



# ALPINE *Threads*

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*Masthead photo courtesy of  
Alpine County photographer  
Todd Branscombe.*

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## How to Help Your Kids in School

- Be sure to make time to talk with your child every day so they know that what goes on at school is important to you.
- Make attending school a priority. Avoid an overload of extra activities and ensure your child is well rested. You can help them avoid absences to get the most out of every day in the classroom.
- There is no magic formula for getting our children to do better in school. In fact, some children are highly self-motivated, while others are not.
- Celebrate all aspects of the school to elevate it to the highest level of importance in your home. Praise good efforts.
- Make time to hear about the day’s activities, and be sure your child knows you’re actively interested and listening carefully.
- Ask questions that go beyond “yes” or “no” answers prompts more developed conversations.
- Take advantage of time during car trips or standing in line at stores to talk with your child.
- Make time for sporting and school events, play games, and talk about current events.
- Encourage your child to read books and stories that are slightly above their competency level.

By making these basic things an intentional part of everyday life, you can boost your child’s chances of success!





**Little kids have big emotions.** Teaching your child to stay calm sets them up for success. There's a lot going on in a little kid's world. New experiences can bring up all kinds of emotions and even tantrums. But that's okay. By giving your child the skills they need to manage their feelings, you'll help them now and down the road.

Kids need the right tools to control their emotions when they get angry. They can get frustrated, angry, and upset when they don't know how to deal with them. The Dragon Song\* gives them a way to calm down with just a few deep breaths. It can help put them in control of their feelings, regulate their mood, and guide them to better manage future meltdowns. Talk to them when they're ready to listen. If they stay calm, let them know you're proud of them. Give them lots of praise! You might even want to do some deep breathing yourself.

**Lead the way.** Kids pay attention to everything we do. One of the best ways to teach them about calmness is to practice dragon breathing in front of them and with them. In fact, you can begin doing this from the moment they're born. It's never too early, and it's never too late. Start practicing calmness in front of your child today by practicing dragon breathing when you're already calm. Use dragon breathing when you're angry or upset, and remember, you can always put your child in a safe space and then leave the room for a moment while you calm down.

**Lifetime of benefits.** We all want our kids to be prepared for school and whatever life brings them. But did you know that learning how to stay calm is a skill that can last a lifetime? If they're taught how to self-regulate early on, it'll help them now and well into the future have:

- More satisfaction with life
- Better relationships as an adult
- Educational attainment and success
- Fewer health problems
- Less chance of drug abuse
- Better chance of financial success

**Let them know you understand.** Kids calm down faster when they feel like you understand them. Some tips for talking through their feelings:

- Keep your voice calm and relaxed.
- Get down to their level and make eye contact.
- Move them away from the situation.
- Ask them what they are feeling.
- Show your child you love and understand them by giving them a hug.

**Give the emotion a name.** As kids grow, they begin to recognize, name, and talk about their feelings. They can distinguish between certain feelings, like sadness, anger, and fear. These feelings can get bottled up and come out as crying, screaming, or refusing to behave. By helping your child learn about their feelings, and how to manage them while they're young, you can help give them a great start to a happier, healthier life. At bedtime, name one upsetting feeling and one happy feeling you had that day, and talk about it using simple words. Then, ask your child to try it. They'll be talking about their feelings in no time!

\*The Dragon Song: **"When you're tired, and you're grumpy, and you want to shout... pretend you're a dragon and let it out!"**

Information for this article was gathered from First 5 California. Learn more about the dragon song at <https://www.first5california.com/en-us/videos/the-dragon-song-calming-kids/>

Do you need assistance paying your utility bill?

**The HEAP Program Helps!**



**Alpine County Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) offers several programs to help Alpine County families pay their utility bills and improve the energy efficiency of their homes.**

Households may qualify to receive assistance with their electric bill, or credit towards their propane, wood, pellets or kerosene. The application process usually takes about 15 minutes. Applications must be submitted with copies of current utility, income, and citizenship or residency documents.

## 2024 Gross Monthly Income Guidelines

Household Size	Maximum Monthly Income
1	\$2,882.83
2	\$3,769.83
3	\$4,656.83
4	\$5,543.92
5	\$6,430.92
6	\$7,317.92

## Contact

HEAP eligibility is determined using the household gross income for the most recent month.

