

# Introducing Ready for Life's Virtual Kitchen Shower Program!

At Ready for Life, Inc. (RFL) we help the former foster youth we serve to overcome crisis and challenges that they face, and then we circle back around with the young adults to help them fill in the life skill and learning gaps that caused the crisis in the first place. With our unique family like atmosphere and the support of the RFL Community we have great success in stopping the crisis' from repeating.

In the RFL Virtual Kitchen Shower Program, we are working to eliminate food crisis from the futures of those we serve by helping them to fill in a significant life-skill learning gap – we are teaching meal planning.

Food crisis is a common occurrence with the young people we serve. In their trauma filled and often very disrupted childhoods, many of the young adults we serve never learned to cook and so they often tend to use their food budgets to purchase prepared foods or frozen dinners which has them run out of food budget before months end. We saw food crisis happening on such a regular basis that we knew we needed to find the life skill that was missing.

What we learned was that simple Meal Planning Skills could save hundreds of dollars each month in food costs, so we began there, and it is working!

Meal planning lessons start in the RFL Pantry when the emergency needs get met. We provide food to overcome the initial crisis along with simple recipes they can prepare at home. We have cookbooks available, and mentors who also share recipes and shopping tips with their mentees.

We host Zoom Cooking classes where we invite a "celebrity chef" to teach us how to prepare a simple meal together ---and how to use leftovers too!

## The Virtual Kitchen Shower

*Supplies the Tools and Food for each of the Lessons*

- Prior to each of the scheduled virtual classes (we have 3 scheduled in 2021), the young adults are gifted with the cooking items they will need to prepare the meal including cookware and food items. We are stocking the kitchen with supplies that will allow these resilient young people to cook more meals and get creative in their own kitchens.

## You're Invited!

- Our first cooking demo for 2021 is coming up on Saturday, March 13 at 10am. We will be making Crock Pot Chili as a "Cooking with Kate" featuring our guest chef Kate Linde.

## The calendar of classes for 2021

1. March 13 10am (Virtual Crock Pot Chili Cookoff)
2. July 22 5:30pm (Taco's and Nachos using leftover chicken, ground beef/turkey, or vegetarian)
3. September TBD (Recipe TBD)
4. December TBD (Cookie Baking)

Please email [MWalag@readyforlifepinellas.org](mailto:MWalag@readyforlifepinellas.org) for the link to attend and if you want to help out with this special program, we still need a few items. See below.

## If You Would Like to Help

- The cookware and kitchen items are listed on our Amazon Wish List here: [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1AL8KBJC8V1QR?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1AL8KBJC8V1QR?ref_=wl_share)
- Food items lists are available on our website or you can email Michelle at [mwalag@readyforlifepinellas.org](mailto:mwalag@readyforlifepinellas.org)

We are still shy a few items for the Virtual Chili Cookoff. We have crockpots and many of the food items gathered, however the items that we haven't been able to secure yet include:

- Ladles
- can openers
- ground turkey or ground beef (2lb packages)
- chili spice packages
- small bags of grated cheddar cheese

