

Fact Sheet

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

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TV Dinners: adapting TV formats to promote healthy eating and cookery skills

Across Scotland, hundreds of community or youth groups have delivered cookery skills activities with their groups. This fact sheet provides examples of how three groups were inspired by TV formats to create a friendly competitive environment to teach cookery skills. They all focus on young people; however, these ideas have been used by other age groups.

Ready Steady Cook! has been used by groups for many years as a cookery teaching tool and despite the recent demise of the TV programme the groups are likely to continue to find this format useful. **Come Dine with Me** is currently popular with a wide audience, and has the added social benefit of a shared meal.

The examples in this fact sheet aim to provide some basic ideas on how these formats can be used, although there is plenty of scope for adaptation and ensuring that nervous cooks get the support they need. We also look forward to hearing about the success of using other formats, such as **The Apprentice** or **Dragons Den**. The last page of this fact sheet includes links to websites where you can find more ideas for resources on healthy eating.

Come Dine with Me by Loretto Care
Loretto Care at Garry Place in Grangemouth provides support and accommodation for young people aged between 16 and 25; many of whom have experienced homelessness. Up to 15 young people are supported in five flats. Over the last few

years, Loretto Care has developed a range of food and health activities, including basic nutrition training for young people and staff, food hygiene training, shopping and cookery skills support for young people. It has also changed how young people are assessed to live independently. Its work is led by the young people it supports.

Here's how Loretto Care delivered **Come Dine with Me**:

1. Loretto Care staff asked young people from all five of the supported flats if they would like to take part in a **Come Dine with Me** type activity. More than five young people wanted to be involved, so they chose one person from each flat to take part.
2. All five came together with staff to talk about what was involved. All the young people knew the TV show, so there was no need to watch the programme. The young people were informed that the prize winner would be supported to buy £30 of groceries. Each host would also be given £30 to buy ingredients for a three-course meal. The young people had to think of themes for their own dinner party.
3. Staff supported each competitor to use the internet to look up recipes to suit their theme, such as American or Italian.
4. On the day of the dinner, staff supported the host to write their shopping list, went to the shop with them to buy ingredients, prepare the meal, set the table and helped serve the meal.

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5. After the meal, the four other competitors gave scores (out of 10) to staff. Competitors were scored on their hosting and cookery skills.
6. On the fifth night, at the last dinner, the winner was announced.

Loretto Care staff and young people reported that this activity was a great success. Ongoing support and enthusiasm from staff was an important ingredient in making this activity fun, sociable and useful. All the competitors had already been supported for several weeks to develop their cookery skills, as well as food safety, hygiene, and nutrition awareness.

Ideas and adaptations for Come Dine with Me

This can also be delivered on a smaller budget, on a smaller scale and with a nominal prize. Competitors could also work in pairs or small teams. Scores could also take into account food presentation skills or healthy eating.

Ready Steady Cook! from the North Glasgow Youth Food Guidelines and Healthy Eating Toolkit

A partnership of seven organisations has been working together since 2009 with the aim of improving the diet of young people in the North Glasgow area. After extensive consultation with youth workers and young people, the partnership put together a toolkit that provides advice on how to improve the availability of healthy foods in youth clubs as well as a range of games and ideas to make healthy eating activities fun. Here's how they suggest groups deliver **Ready Steady Cook!**

1. Split your group into two teams, and give each a bag of ingredients which are tailored towards a certain dish (teams are also allowed to use 'store cupboard' ingredients like oil, stock and spices).
2. Teams can swap one item between them if they like.

3. Teams are given a set time to create a dish from their ingredients - 30-40 minutes.
4. The youth worker or young people not involved then taste both dishes and decide which team wins.

Make sure the tutor and participants are aware of food safety and hygiene before the class starts.

The seven organisations involved in the partnership were: North Glasgow Community Food Initiative, North Glasgow CHP, Glasgow City Council, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS, Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, North Glasgow Healthy Living Community, and North Glasgow Youth Stakeholders group. CFHS provided a grant for staff training.

Ideas and adaptations for Ready Steady Cook!

Individuals or teams who are less confident with their cooking skills could be given hands-on help or provided with recipes to choose from. Some groups use **Ready Steady Cook!** type activities after running cookery courses to find out what people have learnt.