For more information please call **530-573-3490**, visit **[www.edcgov.us/HEAP](http://www.edcgov.us/HEAP)**, or visit El Dorado County HHSA 1360 Johnson Blvd. #103, South Lake Tahoe, CA

## ENJOY THE SUN, ALPINE COUNTY!

**When it snows outside, not only does the thermometer indicator decrease but often our well-being as well.** The Autumn Equinox and short winter days may cause feelings of tiredness, fatigue, and problems with concentration. For most people, these symptoms disappear after a few days. For some, they don't. A prolonged bad mood, apathy, or headaches at this time of the year might be a sign of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Scientists suspect that SAD is all about light exposure. Increased darkness of winter months has a direct impact on the hormonal process taking place in our body. When we lack sun, the level of melatonin increases, making us sleepy and tired. On the other hand, the level of serotonin decreases. Serotonin is associated with boosting our mood, feeling calm, and staying focused.

If you suspect that you, or someone you know, might suffer from SAD, please don't ignore your thoughts. Fall/winter depression may lead to serious problems and complications, including social withdrawal, problems at school or at work, alcohol abuse, and mental health illnesses such as anxiety or eating disorders. Take a look at this list of clues that might indicate you are affected:

- feeling depressed most of the day, almost every day,
- loss of interest in activities that once brought joy,
- lack of energy,
- problems with sleeping,
- changes in appetite (*i.e. increased appetite and weight gain*),
- feeling lethargic or agitated,
- difficulty concentrating,
- feeling of hopelessness, worthlessness, or guilt.

If the condition persists for more than two weeks, prevents you or your loved one from performing daily activities, or if frequent thoughts about death or suicide appear, contact your therapist, doctor, or a psychologist. SAD treatment under their professional care might include light therapy (phototherapy), pharmacotherapy (medications), or psychotherapy.

Along with professional care, there are some simple remedies that can help. People with symptoms of seasonal depression are often encouraged to engage in physical activity as often as possible, ideally 30min a day, 5 days a week. A daily walk or slow jogging can help improve mood as exercise triggers the production of "happiness hormones", strengthens immunity and prepares the body to fight any seasonal infections. Spending some time outside every day, even when it's cloudy, is also beneficial. If it's too cold, or if a person is homebound, opening the shades and sitting by a sunny window could be a solution.

Eating a well-balanced diet helps with energy levels. Mindful eating is crucial at this time of the year when craving starchy and sweet foods is strong. The best bets are whole grains instead of white cakes and fruits instead of candy!

Last but not least, staying present and involved with the community helps with depression related loneliness. Regular activities and social support are all very important because nobody should have to go through difficulties alone.

**Ewa Czarnecka, Suicide Prevention Network**

ewa@spnawareness.org [www.spnawareness.org](http://www.spnawareness.org)

**If you are having thoughts of suicide, do not hesitate to ask for help. Your life is extremely valuable, and people care about you.**

You are not alone. Call 988 to get in touch with trained counselors. They will listen, understand how your problems are affecting you, provide support, and connect you to resources. Another crisis line available to Alpine residents 24/7 is 1-800-318-8212.

To see a clinician, call Alpine County Behavioral Health Services at 530-694-1816.



**The Health & Wellness Coalition is seeking new members!**

To learn more or sign up, contact Jackie at [jspringer@alpinecountyca.gov](mailto:jspringer@alpinecountyca.gov) or (530) 694-2235.





# Alpine Watershed Group Welcomes Two New Team Members

*By Kaitlyn Garber and Bella Kurtz, Wildfire Restoration and Forest Resiliency Fellows through California Climate Action Corps*



**Alpine Watershed Group is honored to have been granted two California Climate Action Corps Fellows for the 2023/2024 term.** Wildfire Restoration and Forest Resiliency Fellows Bella Kurtz and Kaitlyn Garber are helping Alpine County to address the effects of climate change and improve wildfire resiliency through next August. Thank you so much to Bella and Kaitlyn for choosing to serve our community. Bella and Kaitlyn have jumped right in on several projects in Alpine County. They have helped complete meadow assessments in the Tamarack Fire burn scar, launched seedling survivability surveys at Turtle Rock Park following the October community tree planting, and surveyed aspen regeneration around Hope Valley.

