



## Social eating brings people together

Sharing a meal is a form of social connection that everyone can experience. It's a universal language to bring people together and develop a sense of belonging.

Even if just occasionally, research conducted by The Australian Government Department of Health shows that social eating improves your mental health and emotional wellbeing. Plus, the more often people eat with others, the more likely they are to feel happy and satisfied with their lives.



### Eating alone may impact your wellbeing

Studies by the Australian Institute of Family Studies show the following impacts of eating alone:

- ▶ A lack of companionship during mealtimes is associated with depression in adults.
- ▶ Women who eat alone are more likely to experience depression.
- ▶ Men living alone are considered to have higher rates of obesity and other health issues.
- ▶ The elderly who eat with others less than once a month are more likely to have poor health.

### Benefits of social eating



#### Cooking together

Cooking together is an amazing way to connect. You're not only sharing food but developing relationship skills, practicing communication, and working to complement each other's skills and actions.



#### Community

Food can help unite communities in powerful and compelling ways. It can be used to bring people together, find common interests, share wisdom and knowledge, and promote healthy local food systems.



#### Children

Social eating is great for children particularly those 'picky' eaters. With new foods, children may need a little extra encouragement to try new food for themselves, and social eating may help get them involved. More importantly, children learn how to eat well and socialise by observing others at the table.

*The benefits of eating together are endless. Gathering around a dining table has far reaching physical and mental health benefits for people of all ages. While eating together, we share stories, build relationships, learn from each other's mistakes and triumphs; and not only create bonds, but also positively impact our wellbeing. This quality time together benefits every aspect of our wellbeing – emotionally, physically, socially, and mentally – which all contributes to our overall quality of life.*







The City of Gosnells Team from the 2023 Challenge

## The Great West Aussie Adventure is back in 2024!

How far can your team go? It's Shire vs Town vs City for the 2024 Great West Aussie Adventure.

LGIS is giving all local government staff the opportunity to get physical in this fun, interactive activity challenge. Get a team of colleagues together and get involved, get active and have some friendly competition with other local governments. It's accessible to people of all ages and fitness levels, encouraging behavioural change to improve overall wellbeing.

You'll see your individual achievements, team achievements and how you rank against other local government teams. LGIS will have prizes for outstanding individuals and teams at the end of the challenge.

The challenge kicks off on Monday, 29 July, and runs for six weeks.

Keep a look out for posters and registration details over the next month.

Talk to your local government's health and wellbeing representative about how to get involved.



## Broccoli soup – quick and easy!

Try this broccoli soup. Takes just 20 minutes and is perfect to prepare together.  
Serves 5

### Ingredients list

- ▶ 1 tbsp (15g) butter (or olive oil)
- ▶ 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ▶ 1 onion, diced (brown or white onion)
- ▶ 4 cups (1 litre) chicken broth / stock, low sodium (or veg stock)
- ▶ 1.5 cups (325ml) water
- ▶ 700g broccoli florets (2 large broccoli + diced peeled stem, see Note 1)
- ▶ 2 potatoes, peeled and diced into 1.5cm cubes
- ▶ 3/4 tsp salt
- ▶ 1/4 tsp black pepper
- ▶ 1.5 cups (150g) cheddar cheese, shredded (or any other cheese of your choice)
- ▶ 3/4 cup (165ml) cream or milk

### Method

- ▶ Melt butter in a large pot over medium high heat. Add onion and garlic, and sauté for two minutes until onion is softened.
- ▶ Add broth/water, broccoli, potato, salt, and pepper. Bring to a simmer, then place the lid on, turn the heat down to medium high and cook for 20 minutes or until the broccoli is soft.
- ▶ Turn the stove off (but leave the pot on the stove). Puree using a stick blender until smooth (see Note 2).
- ▶ Stir in cream, then add cheese one handful at a time, stirring in between to melt.
- ▶ Taste and add more salt if desired.
- ▶ Ladle into bowls. Drizzle with cream and top with extra grated cheese, if desired.

### Additional Recipe Notes:

- ▶ Broccoli - cut florets off, then peel the skin off the stems. Dice into small pieces. Two large broccoli weighs approximately 700g (including stems). Frozen broccoli can also be used.
- ▶ Store in fridge up to 5 days. Freeze for up to 3 months.



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The LGIS WorkCare Services team are specialist health and wellbeing professionals.

Contact the team on 9483 8888 for more information on our health and wellbeing services.