

Cooking with Children

About this book

Do you have a picky eater at home? This book is for you! Here are some helpful tips:

- Serve a small amount of food on a small plate (for a child who seems overwhelmed by new foods or a lot of different foods served together).
- Serve different foods in separate bowls (if a child does not like mixed foods or foods touching).
- Open a window (for a child who seems overwhelmed or distressed by food odors).
- Add texture (e.g. bread crumbs, cereal flakes) on top of wet foods (if child does not like how wet/shiny foods look).
- Try to match new food colors to a familiar/preferred food color (for a child who tends to eat only one color of food or primarily white/tan/brown foods).
- Provide child-sized utensils, other small kitchen tools (like tongs) and napkins/wet wipes (for a child who does not like to touch food or does not tolerate messy hands).

We appreciate the support from the UNM Pediatric SAFE Clinic, at the UNM Center for Development and Disability.

Safety precautions

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, we can do several things to help keep kids safe in the kitchen while cooking!

1. **Store strong cleaners, lye, furniture polish, dishwasher soap, and other dangerous products in a high cabinet, locked and out of sight.** Detergent packets or pods pose a special risk for young children, who may mistake them for candy or gummy treats; buy powdered or liquid detergent if at all possible. If you must store some items under the sink, use an automatically fastening child safety lock (most hardware, baby supply and department stores have them). Never transfer dangerous substances into containers that look as if they might hold food as this may tempt a child to taste them.
2. **Keep knives, forks, scissors, and other sharp instruments separate from "safe" kitchen utensils.** Store sharp cutting appliances such as food processors out of reach and/or in a locked cupboard. Consider keeping a toy box or drawer with safe play items in the kitchen for your child to amuse them.
3. **Unplug appliances when not in use.** Don't allow electrical cords to dangle where your child can reach and tug on them, possibly pulling a heavy appliance down on themselves.
4. **Always turn pot handles toward the back of the stove** so your child can't reach up and grab them. Whenever you have to walk with hot liquid—coffee, soup, a pot of boiling water—be sure you know where your child is, so you don't trip over them. Do not try to carry your child at the same time.
5. **When shopping for an oven, choose one that is well-insulated** to protect your child from the heat if they touch the oven door. Never leave the oven door open.
6. **If you have a gas stove, turn the dials firmly to the off position.** If they're easy to remove, do so when you aren't cooking so that your child can't turn the stove on. If they cannot be removed easily, use child-resistant knob covers and block access to the stove as much as possible.
7. **Keep matches out of reach** and out of sight. If using them to light birthday candles, for example, put them right back away.
8. **If the microwave is within your child's reach, stay nearby when it is on** and never allow your child to open the microwave or remove food or liquids that have finished heating. Also, don't warm baby bottles in a microwave oven. The liquid heats unevenly, and there may be pockets of milk hot enough to scald your baby. Overheated baby bottles have also exploded when they were removed from the microwave.
9. **Keep a fire extinguisher in your kitchen,** and on every floor of your home, in a place you will remember.
10. **Do not use small refrigerator magnets** that your baby could choke on or swallow.

Easy Mexican Rice



Ingredients

- 1 cup long grain rice (or 4, ¼ cups if easier for the child)
- 1 tablespoonful (Tbsp) cooking oil
- 1 teaspoonful (tsp) salt
- 1 teaspoonful (tsp) chili powder
- 1 tablespoonful (Tbsp) oregano
- 3 cups water

Instructions

1. Sauté rice, oil, salt, oregano and chili powder
 2. Add 3 cups water
 3. Bring to boil
 4. Reduce heat
 5. Cook until rice is tender
 6. Eat it with a spoon or fork
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Guaky Guacamole

Ingredients

- 1 large ripe avocado
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 1/4 roma tomatoes seeded and diced
- 1/4 teaspoonful (tsp) salt
- 1/4 teaspoonful (tsp) freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 teaspoonful (tsp) garlic powder

