



Tips on Teaching Children to Cook

COOKING WITH CHILDREN can be very rewarding. They become better helpers in the kitchen and better eaters at the table. By teaching children to cook you are teaching a lifelong skill that will enhance their ability to make healthy eating choices.



1 If the recipe takes you 10 minutes, it will take much longer when teaching and helping children create the same dish. Keep this in mind when planning.

2 Keep children on the task at hand. Children can be easily distracted so help them by giving them pointers and praise.

3 Give an introduction on what is expected in the kitchen and what the recipe entails before starting.

4 Let children show a little creativity. They need to follow the recipe but choose recipes that allow for creativity.

5 Break the recipe into steps. If possible when making dough, prepare some extra ahead of time.

Show them how to make it from scratch, then pull out your prepared dough while the one you just made is rising.

6 Think at a child's eye level. What is the right height for table and chairs? Also, try to use kitchen utensils made smaller to more easily fit in a child's hands.

7 Keep groups small. If you have more than 6 children you may need to get an assistant to help you.

8 Provide aprons or tie clean dish towels around little waists and put long hair into a ponytail.

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DID YOU KNOW...

- **Father's Day is June 17th**
- June is National Hunger Awareness Month, consider volunteering at your local food bank. Older children are usually welcome as well.
- Research shows that the federal program SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, is highly effective at reducing food insecurity. SNAP Toll Free information number 1-800-221-5689
- June is National Dairy Month, so get a glass of milk and give a toast to all the dairy farmers in your state!
- Safety is no accident: June is National Safety Month. In 2016 the U.S. experienced 161,374 preventable deaths, 44.5 million injuries and \$967.9 billion in associated costs.
- According to new research, cooking programs and classes for children seem to positively influence children's food preferences and behaviors.

Justharvest.org, USDA, International Dairy Foods Association, National Safety Council, CBS news

Quotable Quotes

“Food is an important part of a balanced diet.”

— Fran Lebowitz

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9 Have a reachable sink or use a stool to make washing hands and dishes easy.

10 When teaching children to cook, there is a fine line between instructing and hands on learning. Make sure children understand the recipe and what they are to do but also step back and let them figure some things out themselves.

11 Part of cooking is cleaning up. Teach children to wipe up spills as they go, wash bowls, wipe counter tops and sweep the floor with a broom if needed.

12 Review kitchen safety rules before children start cooking and remind them throughout the process as needed.

13 Enjoy what you have created together as a group. Encourage children to at least try what was prepared.

14 Above all, have fun!

Start with a fun, easy recipe that is sure to please everyone, such as:

EASY MAC & CHEESE MUFFINS – allrecipes.com

1. Grease a muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a small bowl combine ½ cup seasoned bread crumbs, 2 teaspoons olive oil and ½ teaspoon salt, set aside.
3. Cook 2 cups whole wheat elbow macaroni according to package directions, drain and return to the pan.
4. Crack an egg into a small bowl and beat with a fork.
5. Stir 1 tablespoon butter and beaten egg into the macaroni until coated.
6. Stir in 1½ cups shredded mozzarella cheese, 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese and ½ cup of milk.
7. Spoon mixture into the prepared muffin tin.
8. Sprinkle the bread crumb mixture and ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese over the tops.



9. Bake for 30 minutes at 350°F. Allow muffins to cool for a few minutes before removing from pan.

Cooking with children requires patience. There will be spills and the finished product might not look appealing. Relax and realize that learning is happening! Making a mess or spilling is going to happen and if we lose patience children will be fearful of not doing it “right.” Praise children for a job well done and enjoy the prepared dish together with compliments to the chefs!

—Adapted from kids-cooking-activities.com

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

The New Nutrition Facts Labels – Everything You Need to Know

FOR THE FIRST TIME in more than 20 years, the familiar FDA-required nutrition facts are getting a major overhaul. Here's what you need to know—and why it matters.

