

Feb. 11 Is an Unofficial Holiday Encouraging People To “Make a Friend Day”

Research shows that socialization and enrichment are good for aging brains. There are several brain health factors, and socialization is one of the key ingredients to a long and healthy lifestyle. On this day or throughout the month, stepping out of one’s comfort zone and meeting new people can lead to new friendships.

Here are a few tips for making new friendships or restoring old ones:

1. Say hello to people: The 10/5 rule. When within 10 feet of someone, always smile and make eye contact. When within 5 feet, say hello in a friendly or polite way.
2. Look at community events and choose to attend a local meeting.
3. Consider attending an event that was initially off the agenda.
4. Call or text a friend you last contacted a while ago due to the busyness of life.
5. Ask a coworker to go to a gym class together.

FIESTA QUINOA SALAD

Servings: 7

Ingredients

- ½ cup uncooked and rinsed quinoa
- ½ cup corn, drained and rinsed or thawed from frozen
- ½ cup black beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup red or green bell pepper
- ⅓ cup red onion, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and chopped (optional)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice from 1 lime
- 2 teaspoons fresh cilantro, chopped
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water. In a saucepan, heat 1 cup water to boiling. Add quinoa. Return to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Fluff with a fork and allow to cool slightly.
2. Add corn, black beans, bell pepper, red onion, and jalapeño to quinoa.
3. Whisk together olive oil, lime juice, cilantro, cumin, garlic powder, pepper, and salt in a small separate bowl.
4. Add dressing to vegetable mixture and gently toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours before serving.

Store in an airtight container and refrigerate for up to four days.

Nutrition information per serving:
90 calories; 4.5 g fat (0.5 g saturated fats);
70 mg sodium; 4 g carbohydrates;
0 g added sugar; 2 g dietary fiber;
3 g protein.

Game Plan for Food Safety: Don’t Fumble on Gameday

Set the play clock: Don’t let cold food sit on the sidelines for over two hours. Use ice to keep it cool and refresh the ice as needed.

Clean before the snap: Wash hands and veggies before serving. A USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service study revealed that over 95% of people need to improve their hand-washing. Rinse fruits and veggies to tackle harmful bacteria before serving.

Keep hot food in the end zone:

A thermometer is the only safe way to check if hot foods stay above 140 F. Keep wings, dips, and nacho toppings warm with an oven, warming trays, or slow cookers. Preheat slow cookers according to the playbook or manufacturer’s instructions.

Stay in the food safety league — don’t let bacteria intercept party plans.



Think about having a Frugal February. Be intentional about finances this month and into 2025.

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