**Kaitlyn** recently relocated from San Diego where she was the copywriter intern for the San Diego River Park Foundation. Her background is in watershed habitat restoration, volunteer and community engagement, and digital communications. She has a B.A. in English from San Diego State University and hopes to form a career sharing stories of successful environmental protection. She has been immensely enjoying meeting the community in Alpine County and in the Alpine Watershed Group family. She can't wait to learn more about the forests, lakes, and rivers in the area from all of you. Look for Kaitlyn and Bella's take on climate resilience in Climate Corner, a new section in the AWG newsletter! In her free time, Kaitlyn likes kayaking, backpacking, and doing agility with her dog Denna.



**Bella** is originally from Pennsylvania where she grew up on her family's fish hatchery. After graduating from University of California, Irvine, with a B.S. in Pharmaceutical Sciences, she spent the next year traveling around to different states and decided to embark on a new journey. While exploring numerous National Forests during this travel period, she developed a new hobby of finding and identifying wildflowers, which led to a desire to work in conservation. She has always had an interest in environmentalism and is very excited to gain new knowledge and experience that pertains to the environment and climate change. She finds it extremely exciting and interesting to see the process of ecological succession through comparison of photographs taken throughout the duration of projects. Bella has enjoyed her time exploring Markleeville and getting to know the kind-hearted community. She would really like to become involved with local native plant nurseries during her service term. During her free time, Bella enjoys hiking, finding and identifying wildflowers, reading, and crafting.

If you aren't already getting AWG's newsletter, visit [www.alpinewatershedgroup.org/email-bulletin](http://www.alpinewatershedgroup.org/email-bulletin) to sign up to receive monthly updates on all things related to forest and watershed health. Please reach out to us anytime!

**Kaitlyn Garber – [awg.kaitlyn@gmail.com](mailto:awg.kaitlyn@gmail.com) • Bella Kurtz – [awg.isabella@gmail.com](mailto:awg.isabella@gmail.com) • AWG Office - (530) 694-2327**



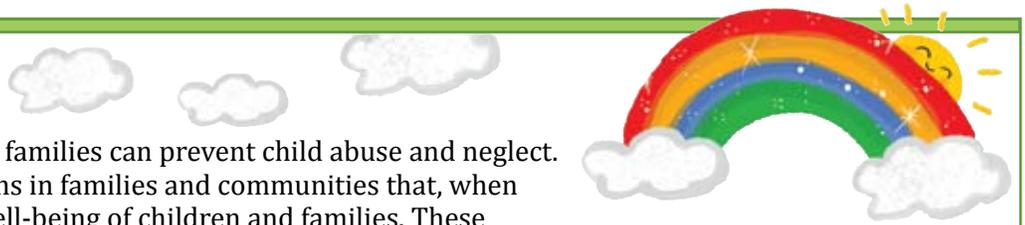
## ATTENTION Alpine County!

We are modifying our coverage schedule for the Alpine office, moving from 3 days a week to 1 day a week on Tuesdays.

Once a month, we will provide a Basic Needs Day, which is held on Wednesdays. Our therapists will still be seeing their Alpine clients in the Alpine office during this time (weather permitting).



## Protective Factors



Increasing the protective factors in families can prevent child abuse and neglect. The protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, improve the health and well-being of children and families. These attributes serve as buffers, helping parents find resources, support, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress. Research has shown that the protective factors are linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect.

### PARENTAL RESILIENCE

Parents who can cope with everyday life's stresses and occasional crises have resilience; they have the flexibility and inner strength necessary to bounce back when things are not going well. Multiple life stressors, such as a family history of abuse or neglect, health problems, marital conflict, or domestic or community violence—and financial stressors, such as unemployment, poverty, and homelessness—may reduce a parent's capacity to cope effectively with the typical day-to-day stresses of raising children.

### SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN

Children's early experiences of being nurtured and developing a positive relationship with caring adults affect all behavior and development aspects. Research shows that babies who receive affection and nurturing from their parents have the best chance of healthy development. A child's relationship with a consistent, caring adult in the early years is associated later in life with better academic grades, healthier behaviors, more positive peer interactions, and an increased ability to cope with stress.