CALORIE COUNTS ARE BIGGER AND BOLDER

The first thing most people check is about to get easier to find. This number is really important in balancing your diet, so it's getting top billing.

ADDED SUGARS MAKE THEIR DEBUT

Not all sugars are created equal. Some products have naturally occurring sugar (like lactose in yogurt), worthwhile for the food's benefits. Others have it dumped in during processing (corn syrup, cane sugar, etc.). Now you can easily look out for bucket loads of the added stuff.

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT, VITAMINS A AND C

Most Americans get enough of these two, so companies don't have to list them anymore. Though they still can if they want to. However, most people need more vitamin D for healthy bones and potassium for regulating blood pressure, so they are mandatory on the new label.



SERVING SIZES GET REAL

Raise your hand if you've ever polished off a 16-ounce bottle of pop before noticing it was actually two servings, according to the label. Now the serving size for many items, including that soda, will be much more in line with what people actually eat. (Not because the FDA wants you to eat more—they're simply trying to reflect reality.) Look for changes on, among others, cereal, bagels and (sob) ice cream.

The new labels began appearing on some products last summer. Look out for them!

— Kris Sollid, RD and Senior Director of Nutrition Communications for the International Food Information Council, rachaelraymag.com

Baked Hummus with Vegetables

Prepared hummus	16 ounces
Feta cheese, crumbled	1 1/4 cups
Kalamata olives, chopped	2/3 cup
Fresh tomato, chopped	2/3 cup
Olive oil	2 Tbsp
Vegetables for dipping:	5 cups

FRESH VEGETABLES: Red and yellow bell pepper wedges, celery sticks, cucumber rounds, baby carrots

BLANCHED VEGETABLES: Asparagus spears, broccoli, cauliflower, green beans

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Spread hummus in an 8x8 inch baking dish. Sprinkle with feta cheese.
3. Toss together tomatoes and olives and layer over the feta cheese.
4. Drizzle with olive oil. Bake until bubbly, 15–20 minutes. Serve with veggies for dipping.

Yield: 10 servings

Meets requirement for vegetable

— *Allrecipes.com*

Grilled Chicken Breasts with Honeydew Salsa

Honeydew or other melon, finely diced	2 cups
Cilantro, fresh, chopped, divided	1/2 cup
Red onion, finely diced	1/4 cup
Lime juice	2 Tbsp
Lime peel, finely grated	2 tsp
Olive oil	2 Tbsp
Serrano chile, seeded and finely chopped	1 tsp
Chicken breast halves, boneless	4
Nonstick cooking spray	
Salt and pepper	to taste

1. Combine melon, 1/4 cup cilantro, red onion, lime juice and peel, olive oil and serrano chile in a medium bowl and season with salt and pepper to taste.
2. Spray a grill with nonstick vegetable oil spray. Heat grill to medium. Season chicken with salt and pepper and grill until cooked through, about 5–10 minutes per side.
3. Slice chicken breasts, arrange on a plate and top with the melon salsa and more cilantro leaves.

Yield: 8 servings

Meets requirement for meat/meat alternate and fruit

— *Bon appetit*

ACTIVITY CORNER

Plant An Odds & Ends Garden

Children enjoy turning ordinary kitchen scraps into a windowsill garden.

Beets. Slice the top 1/2 inch from a beet, with its greens still attached. Trim the greens to 1/2 inch and place beet in a shallow dish of water. Shoots will appear in several days.

Celery. Trim a bunch of celery 2 inches above its base. Place in a shallow dish of water. Leaves will grow out of the center in a week and roots will sprout from the bottom. Peel away the rotting stalks as the plant grows.

Yam. Wash a yam well, then cut in half crosswise. Place the cut surface in shallow dish of water. Leaves will appear in two weeks.

Set plants in a warm spot with sunlight. Check the water every day and change it every 3–4 days. Use a spray bottle to mist the leaves every few days. Transfer the rooted plants to soil to encourage further growth.

— *FamilyFun.com*

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Food Funny Q. What do you call a sleeping egg?
A. Eggshhausted!