

Decorate Cloth “Napkins” for Dine In Day

Do you have to use cloth napkins and plan a formal dinner for December 3rd Dine In day? Of course, not! Dine In Day can be as easy and informal as a mug of soup and a sandwich, as long as there’s time to sit down and enjoy time together. For busy days, paper napkins and paper towels might be more common in the kitchen but this activity can be used to encourage youth and their families to make their own plans for Dine In Day, December 3rd.

Supplies to collect, purchase or make:

This might look different depending on supplies already on hand, the amount to make, making an ask to a local funder to help defray the cost, etc.

- Cloth “napkins”:
 - This could be purchased cloth napkins, white handkerchiefs, or volunteers committed to making cloth napkins out of fabric.
 - The examples here are white, handkerchiefs. *If* there is a choice of 100% cotton verses a cotton and polyester mix, the cotton will be more wrinkled after washing.
 - Determine how many to provide for each child. One napkin for the child or enough for everyone in their household?
 - Depending on the amount of napkins needed, it would probably be easier to order online for larger amounts. If you plan to go to brick and mortar stores, you might want to order additional amounts ahead of time.
- **Stamps, paint or markers.** There are many options for decorating but this handout shows two examples
 1. Fabric markers
 2. Permanent markers and alcohol to make a pseudo “tie-dye” (read more details on page two)
- “Easel”
 - For fabric makers, **cardboard or foam pages** cut to size to use underneath one layer of the folded “napkin”. Both fabric and permanent markers will go through the one layer of handkerchief fabric. For the sake of time, you might choose to define the area to color verses letting children color the entire fabric square. This area could be identified by pre-folding the fabric and sliding the cardboard under one layer.
 - For “tie-dye” wide mouth mason jars with the ring work well. A backup plan is a disposable cup with a rubber band. See instructions on back page.
- **Information about Dine In Day** create your own flyer on local information. Ideas at go.osu.edu/fcsdinein
- **Packaging** to send home the information and napkins. We used zip top bags with a small handout.





Additional notes for tie-dye napkins:

Supplies (already listed on page one): napkins, permanent markers, rubbing alcohol, “easel” of wide-mouth mason jar and ring (preferred) or heavy plastic cup and strong rubber band (harder to work with)

Additional supplies: plastic table cover, spray bottle for rubbing alcohol, wet wipes.

Suggested instructions:

- Adult leaders can prep the napkins by stretching the cloth and tightening on the jar or cup for a flat surface to draw on.
- Tell the youth to design it however they'd like but it seems to work best with about 3 colors of marker. Make whatever design but leave a little white space between each color so it can blend.
- Depending on space, age of participants, etc. choose if the youth will spray the rubbing alcohol or if an adult volunteer does that step. No recommendation on spraying a minimal amount (not as much blending) verses a lot (it's pretty wet and more likely to make a mess)
- It doesn't take too long to dry but make sure the youth don't get the wet marker on themselves or clothes. They can carefully hold and wave it to dry or you can choose to hang them on a temporary clothesline.



Reaching youth and families at:

- County fair
- School open houses
- After-school programs
- FCS classrooms
- Partner with 4-H

Add additional ideas:

Example of plastic cup with rubber band

Additional resources to share at decorating station:

- Table setting with information about Dine In Day (go.osu.edu/fcsdinein)
- Handouts from MyPlate, Eat Together, Eat Better, and/or local information to promote signing up for Dine In Day
- Easy recipes for families to make at home

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