The F Word and Ready Steady Cook! by Fairbridge

Fairbridge is a national charity that works with vulnerable young people aged 13 to 25 across Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Fairbridge staff incorporate healthy cookery into many of their training activities and use food to build other skills, such as team building and negotiation skills, or to raise awareness of current international issue.

Here's how Fairbridge Dundee delivered an **F Word** inspired event, the aim of which was to showcase the young people's skills and to raise funds for Fairbridge.

1. Young people were asked if they were interested in getting involved in cooking

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- a meal for a fundraising event; a range of cooking courses were organised over a six month period and the young people were given food hygiene training to help equip them with the necessary skills, confidence and motivation to take part in the event.
2. A local chef helped the young people prepare a three-course meal for an audience of around 40 people
 3. The audience at the event were asked to rate the dishes as either 'good', 'very good' or 'out of this world' and to put a donation in an envelope that reflected how much they were prepared to spend on the meal
 4. The young people were presented with certificates for taking part in the event.

The young people gained a real sense of achievement by preparing food for a large audience, receiving positive feedback and raising money for Fairbridge.

Ideas and adaptations for the F Word

An **F Word** type event could be used at the end of a series of cookery sessions as part of a celebratory meal. It could also be delivered on a much smaller scale with a small invited audience (such as other members of the group). They could vote for their favourite dish or indicate how much they would be prepared to pay for the meal.

Fairbridge Edinburgh also delivers a version of **Ready Steady Cook!** called **Buy it, Swap it, Cook it.**

This course takes place over a half or whole day. The aim of the course is to engage young people to learn to cook within a budget, get them involved in decision making, develop their communication, teamwork, and leadership skills.

1. The group are split into two teams and given a budget for their meal. The teams are instructed to buy enough ingredients to make a main meal and a dessert.

2. They are not allowed to use any ready-made ingredients.
3. Each team has to work together as a group to decide on a menu that suits the budget that they have been given. They are expected to listen to all of their teammates before negotiating and deciding on the planned meal.
4. Once they have been to the shops and bought all the necessary ingredients, they are asked to swap one of their ingredients with the other team. They are not expecting this, so it comes as a surprise. They then have to take time to discuss this new problem. This helps develop their problem-solving skills and also helps them realise how many different ways there are of using simple ingredients.
5. The meals are tasted and scored by the young people and staff. The scores take into account presentation skills as well as flavour.

Fairbridge staff have created other food activities to build a variety of skills and knowledge. **Economy Gastronomy** considers food marketing and how to prepare favourite meals using more affordable ingredients. **World Food Trivia** uses cookery and trivia questions to raise awareness of how economic and climate conditions influence cultural food habits and tastes.

Ideas or adaptations for Buy it, Swap it, Cook it!

You could include other instructions within the activity, such as ensuring the meal includes two or three portions of fruit and veg as part of five-a-day. Scores could also include other factors such as healthy eating, using new ingredients, or environmental issues.

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Further information and ideas

Information on promoting a healthy balanced diet

The 'eatwell plate' is available in the National Archives section of www.eatwell.gov.uk (the eatwell website is in the process of being moved). The site also has quizzes and games

The Scottish Government's website 'Take Life on' has information on healthy eating: www.takelifeon.co.uk

Information on food, health and young people

- The North Glasgow Youth Food Guidelines and Healthy Eating Toolkit
- Beyond Smoothies: developing cooking and healthy eating activities for young people
- How to get beyond smoothies - top tips and ideas for healthy eating activities with young people

These publications are all available on the CFHS website

The Comic Company has games and resources to buy, many suitable for young people.

www.comiccompany.co.uk

Chew On This has information and activities about the food industry and food labelling.

www.chewonthis.org.uk

Young Scot has information about healthy eating

www.youngscot.org.uk

Further information about the groups featured in this fact sheet

Information about the food activities of Fairbridge is featured in the CFHS newsletter Fare Choice, Issue 55.

Information about The North Glasgow Youth Food Guidelines and Healthy Eating Toolkit is featured in the CFHS newsletter Fare Choice, Issue 55.

Information about Loretto Care, Garry Place in Grangemouth is featured in the CFHS newsletter Fare Choice, Issue 54.

Past issues of Fare Choice are available on the CFHS website.

Thanks to the organisations who took part for sharing their ideas.