### PARENTAL KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND PARENTING SKILLS

Extensive research links healthy child development to effective parenting. Children thrive when parents provide affection, respectful communication, listening, consistent rules and expectations, and safe opportunities that promote independence. Successful parenting fosters psychological adjustment, helps children succeed in school, encourages curiosity about the world, and motivates children to achieve.

### CONCRETE SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

Many factors affect a family's ability to care for their children. Families who can meet their own basic needs for food, clothing, housing, and transportation—and who know how to access essential services such as childcare, health care, and mental health services to address family-specific needs—can better ensure their children's safety and well-being. Partnering with parents to identify and access resources in the community may help prevent the stress that sometimes precipitates child maltreatment. Providing concrete support may also help prevent the unintended neglect that sometimes occurs when parents are unable to provide for their children.

### SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Parents with a social network of emotionally supportive friends, family, and neighbors often find caring for their children and themselves easier. Most parents need people they can call on occasionally when they need a sympathetic listener, advice, or concrete support. Research has shown that parents who are isolated, with few social connections, are at higher risk for child abuse and neglect.



Alpine County's Child Abuse Prevention Council, CAPC, invites community members to attend meetings monthly on the first Wednesday each month, 1:30pm at the Health & Human Services Conference Room. For more information contact CAPC Coordinator Amy Broadhurst [abroadhurst@alpinecountycyca.gov](mailto:abroadhurst@alpinecountycyca.gov) or call 530.694.2230 ext. 224



Alpine Kids' Ministry  
Carson Valley United Methodist Church  
1375 Centerville Lane, Gardnerville, NV 89410  
• Contact Edie Veatch (775) 781-1416 •

## Alpine Kids Ministry Family Outings

**Saturday, January 20th: Ironwood Cinema 10am** Alpine Kids will purchase ticket, medium popcorn and medium soda for everyone.

**Saturday, February 10th: Chinese New Year celebration.** Potluck and games for the whole family. 2pm-6pm at Carson Valley United Methodist Church. Open to the public.

# FAQ'S ABOUT FENTANYL

## WHAT IS FENTANYL?

Fentanyl is a potent prescription synthetic opioid drug approved by the FDA for pain relief and anesthetic. Prescription opioids are powerful drugs with a high risk for dependency.

Fentanyl is 80-100 times stronger than morphine. ***A potentially lethal dose of fentanyl is the size of 2 grains of salt.***

## WHY SHOULD I CARE?

This is a national public health crisis. People, especially young people, are ingesting illegally manufactured fentanyl without knowing it and dying at alarming rates as a result.

Fentanyl is very cheap and extremely addictive. Drug dealers are dangerously mixing illegally made fentanyl with, and disguising it as, other common drugs like oxycodone, Percocet and Xanax to increase profits.

People have no way of knowing what they are getting in illegally purchased drugs, and as little as two milligrams of fentanyl (two grains of sand) can kill a person.

Fentanyl is everywhere: an estimated 250-500 million pills made with fentanyl are in circulation in the U.S. at any time. This doesn't even account for powder drugs made with fentanyl such as cocaine, MDMA (molly/ecstasy), or heroin.

Fentanyl is being integrated into almost all forms of street drugs. In some cases, dealers purposely add fentanyl to their drugs to reduce costs, enhance the effect of an existing drug, hook their customers, or all thr

## WHAT CAN I DO AS A PARENT OR CAREGIVER?

Don't avoid the topic. Educate yourself about the dangers of fentanyl, and have a conversation with the kids in your life. Youth are dying from lack of information about this.

There is a significant knowledge gap in youth about fentanyl in drugs. 35% of youth ages 13-17 say they don't know enough about fentanyl and its rate of danger, and 73% have never heard of fentanyl in counterfeit pills.

Mental health is a key factor: 86% of youth 13-17 are overwhelmed and 79% say anxiety and stress is a common reason to misuse medication. Learn how to notice symptoms and support young people struggling with mental health challenges.

Neither kids today nor their parents are aware of the growing dangers of fentanyl poisoning. Research has shown that kids who have multiple opportunities to discuss the harms of drug use with caring adults fare much better.

