



Growing Together: Food, Family and Friends

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This month we celebrate National Soup Month with a do-it-yourself recipe using what you have on hand. We also offer a bit of “parenting soup.”



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EAT

Most people remember the folk story of “stone soup” when strangers came into a village with only a cooking pot. Each villager contributed an ingredient to the pot, and soon the villagers had a delicious soup made with vegetables, meat and seasonings.

- **Share it:** Read the Stone Soup story, or search online for an animated or audio story. Children can learn the power of sharing with others. Older children might enjoy the story when they read it to younger children.

You can make your own version of “stone soup” with the food you have on hand in your cupboard, pantry or freezer. Invite kids into the kitchen to create a soup. Have them discuss the type of soup they would like to make with ingredients available.

Make your own Stone Soup (without a stone, of course)

1. Choose one fat, such as 2 tablespoons of your favorite oil. Heat in large pot on stove.
2. Rinse and chop one medium onion. Add to pot and cook over medium heat until tender.
3. Choose one broth. Add to pot.
 - 2 (16-ounce) cans chicken, beef or vegetable broth
 - 4 cups water plus chicken, beef or vegetable bouillon or soup base prepared according to manufacturer’s directions
 - 1 (16-ounce) can crushed or diced tomatoes and 3 cups water
 - 4 cups milk and chicken bouillon or soup base prepared according to manufacturer’s directions
4. Choose one protein. Add to pot.
 - 1 pound cooked (or leftover) chopped/diced beef, chicken, ham, lean sausage, firm tofu, etc.
 - 1 (16-ounce) can beef, chicken or ham
 - 1 (16-ounce) can beans (such as pinto, kidney, navy or black), drained and rinsed
5. Choose one starch. Add to pot.
 - 3 to 4 cups diced potatoes
 - 4 ounces egg noodles, macaroni or other pasta (or 1½ cups leftover cooked noodles)
 - ½ cup uncooked rice (or 1½ cups leftover cooked rice)
6. Choose a mixture of 2 to 3 cups chopped vegetables (fresh, frozen or canned). Add to pot.
7. Add some seasonings, such as 1 to 2 teaspoons of dried herbs like oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, parsley or rosemary.

Connect

A Recipe for Healthy Parenting

As you enjoy your “stone soup,” take a moment to think about what your “parenting soup” might look like.

Cooking soup has a lot in common with raising children. Just like soup needs a strong base, kids thrive with a strong foundation of love, safety and care. You build this by creating consistent routines they can count on, spending quality time together, and using nurturing discipline. What are healthy routines your family has?

Soup gets better when you add ingredients you love — and kids respond the same way to loving attention. They crave and need your focus. Cooking a meal together, eating as a family, playing a game, or even tackling homework are simple but meaningful ways to show you care.

To bring out the best flavors in soup, it needs time to simmer. Parenting is no different — it takes patience. Both you and your children need time to learn and grow. Mistakes are part of the

process. Allowing kids to stumble and try again builds resilience while giving everyone space to grow in healthy ways.

Don't forget to add some spice! Laughter can be the secret ingredient in both your soup and your family life. Have fun together — go sledding, watch a funny movie, or have a goofy family dance party. What does your family do to keep everyone laughing?

And just like soup might need a little tweaking, parenting sometimes does too. Adjust your “recipe” to fit your child's unique personality, and if something isn't working, don't be afraid to try new approaches to help them succeed.

Need help finding the right balance in your parenting? NDSU Extension offers a variety of parenting classes you can join in person or online. Check out the options here: www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/programs/parent-education



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Savor the Conversations (and Soup)!

As you enjoy a bowl of warm soup, check out the printable Conversation Starters at www.ag.ndsu.edu/familytable.

Like most leftovers, soup remains delicious and safe to reheat and eat for about four days in your refrigerator. If you will not consume the soup within this time range, freeze it in meal-sized amounts to enjoy later.

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