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HCSF Newsletter

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! As we come together for the holidays read on for easy and fun gift ideas that your kids can make and festive recipes the whole family will enjoy. Schedules this season may get hectic, but don't forget to make yourself a priority and take time to enjoy healthy meals and daily physical activity with the whole family.

Gift Ideas Kids Can Make

Seasoned Pretzels

Ingredients/Materials



- * 1 cup canola oil
 - * 1 envelope (1 ounce) dried ranch salad-dressing mix
 - * 1/2 of a 1-ounce envelope dried garlic-flavored salad-dressing mix such as Good Seasons (pour the envelope into a measuring cup and spoon out half)
 - * 1 teaspoon lemon-pepper seasoning
 - * 1 teaspoon dried dill
 - * 1 pound hard sourdough pretzels, broken into pieces ("hard" pretzels are in the snack section of your grocery store; if you can only find a 13-ounce box, that's fine to use instead of 1 pound)
 - * Sealable zip top bag (gallon size)
 - * Aluminum foil
 - * Cookie sheets
 - * Clean coffee can
 - * Wrapping paper, bows, ribbon
- * Put oil, salad-dressing mixes, lemon-pepper seasoning, and dill into a gallon-size zip top bag, seal it, then shake hard to mix. Kids are perfect for this step!
- * Add pretzels and toss until they're completely coated. Again, kids will love this. After the pretzels are coated, allow them to "marinate" for at least 1 hour, giving them a shake whenever you think of it.
- * Heat the oven to 300 degrees. Spread pretzels and their flavorings on a large cookie sheet lined with foil and bake, stirring every 10 minutes, for 30 minutes.
- * Let pretzels cool completely, while stirring often. Store them in an airtight container (they'll keep for 4 to 6 weeks).
- * To give as a gift, wrap a clean coffee can in holiday themed paper, place pretzels inside and put lid on. Top with a bow and you're all set!

Button Frame

Materials:



- * Inexpensive picture frames
- * Assorted buttons
- * Glue (Wood glue works best, but Elmer's if fine too!)

Pick up a few inexpensive picture frames. Using glue dotted along the frame have your kids decorate the frames with buttons you've collected over the years. Once the frame is dry, add a recent photo of your child or a piece of your child's artwork.

Play Dough Ornaments

Ingredients/Materials:

- * 2 cups flour
- * 1 cup salt
- * 1 cup water
- * Food coloring (optional)
- * Rolling pin
- * Cookie cutters
- * Paint, glue, glitter
- * String/yarn
- * Straw or skewer to create hole for string



To make the ornaments, mix all ingredients together. Knead into soft "play dough". You may need to adjust the flour or water slowly by small amounts. You can add food coloring with the water if you like. Once the dough has come together, roll it out like sugar cookies and cut out desired shapes using cookie cutters. Remember to poke a hole for hanging the ornament. Place the ornaments in a 200 degree oven for about 2 hours. Check often to avoid browning or scorching. Once the shapes are dry, decorate with whatever your imagination comes up with, using paint, glitter etc. After the ornaments are decorated and completely dry, use string or yarn to allow them to be hung as decorations.





Mythbusters



With endless lists of things to do during the holiday season, exercise can seem like a low priority.

MYTH:

"I don't have time to exercise, I have a job and children to look after."

TRUTH:

Make time to be active by incorporating it into your day instead of scheduling separate time for a trip to the gym!

These days we all feel rushed, even more so around the holidays, but don't let 'time' be your excuse for not being active. Instead of feeling like you have to "make time" for physical activity, try and incorporate it into your daily life. Try taking 10 minutes of your lunch break to take a brisk walk. Not only will you sneak in some exercise but you'll probably feel clearer headed for that long afternoon of work or school after lunch.

In the evenings, make time to get active. The average person watches 168 minutes of TV per day--that's nearly three hours per day. **Yikes!** Try to turn on the TV later in the evening and dedicate the time you would have been parked on the couch to getting active. Take the dog for a walk with your kids and check out the neighbor's holiday decorations. Run the vacuum, turn on the radio – try those "Christmas only" stations and sing and dance along... anything that keeps you moving and gets your heart pumping! Making activity part of your day instead of having to find time will keep you moving without the guilt of not having 'time' to exercise

Get dinner on the table in a hurry!

Battle of the Skillets



Squash and Pepper Skillet



Ingredients

- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon Olive Oil or Canola Oil
- 5 medium zucchini, sliced
- 3 medium yellow summer squash, sliced
- 1 small sweet red or green pepper
- 1 garlic glove, minced

Directions

- In a large skillet, sauté onion in oil until tender. Add the zucchini, yellow squash, red pepper and garlic; stir-fry for 12-15 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender. Season with salt and pepper. Yield: 8 Servings.

Turkey Vegetable Skillet



Ingredients

- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon canola oil
- ¼ pound zucchini, diced
- ¼ cup chopped dill pickle
- 1 pound fresh chopped tomatoes or canned diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon pepper

Directions

- In a large skillet, cook the turkey, onion and garlic over medium heat in oil until turkey is no longer pink; drain if necessary. Add remaining ingredients. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered for 5-10 minutes or until heated through. Yield 6 servings