Even if substance use is the last thing you need to worry about with your kid or your students, perhaps their awareness could save a friend.

*If you or someone who know is struggling with addiction,  
contact Alpine County Behavioral Health Services for assistance at*

**530-694-1816**



**Alpine County Public Health is now on Facebook & Twitter**

Like us and follow us for up to date information and tips about healthy living and emergency preparedness in beautiful Alpine County!



# Staying Grounded:

## A Guide for Fall Prevention During the Winter

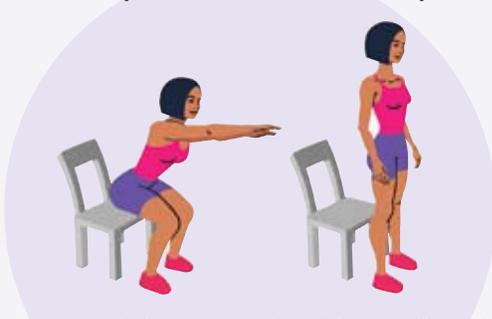
by Elyse Burandt, Doctor of Physical Therapy

Ready or not, winter has arrived! While many of us have prepared our snow tires, fueled up the snow blowers, and stocked up on firewood, we may be missing out on important preparation for another big danger: falls within the home. **Over 800,000 older adults are hospitalized each year because of a fall injury, most often because of a head injury or hip fracture. Falls account for one of the most common and serious issues contributing to an injury or disability.** In fact, more than one out of four older people falls each year. While these statistics can be alarming, the good news is that, just like the winter season, there are proactive measures you can take to safeguard yourself and loved ones against falls.

Here are three tips to stay safe in your home and reduce your risk for a fall:

- 1. Remove clutter in the home.** This tip may seem obvious; however, household items are among the biggest factors for falls at home. That stack of books cluttered at the bottom of your stairs, and yes, that old throw rug you have been meaning to donate for the last three months, are major tripping hazards.
- 2. Consult with your doctor about your medications.** Some medications can increase your risk for falls due to increased drowsiness or can even cause dizziness when you sit or stand up too quickly. Also, be aware that some medications, when combined with other medications, can impair balance or cause dizziness.
- 3. Address lower body weakness.** After age 30, you lose up to 5% of your body's muscle mass per decade of life. It is never too late to start strengthening. One of the best exercises to support safe movement is "Sit to Stands."

### How to perform a Sit to Stand Squat:



Begin by sitting upright on a chair with your feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Reach out with your arms and lean forward at your hips until your bottom starts to lift off the chair. Move your body into a standing upright position, then reverse the order of your movements to return to the starting position. Make sure not to let your knees collapse inward during the exercise. Increase the height of your chair with a pillow or use armrests for a modified exercise.

Catalyst  
community



# Parent Circle

## 2024 Schedule



Please join us for a mid-morning get together where we explore the different domains/areas of your child's development. The Circles will be interactive, allowing you to connect with your child and additional supports to complement what you're already doing at home, as your child's first teacher.

Parent Circle is an opportunity for caregivers of children ages newborn to age five. This class helps build a community of support in the journey as your child's first teacher. Every family will leave with an educational item that supports the Domain-of-the-Day!

**2024 Schedule: Fridays, 10:00 am - 11:30 am**

Catalyst Community Office 100 Foothill Rd. Suite D-6, Markleeville, CA 96120

1.12.24 Cognitive Development

4.5.24 Emotional and Social Development

2.2.24 Social and Emotional Development

5.3.24 Review of Domains of Early Childhood (and your next steps!)

3.1.24 Adaptive Development

Questions/RSVP Contact  
Donita Blam | 530.694.2129  
delam@catalystcomm.org



A Division of  
**Catalyst**  
Family Inc.  
Member Property 2024

# ALPINE COUNTY 2023 CIGARETTE BUTT AUDIT

ON OCTOBER 22ND, 2023, THE ALPINE WATERSHED GROUP CONDUCTED A CIGARETTE BUTT AUDIT DURING THEIR CREEK DAY. FOUR VOLUNTEERS CLEANED UP 64 CIGARETTE BUTTS AND ONE CIGARILLO PACKAGE ALONG HIGHWAY 89. THE ALPINE COUNTY TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM IS THANKFUL TO THE ALPINE WATERSHED GROUP AND THEIR VOLUNTEERS WHO WORK HARD TO KEEP ALPINE COUNTY BEAUTIFUL AND TOBACCO LITTER-FREE.

