



# Stan & Fran's Health Hints



March 2008

## Eat Better Together

**H**as daily life become so busy that you no longer have family meals? Juggling work and family time is a challenge for many families. Sitting down together as a family to eat a meal in the morning or evening has terrific benefits for both kids and adults. Take a look at this month's Potato Post at *\*(see footer below)* for more great ideas to bring your family back to the table!



### The Family Meal: A time to connect and strengthen relationships

#### Benefits to Children:



- ☺ Are less likely to engage in risky behaviours (smoking, drugs, alcohol, or attempting suicide)
- ☺ Perform better at school with fewer behaviour problems
- ☺ Fewer eating disorders (anorexia and obesity)
- ☺ Will learn about family history and traditions
- ☺ Have a stronger sense of belonging, security, and have better coping skills
- ☺ Have improved vocabulary

Learn more about family meals at:  
[www.kidshealth.org/parent/food/general/family\\_meals.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/food/general/family_meals.html)

#### Colourful Veggie Kabobs:

1. Place any selection of vegetables on skewers
2. Sprinkle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar
3. Broil in oven for 5 to 10 minutes, watching carefully, and turning a couple of times



Remove from skewers and enjoy!

Even younger children may be able to take the veggies off the skewers, but may not be able to safely put them on.

Making kabobs is fun and simple for the whole family. They are a great way to get variety and to add veggies to your day!

### Some tips for great family meals

- ➔ Turn off distractions (television, cell phones, computers, or video games)
- ➔ Have meals at the dinner table so the family sits facing each other
- ➔ Keep conversation pleasant—postpone difficult subjects until later



- ➔ Pre-plan and schedule your meals together
- ➔ Develop traditions and rituals (setting table, doing dishes, Sunday brunch)
- ➔ Try to include a variety of foods
- ➔ Talk about daily events—allow each person a chance to speak



March is Nutrition Month. For more information go to: [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)