Instructions

1. Cut avocado in half
2. Remove pit and scoop into a bowl
3. With a fork, mash avocado
4. Add lime juice, tomatoes, salt, pepper, garlic
5. Stir to combine
6. Enjoy and serve with tortilla chips





Toast with Jolly Jelly

Ingredients

- 1 slice of white, whole grain bread (or your preferred bread)
- 1 tablespoonful (Tbsp) of your preferred jelly

Instructions

1. Toast the bread slice (light or medium, as preferred, in regular toaster or toaster oven)
 2. Place the toast in a dish. Be careful, it will be hot!
 3. Cut it in half
 4. Apply your preferred jelly
 5. Enjoy with small bites
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Super Cheese Toast

- 1 slice of white, whole grain bread (or your preferred bread)
 - 1 cheese slice
 - 1 teaspoonful (tsp) of butter
1. Apply the butter to one side of the bread slice
 2. Place the bread with butter in a pan and toast on low heat until golden
 3. Add the cheese slice on top of the bread slice, and press gently with a cooking spatula
 4. Remove it and place it on a dish. Be careful, it will be hot!
 5. Cut in 4 pieces
 6. Enjoy

Delicious Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich



- 2 slices of your favorite bread
 - ½ tablespoonful (Tbsp) of your favorite jelly
 - 1 tablespoonful (Tbsp) peanut butter
1. Apply peanut butter to one slice of bread
 2. Apply jelly to the other slice of bread
 3. Put the bread slices together
 4. Cut into 2 or 4 pieces
 5. Enjoy



Tasty M&Ms Cereal

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of your favorite cereal
- 10 M&Ms (can be substituted with sprinkles)

1. Place cereal in your favorite bowl
 2. Add M&Ms
 3. Mixed with a spoon
 4. Enjoy
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Yummy Salad



Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{4}$ tomato
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cucumber
- 1 teaspoonful (tsp) lime or lemon juice
- 1 teaspoonful (tsp) olive oil (or your favorite oil for salads)

Instructions

1. Cut the tomato into small pieces
 2. Cut the cucumber into slices or small pieces
 3. Add the lime or lemon juice, and the olive oil
 4. Enjoy
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Best Hot Chocolate Ever

Ingredients

- 1 cup milk
- 4 tablespoonful (Tbsp) of hot cocoa mix (or 2 Tbsp if using powder milk for a creamier texture)
- 2 tablespoonful (Tbsp) of powder milk (optional)
- 3 small marshmallow

Instructions

1. Add the hot cocoa mix to the warm milk and stir with a spoon until the chocolate is well dissolved. Add the powder milk for a creamier texture.
2. Add the marshmallows
3. Enjoy





Super Delicious Smoothie

Ingredients

- 1 cup of milk (can be non-dairy)
- ½ cup spinach (can use roasted sweet potatoes, roasted butternut squash, or 2 Tsp of avocado)
- 1 small banana
- Optional:
 - 1 teaspoonful (tsp) of vanilla extract

Instructions

1. Add ingredients to a blender
2. Add until very smooth. Add more liquid if necessary
3. Put in your favorite cup
4. Enjoy!



Muffins and Veggies: “Muffingies”!

Ingredients

- 1 cup finely chopped broccoli (no stems) or 1 cup of grated carrot. You can also use ½ cup of chopped broccoli and ½ cup of grated carrot).
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 package of cornmeal mix or vegetarian cornmeal mix (or 1 cup of cornmeal from scratch. In this case, you can add 1 teaspoonful (tsp) of sugar, if preferred).
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cups milk or water
- Optional: You can add 1 tablespoon oil, melted butter, or ⅓ cup plain Greek yogurt

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F
2. Grease a muffin tin with non stick spray or a little bit of cooking oil
3. Place ingredients in a medium bowl and stir
4. Fill each muffin tin about ¾ full
5. Bake for about 18- 20 minutes until golden brown
6. Careful, it will be hot!
7. Enjoy

