of family meals and your important role in making them happen.

How to make dinner happen?

#1 Abandon unrealistic goals

The 4:30 dinner dilemma...

Have a game plan!

Your game plan:

Menu planning

- See the 2006 Women's Conference website for menu planning guide and easy recipes courtesy of Tricia Dennis from Sandy, Utah.

Is it nutritious enough?

- Probably! Don't stress!
- Organized eating of several food groups
- Not the same foods every time

USDA Food Guide

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/>

- Take care of the food groups...& nutrients will take care of themselves.
- Vary choices over meals & days.

Famous quotes from women about dinner

“I don't know how to cook.”

-Nancy Needs-know-how

“I don't enjoy cooking.”

-Holly Cook Hobbynot

“I cooked for 25 years – now I'm retired from cooking.”

-Donna Done-enough

How to make dinner happen?

#2 Quit quoting!

“I don’t know how to cook.”

-Nancy Needs-know-how

Shadow a good cook

Try/trade a new cookbook

“I don’t enjoy cooking.”

-Holly Cook Hobbynot

Food shows for new ideas

Cooking classes, demos

“I cooked for 25 years,
now I’m retired from cooking.”

-Donna Done-enough

Monthly neighborhood recipe club

Take turns eating out at the neighbor’s house

Easy recipes

“Making dinner is a lot of work and no one appreciates it (...or me).”

-Nellie Needs-praise

It IS a lot of work. Look for ways to simplify.

Convenience ingredients.

Well-stocked pantry w/ commonly used items

Best-kept secret family – enlist them. NOT JUST FOR GIRLS:

Cub Scout Family Member Badge: “I don’t know why you complain about cooking dinner, Mom –it’s really fun” as he seized the spatula & swirled contents of another saucepan.

Gratitude doesn’t show up until kids are grown – but it’s worth the wait.

Perhaps teach spouse/older children to express appreciation. (Create a new tradition!)

Discover the inherent joy in service

If your satisfaction is based on appreciation, you will always be disappointed.

True story from Jaroldeen Edwards, “Remedies for the ‘I Don’t Cook’ Syndrome” by Janet Peterson

Lunchbox story

“My children don’t like my cooking.”

-Patty Pleaser

Not your job to please them.

Help them learn socially acceptability behaviors, comfortable with new foods/situations, appreciate goodness of earth & it's wonderful abundance and variety of foods.

Not too bizarre or extreme...

Let kids help choose (veggies in grocery store, or what to plant in garden)

Power of example

Picky eaters?

- Preferences are normal
- Don't pressure kids to eat/avoid
 - Certain foods
 - Certain amounts
- Pressure backfires!
- Be matter of fact

The more you pressure kids to eat, the LESS LIKELY they are to

(a) like the “duty” foods and

(b) stay attuned to natural feelings of hunger and fullness.

Be matter of fact –

Division of Responsibility

- Parents are responsible for what, when, & where the child is fed.
- The child is responsible for how much & whether he eats.

Don't worry too much about NUTRITION.

See book for more details

Rename the old standbys

Research with consumers: fancy names INCREASE liking!

Tuna casserole vs. *Pacific Rim Pasta*.

Zucchini squash vs. *Prairie squash au gratin*

Tossed salad vs. *Mountain garden supreme salad*

Left-overs menu: Use them up by printing a menu on computer with made up names, & kids “order”

Chef's delight

Super supper special

Garden crisp

[Holiday] treat

Island paradise

Ultimate smoothie

Garden treat

“I'm too tired.”

-Diane Drowsy

“I’m don’t have time.”

-Rebecca Runninglate

Three creative and different options to traditional cooking...

#1: Planned-overs

Use leftovers to create another night’s meal...

Roast beef to create beef pot pie

grilled chicken to create chicken tacos

#2: Freezer meals

Deanna Buxton’s book *Dinner is Ready* teaches how to make a whole month of meals in one day. You pick 15 freezer-friendly recipes and double them so you now have 30 meals.

It is a liberating feeling to have your freezer full of meals that just need to be thawed and heated and they will be homemade delicious.

If you have older kids, perhaps one Saturday a month you have family cooking day and crank out the meals together!

Another idea: Double recipes each night as you cook and FREEZE THEM!

Try retail freezer meal stores as another option...a little more pricey

#3: Dinner co-op

How it works...5 families with each family cooking for everyone one night of the week

Amanda Harp 3 houses up...made it work with just two!

Dinner co-op benefits

Cook like company is coming every night

Drudgery out of cooking

Fun to cook again

Other people’s food tastes better

Saves money

Just one kitchen mess a week

More creative juices flowing...you haven’t run dry through nightly cooking

So much more fun

Wonderful to know dinner is taken care of!

“It’s too much bother to cook for one person.”

-Sally Single

You are worth it – get benefits of health, nutrition, savings, even if you are only one!.

Don’t be a sink-y...

*Enjoy your food more if you sit down & pay attention to eating!
Appreciate color, tastes, textures, beauty -- & ye, nutrition!*

Worth it even if there are only 2 of you.

Or invite family, friends, neighbors over.

Share a potluck lunch with other singles each week.

True potluck can be lots of fun! So what if you only have appetizers & chips one week and only entrees or desserts the next!

How to make dinner happen?

#3 Have fun with dinner!

A chore or a celebration???

Who doesn't like to plan a party??

◆ Birthday dinners

Or 1/2 birthday dinners

Let the guest of honor pick the menu for the party

◆ Tablecloths

◆ "You are special" plate

Take turns with the plate at a different family member's place once a week. It could be a surprise thing...you could go around the table and tell why that person is special!

◆ Change the place

Picnics, park

Front porch

Roof of the garage...

◆ Ethnic or country theme night

Where you served as a missionary, or where someone is now serving.

Places you lived.

Friends in your neighborhood.

Coordinate with social studies or geography classes in school.

◆ April Fools' Dinner

◆ Dinner conversations (see www.togetherfordinner.com)

◆ Bethlehem Supper

◆ Invite a guest

First things first

- “Make more Mary-like choices; show less Martha-like anxiety.”
- Neal Maxwell

President Hinckley

“If you do your best, it will all work out.”

“It isn’t as bad as you sometimes think it is. It all works out. Don’t worry. I say that to myself every morning. It will all work out. If you do your best, it will all work out. Put your trust in God, and move forward with faith and confidence in the future. The Lord will not forsake us. He will not forsake us. ... If we will put our trust in Him, if we will pray to Him, if we will live worthy of His blessings, He will hear our prayers” (Jordan Utah South regional conference, priesthood session, 1 Mar. 1997).

What legacy will you leave?

“Learn how to cook – try new recipes, learn from your mistakes, be fearless, and above all have fun!”

-Julia Child

Thanks to...

- Many families for allowing us to “shoot” them!
- YOU, for not giving up!

Share your own ideas, hints & traditions – the potential for ideas among YOU is enormous!