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Buffalo County Extension
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Place Setting Fun for Everyone!

Believe it or not, the Holiday Season is almost upon us! The Holiday Season can be stressful, and we can all feel pressured to buy presents, make time for family, decorate, bake cookies, etc. But looking back, some of my favorite memories do not involve anything fancy or extravagant, but the time that my family made it special with little gestures. One way you can involve your children in the holiday season is to help them decorate the table! This not only involves children in the holiday season but emphasizes the importance of eating together as a family. According to Stanford Medicine of Children's Health Family meals set expectations, improve family communication, teach children by example, build self-esteem, and improve family dynamics. Setting the table can be a fun, creative way to bring the family together.

First off, start with the base layer of your table. You may have a tablecloth or table runner for your kids to lay down. Next, are the placemats, and if you don't have any, it is not a problem! Print off coloring page placemats and let your children decorate them! This can be very fun if you all know who will be coming and each placemat can be personalized for your guests at your holiday dinner. Next, lay out a plate in the middle of each placemat. On the right of the plate should be your knife and spoon, with the blade of the knife facing the plate. On the left of the plate, should be your fork(s) and napkin. To the top right of the plate, is where the drinkware goes. Teach your children while setting the table the proper way, and next, let their creativity run wild. Provide them with décor to make a centerpiece and name cards.

Family holidays look different for everyone, but by involving your youth in them, even without big presents or huge vacations, you are leaving memories forever with them. Other ways you can do this are teach them how to make a holiday dish they can make every year, have them help decorate around the house, and have them help pick out Christmas lights!

The 4-H Culinary Challenge is a great way to highlight these skills youth can learn over the Holidays. In the 4-H Culinary Challenge, youth plan a meal, make a dish that is included in the meal, decorate a table, and interview with a judge over their work. This can be a very beneficial and fun challenge for 4-H youth to be a part of! Contact the Buffalo County Extension Office on how to get involved!

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Proper Place Setting Diagram:

