



Nutrition Edition

Your Guide to Child Health and Nutrition



Nutrition Edition
October 2020, Issue 109

CCFPRoundtable.org

Expanding Children's Learning Opportunities Through Cooking

IT IS UNQUESTIONABLE that children will spend more time at home and indoors than ever before due to this pandemic. While we all continue to adjust to this new reality, many children will experience overwhelming feelings and may need more attention. The big question adults are asking themselves is "How do I keep them busy and entertained?" The answer is literally within hands' reach: cook with them!

Cooking is an entertaining activity that involves all our senses and creates meaningful connections and bonds. When we involve children in every step of creating healthy meals, we open the door for them to learn about health, nutrition, math, reading, science, art and geography while gaining social-emotional skills.

In addition, research shows that children who participate in cooking eat less processed or fast foods, are more eager to try new foods and are more likely to enjoy cooking through their adulthood. Furthermore, some studies show that the most valuable impacts of cooking are developing a positive relationship with food and a healthier diet throughout life.



When caregivers play a role in expanding learning opportunities through cooking, everyone wins. Children are engaged and motivated and adults tap into a daily, life skill that will have a positive impact in family's lives. If you are still on the fence or have not tried it yet, these are a few simple tips to get you started:

- Always supervise children while in the kitchen; if you have a mixed age group, consider playing "cooking show" where the older children assist with the more complex tasks and younger children are the audience, cheering, voting or clapping along.
- Follow easy recipes to begin with. A snack, side dish or one simple entree is a safe place to start.

(continued on page 2)

Farmer Fran's Fun Facts



Persimmons

- Persimmons originated in China over a thousand years ago. In 1870, grafted trees were introduced to the U.S.
- There are ancient references to persimmons as "food for the gods." The persimmon is Japan's national fruit and the art of hoshigaki—hand-dried persimmons—is an integral part of traditional Japanese New Year's celebrations.
- These fruits are astringent and non-astringent. Hachiya, the astringent variety, is deep orange-red, acorn shaped and the pulp is used mostly in baking. The non-astringent Fuyu is light orange, pumpkin shaped and enjoyed raw.
- Ripe Hachiyas are very soft. Store at room temperature and use within a few days. Ripe Fuyus are firm and stay fresh up to three weeks at room temperature or longer in the refrigerator.
- Add Hachiya persimmons to recipes like muffins and breads or try in a smoothie with yogurt and ice. Offer Fuyu persimmons as a healthy snack, toss into salads or add to stir-fries.
- Persimmons are an excellent source of vitamin A and a good source of vitamin C and fiber.

INSIDE:

- Child Wellness Today
- Yoga Pose of the Month

- Recipes
- Food Funny

Expanding Children's Learning Opportunities Through Cooking

—Continued from front page

- Have all the ingredients and utensils ready on the counter; if possible, find child size and safe cooking utensils. Recipes with pictures of each step are helpful with younger children.
- Planning, organizing and cleaning should be an integral part of the cooking experience. Have aprons and dish towels available, do not forget to keep surfaces and floors clean and wash hands before, during and after!

Now that you can see how simple it is to get started, let's review some of the most valuable skills and lessons children will learn through cooking:

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- Learning about food groups and where our foods come from
- Understanding how to serve balanced meals and healthy portions for different age groups
- Making healthy choices, food substitutions and integrating fresh ingredients into every meal
- Adding healthy ingredients like oils and spices to enhance flavors and aromas
- Feeling adventurous and eager to try new foods
- Choosing healthy foods that support their developing body

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

- Listening to and following instructions, teamwork and problem-solving
- Being resourceful by utilizing what you have readily available in the pantry or fridge
- Planning ahead by making menus or shopping lists.
- Gaining confidence by learning simple recipes children can prepare on their own
- Having a sense of pride and responsibility after cooking their own foods and helping in the kitchen

LITERACY, MATH, AND ART

- Reading a recipe or drawing a picture of the finished recipe (depending on age)
- Reading labels, ingredient lists and nutrition values and percentages

- Discovering and using numbers, measurements, fractions, addition, multiplication, ratios and sequences. Ask what happens if we double or triple a recipe, how many, how much?
- Talking about or describing colors and textures (what happens when we mix different colors or textures?)
- Using all our senses to explore and enjoy foods
- Reading a story that focuses on healthy foods and eating and expanding it into a coloring or painting activity
- Using left over fruit and vegetable cuttings to create art supplies like dyes, paint and stamps

SCIENCE AND CHEMISTRY

- Making predictions and observations
- Experimenting with different temperatures: heating, freezing and melting; discovering solidification, evaporation, and condensation
- Using scales and measuring dry and liquid ingredients
- Understanding cause and effect
- Learning about expansion and shrinkage (yeast in doughs and cooking meats or vegetables)

GEOGRAPHY

- Learning about food differences and similarities in other continents, countries and cities
- Talking about cultural or family traditions related to food and cooking methods
- Exploring the world by cooking recipes from different countries

Regardless of their age, children will acquire important skills that support their learning, but moreover, they will gain invaluable lessons and a love of cooking that they can share with their families now and with children of future generations.

— *Alejandra Marín Santos*
Child Health and Nutrition Specialist

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Child Wellness Today

CHILD HEALTH DAY was first celebrated in 1928. On this first Monday in October, many health organizations and health professionals nationwide organize activities and events aimed at child wellness. Informing caregivers of the importance of prenatal and newborn care, regular doctor visits, healthy eating, physical activity as well as preventing and treating illnesses and injuries, is the goal. This year gives us an opportunity to focus on the impact the pandemic has on children's well-being.



