

The Best Father's Day Gift? Healthy Children!

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By Alex McBride

As a single father raising two daughters, it's up to me to make sure they have everything they need. The one thing I want my girls to have more than anything else in the world is good health, and the best way I can do that is by helping them eat healthfully. That's why my younger daughter and I go to Food Bank's Community CookShop program at Hour Children Food Pantry. The workshops teach us how to make healthy meals on a budget. I've learned to make dishes that are much better for my family than what I'd normally cook. Let's be honest, some of the foods many of us love--fried and fatty--just aren't good for us.

It's great to get new ideas for dishes that are good for my daughters--and that they actually like. I have to admit, I'm

finding out about different recipes that I never thought of before, like bean salad. We used different types of beans, onions, peppers and other vegetables. It tasted really good. You can get your protein and you don't even need meat!

So now I'm stocking up on beans, fresh fruits and vegetables, and lots of other good foods that will benefit my daughters. Their mother passed away at a young age. When I lost my wife, it really opened my eyes and made me determined to help our girls have long, healthy lives. I'm so glad that Community CookShop is in my neighborhood. We need it in our community. People need to know which foods are the most nutritious. They need to know how to cook them in a healthy way. This is the type of information that can help prevent us from getting diabetes and high blood pressure. As a dad, it's my job to know this so I can pass it on to my girls.

Alex McBride lives with his daughters, Christina, 15, and Katrina, 7, in Queens.