"CIGARETTE FILTERS ARE THE NUMBER ONE TRASH ITEM FOUND ON CALIFORNIA BEACHES AND ROADSIDE." 23% OF THE TOTAL LITTER COLLECTED IN CALIFORNIA IS CIGARETTE FILTERS. CIGARETTE FILTERS BREAK INTO TINY PARTICLES, CALLED MICROPLASTICS, THAT STAY IN THE SOIL AND WATER FOR MANY YEARS.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TOBACCO AND ITS ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS, CONTACT ALPINE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH AT 530-694-2146 OR SCAN THE QR.

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW WOULD LIKE HELP TO QUIT TOBACCO, CONTACT ALPINE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH AT 530-694-2146 OR SCAN THE QR CODE FOR CESSATION RESOURCES.

FUNDED BY PROPOSITION 56 AND PROPOSITION 89



Be Tobacco Free - Alpine County



## Alpine Threads Editorial Board

### First 5 Alpine

75 Diamond Valley Road  
PH: 530-694-2235 ext. 227  
[www.alpinecountyca.gov/523/First-5-Alpine](http://www.alpinecountyca.gov/523/First-5-Alpine)

### Alpine County Health and Human Services

75 B Diamond Valley Rd.  
PH: 530-694-2146  
FAX: 530-694-2252

### The Learning Center and Local Child Care Planning Council

100 Foothill Rd.  
PH: 530-694-1148

### Website Links

- [www.alpinecounty.com](http://www.alpinecounty.com)
- [www.spnawareness.org](http://www.spnawareness.org)
- [www.alpinewatershedgroup.org](http://www.alpinewatershedgroup.org)
- [www.alpinecountyca.gov/calendar](http://www.alpinecountyca.gov/calendar)
- [www.alpinecountyca.gov/523/First-5-Alpine](http://www.alpinecountyca.gov/523/First-5-Alpine)
- [www.alpinebiomasscommittee.wordpress.com](http://www.alpinebiomasscommittee.wordpress.com)

### ATTENTION LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS & AGENCIES

If you'd like to share your website link send it to Gina at [gina@originalmatteoni.com](mailto:gina@originalmatteoni.com) and we'll add it to our column.

*Disclaimer: This wellness-focused publication is not intended to provide timely news and/or personal, political or discriminatory statements. Alpine Threads Editorial Board reviews all content.*



## ALPINE THREADS

75 B Diamond Valley Rd.  
Markleeville, CA 96120  
Phone: (530) 694-2146

Addressing the needs of the  
Alpine County Community

## ★ ★ Healthy Eating, in a SNAP! ★ ★

# Winter Vegetables in Coconut Sauce



serves 6

## Ingredients

- 6 cups Butternut Squash peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks or 6 cups Sweet Potato peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks
- 1 bunch Collard Greens cut into postage-stamp sized pieces
- 1/2 Onion cut into 1-inch pieces
- 14 ounces Coconut Milk
- 3/4 cup Water
- 1 tablespoon Soy Sauce
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- 1 teaspoon Crushed Red Pepper Flakes (optional)

## Directions:

Rice Cooker Directions 40 minutes

Toss the squash or potatoes, greens and onions together in a rice cooker. Whisk the coconut milk, water, soy sauce, chili, and salt together in a bowl. Pour the coconut milk mixture over vegetable. Cover and cook for one cycle, or until the squash/potatoes are tender. Stir once or twice during cooking.

Slow Cooker Directions 4 hours 20 minutes

Toss the squash or potatoes, greens and onions together in a slow cooker. Whisk the coconut milk, water, soy sauce, chili, and salt together in a bowl. Pour the coconut milk mixture over vegetable. Cover and cook for four hours on LOW, or until the squash/potatoes are tender. Stir once or twice during cooking.



Connect with us!



For more recipes, borrow SNAP-Ed cookbooks from the Library and the Woodfords Indian Education Center.



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