MASKS

Masks can be scary for children because from an early age, children look at faces for signals they need to feel safe.

To help children feel more comfortable with masks:

- Explain the importance of wearing a mask and let them know it is ok if they feel scared.
- Practice wearing masks and teach them how to put it on and take it off before going out in public.
- Make it fun by having them decorate their mask if the fabric allows or getting a mask with a friendly pattern.
- Put a mask on a favorite stuffed animal or draw a mask on their favorite book character.
- Show pictures of other children wearing masks.

Children over the age of two should wear a mask:

- When social distancing (at least 6 feet away from others) cannot be maintained, including both indoor and outdoor environments.

Children should **not** wear a mask:

- If they are under the age of two, have any trouble breathing or are unable to remove the mask without assistance.

VIRTUAL LEARNING FOR CHILDREN

Desk and computer ergonomics:

- Children should be allowed to fidget and get up to move around throughout the school day.
- The seat's backrest should fully support the spine up to the area between the shoulder blades.
- For the right desk height, both feet should be flat on the

floor and when both arms are on the desk elbows should rest at an angle slightly wider than 90 degrees.

- The monitor should be close enough so that the child doesn't have to squint, lean or hunch forward to see what's on the screen.
- The keyboard should have angular adjustments and padding so that the wrists are neutrally positioned while typing.
- The mouse and keyboard should be at a height that opens up the angles of the elbow at 90 degrees or slightly more.
- A sturdy footrest may be helpful to promote positional changes to the feet while sitting and increase circulation through the legs.

Taking breaks:

- Childhood development experts agree that a reasonable attention span to expect of a child is two to five minutes per year of their age, therefore breaks need to be a planned part of a child's day.
- Include recess breaks, snack or meal breaks, physical activity breaks and short breaks to rest their eyes from the screen for a few minutes.

Physical activity:

- Exercise is an important part of staying healthy, both physically and mentally. It is recommended that children get at least one hour of physical activity each day.
- Set aside time to get children's heart rate up by playing active games in the back yard, dancing, taking a walk, running, jumping or leading a yoga session.

WELL CHILD CHECKS

Well child checks have decreased during the pandemic. It is more important than ever to keep up with routine preventative health care to keep children safe and healthy. If your child has fallen behind, in honor of Child Health Day, schedule these appointments today:

- Physical exams
- Immunizations
- Dental cleanings

— Catherine Stafford
Child Health and Nutrition Manager

Persimmon Pear Pomegranate Salad

Mixed baby greens	6 cups	Pomegranate arils	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Pear, cored, seeded & sliced.....	1	Feta, crumbled	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup
Avocado, sliced.....	1	Pecans, toasted	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Fuyu Persimmons, sliced.....	2	Balsamic Vinaigrette	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup

1. Assemble all veggies and fruits in a large bowl.
2. Dress with vinaigrette just before serving.

Yield: 8 servings

Meets requirement for vegetable

— *RainbowDelicious.com*

Healthy Persimmon Bread

Olive oil	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	Baking soda	1 tsp
Honey.....	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup	Pumpkin pie spice	$1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp
Eggs.....	2	Whole wheat flour	$1\frac{1}{4}$ cups
Hachiya persimmon, pulp.....	1 cup	Flaxseed meal	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Vanilla	1 tsp		

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 x 5 loaf pan with nonstick spray.
2. In a large bowl, mix all wet ingredients together. Slowly mix in dry ingredients.
3. Spoon into prepared pan and bake for 40–45 minutes.

Yield: 9 servings

Meets requirement for whole grain

— *Onehungrybunny.com*

Stuffed Jack O'Lantern Peppers

Cut off stem end of orange bell peppers and scoop out seeds. Reserve top. With a paring knife, cut a jack o' lantern face on one side of each pepper.



Stand the peppers cut side up in a baking dish. Fill with mixture of your choice: Spanish rice, sloppy joe mix, cooked lentils, spaghetti and sauce, cooked quinoa, black beans and salsa, vegetarian or ground beef chili, shredded taco chicken and rice with salsa. Place tops on peppers and bake at 350°F for about 20 minutes, until the filling is warmed through. Or serve the peppers raw, stuffed with tuna, egg or chicken salad.

— Adapted from *everydayjenny.com* and *eatingwell.com*

Food Q. What's a ghost's favorite fruit?
Funny A. Booberries!

ACTIVITY CORNER

Yoga Pose of the Month



BRIDGE POSE

Bend upward into a bridge to calm the brain and nervous system, leaving you feeling both energized and restored.

- 1 Begin by laying flat on your back, knees bent, feet hip-width apart and flat on the floor.
- 2 Bring your heels about a hands' length from your sitting bones.
- 3 On an exhale, press evenly into the feet and lift your hips and pelvis off the floor, pointing your tailbone toward the back of the knees, thighs parallel to the floor.
- 4 Remain in the pose 10–30 seconds breathing evenly and deeply.
- 5 On an exhale, slowly roll down, placing one vertebra on the floor at a time.

This Nutrition Edition is brought to you by:



Child Development Associates
Nutrition Program
180 Otay Lakes Road, Suite 300
Bonita, CA 91902