

Collective Kitchens

Getting Started

Collective Kitchen participants meet once a month or more, and while there are no set rules about how to operate a Collective Kitchen, the group should discuss some basic expectations of one another, example, working co-operatively, being fair and equitable with food resources, working collectively for the betterment of the group. We hope that your cooking experience will be fun and enjoyable for all participants. By now all participants should know where you will be cooking and when you will be cooking, but if they don't perhaps your participants could appoint a kitchen leader to make those necessary telephone calls before each kitchen meeting. Perhaps you would like to rotate this position. Whatever works for your group, give it a try.

Struggles and Creative Options

A Collective Kitchen is both fun and work. Have realistic expectations for your kitchen.

Participants who know what to expect are more likely to continue participating.

The participants need to make a commitment to each other to be on time and to participate to the best of their ability.

Often it is best for the group to make decisions by consensus, where everyone has input and then you decide with a vote. Therefore the decisions will not be what are in the best interest of individuals, but rather the majority of participants.

Sponsors

Collective Kitchens are meant to be self-sustaining. This means that participants support themselves financially by paying for their own meals. Collective Kitchens can be assisted by sponsors who can help out with the cost of food. Sponsors could be local community agencies, service clubs or churches. Their donations can be in-kind such as food products or cooking products. Sponsors can also make financial contributions.

Support

The London Community Resource Centre coordinates community supports for Collective Kitchens. Some of the supports we can provide are: university and college students in nutrition programs and general volunteers. For any questions the kitchen participants may want answered, please contact the London Community Resource Centre at 519-432-1801

Cooking Locations

Participants may join existing kitchens, or form their own in a location that has access to kitchen facilities. Some suggestions might be to ask your neighbourhood church or school or community centre.

Childcare

It is up to the participants to arrange their own childcare. Some neighbours may be willing to help, find a volunteer, or rotate childcare responsibility among the Collective Kitchen participants.

Transportation

Transportation is usually not an issue because participants live and shop within walking distance of their collective kitchen. If this is not possible, consider starting a collective kitchen in your neighbourhood by approaching a community centre, a church or a school.

The Planning Stage

This is where all of the "meat and potatoes" pardon the pun get sorted out.

Participants meet to choose meals they want to cook and prepare a shopping list.

Pooling resources, planning and preparing delicious low-cost, nutritious meals are all part of the fun in the Collective Kitchen.