Easy Spaghetti with Veggies

Ingredients

- 1 cup of your favorite short shape pasta or 2 ⅝ inches circumference of the long ones
- ½ cup of squash (you can add one or more veggies, like zucchini, carrots, peas, cauliflower, corn)
- 2 tablespoonful (Tbsp) olive oil
- 2 tablespoonful (Tbsp) parmesan or grated cheddar cheese
- ½ tablespoonful (Tbsp) garlic powder

Optional:

- 1 cup of tomato sauce (pasta sauce)

Instructions

1. Fill a large stockpot $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water. Bring to a boil.
2. Add pasta and cook according to package directions
3. When two minutes left on the timer, add vegetables (one or more) into the pasta and water.
4. Drain the pasta and vegetables
5. Stir together the olive oil and garlic, and add it to the pasta and vegetables. Optional, add it to the tomato or pasta sauce, and then to the pasta and vegetables.
6. Add cheese
7. Enjoy



Ice Lollies: Popsicles with Fruits and Vegetables



Option #1

- 1 cup of chopped fresh spinach
- 1 banana
- 1 Green apple diced
- Juice from a lime
- 1 cup of apple juice

Option #2

- 1 cup of apple juice or orange juice
- 1 small banana (or 1 mango diced)
- 1 cup of shredded carrots
- 1 orange, peeled

Instructions

1. Place the ingredients in a blender
2. Blend until smooth
3. Fill popsicle molds and freeze
4. Enjoy



Ground beef or chicken empanadas

Ingredients

- 1 Ready to Bake pie crust (or a pie crust made from scratch)
- 1 cup of cooked ground beef or shredded chicken
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water
- 1 egg (beat with a fork or a whisk)
- 1 small plastic cup
- 1 fork
- 1 basting brush
- 1 baking tray

Instructions

1. Let the pie crust out of the refrigerator (as directed in the package)
2. Set the oven to 410 degrees F (or as directed in the package)
3. Stretch the pie crust with a rolling pin
4. Use the plastic cup to cut the pie crust in discs
5. Place one tablespoon of the meat in the center of the pie disc
6. Apply a small amount of water (with your fingertip) to the corner of the disc
7. Fold the disc in half, with the meat inside
8. Close the borders of the disc using a fork to make an empanada
9. Place the empanadas in a baking tray
10. Apply a thin layer of egg to the the empanadas (to the side up)
11. Bake until golden brown
12. Enjoy



Tuna Quesadilla

- 2 soft flour tortillas
- 5 ounces (oz) can of tuna in water (drained) (or 5 oz of your favorite fish, cooked)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoonful (tsp) olive oil
- 1 cooking spatula
- Optional:
 - 2 green onions
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ small yellow or orange bell pepper, deseeded and cut into small pieces)



1. Brush a large frying pan with olive oil
2. Place one flour tortilla
3. Spoon the tuna over the top leaving about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch border around
4. Sprinkle the shredded cheese on top
5. Optional: add the green onions and bell pepper
6. Place the second tortilla on top
7. Press firmly
8. Cook the quesadilla over medium heat for about two minutes, pressing down with a spatula to make sure the cheese melts
9. Turn the quesadilla over. You can slide it onto a large plate, put another plate on top and turn the plates over, gently.
10. Put the quesadilla back in the pan and cook the other side for two minutes
11. Remove the quesadilla from the pan
12. Cut it into wedges
13. Careful, it is hot!
14. Enjoy

Future readings

For those navigating the intricate terrain of feeding difficulties, there is a collection of books that aims to provide further resources and information. These books are meant to complement professional guidance and support.

You can find these titles, and many more, at the Center for Development and Disability Library at 2300 Menaul Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Call 505-272-0281 or email HSC-infonet@salud.unm.edu for more information

