



Early Learning Practitioners Resource





Literacy, Education, Activity and Play

LEAP BC™ is an initiative of 2010 Legacies Now,
in partnership with the Province of British Columbia and
the University of Victoria

Food Flair was developed by the B.C. Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport
in partnership with 2010 Legacies Now

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"Children learn about food and eating from the examples of the adults and other children around them. Food Flair offers suggestions for early learning practitioners as they create an environment in which young children enjoy eating healthy foods and learn to make healthy choices. The aim of the LEAP BC program is to give young children a strong start in healthy living and learning, and this resource will help us do that. Ensuring young children have a healthy start is an important step as we work towards the goal of making B.C. the North American leader in healthy living and physical fitness."

*Hon. Gordon Campbell,
Premier of British Columbia*

"Through programs like LEAP BC, 2010 Legacies Now promotes lifelong learning, physical activity and healthy living. Food Flair, a LEAP BC resource for early learning practitioners, will help build relationships between families and childcare providers, and help young children develop positive eating patterns that will lead to healthy choices throughout their lives."

*Bruce Dewar,
CEO, 2010 Legacies Now*

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Introduction

Healthy and enjoyable eating experiences are important for all aspects of growth in young children. During their early years, children develop preferences and eating patterns that may continue throughout their lives. Positive experiences with food are important for both early child development and good lifelong eating habits.

Food Flair, a LEAP BC™ early learning practitioners' resource, contains many ideas to help early childhood specialists and caregivers create an environment that supports healthy eating for young children. It emphasizes the importance of combining healthy eating with opportunities for physical activity, literacy and play. The activities described in this resource are meant to be playful, hands-on and fun for all.

HOW FOOD FLAIR WAS DEVELOPED

Food Flair is part of the LEAP BC family of resources that support young children's development in early literacy, physical activity, healthy eating and play. Formerly called Food Flair for Child Care, this resource was developed by the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport in partnership with 2010 Legacies Now. It has been revised after talking with childcare providers, parents and professionals in nutrition, physical activity and early childhood education. LEAP BC is a 2010 Legacies Now program offering resources and training to support early learning specialists and caregivers as they actively participate in children's early learning and development.

HOW FOOD FLAIR IS ORGANIZED

Each section of Food Flair addresses a different element of a sound nutrition program for young children:

- ❖ Communicating with families
- ❖ Healthy food and beverages
- ❖ Food safety
- ❖ Social aspects of food
- ❖ Fun and learning about healthy eating
- ❖ Bundles of fun



- ❖ Let's make
- ❖ Resources

Within each section, information is presented in point-by-point form under colour-coded headings. "Quick Tips" boxes make it easy to find the most important points.

QUICK TIP

Some children have taste buds that make it harder for them to like certain flavours and textures.

QUICK TIP

Foam plates and cups are a choking hazard since children might bite off pieces.

Some single and back-to-back pages marked "INFORMATION SHEETS" have been formatted for copying and distributing to families and caregivers.

food
flair

Healthy eating

Healthy eating means providing nutritious foods in a relaxed and social environment.

- ❖ **Plan and provide a variety of healthy foods.** Offer colourful vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives from Canada's Food Guide.
- ❖ **Offer new foods often.** It may take 15 to 20 tries before a child accepts a new food. Allow a child to taste a new food with no pressure to eat any number of bites.
- ❖ **Offer meals and snacks at the same times each day.** Children need the routine of regular eating. Children will eat better if they do not nibble on food or drink beverages other than water between meal and snack times.
- ❖ **Make time to eat together. Be good company.** Take the time to sit down to model healthy eating and talking with children. Enjoy relaxed and social eating with no toys, TV or phone calls.
- ❖ **Help children build healthy eating habits.** Help infants and toddlers to progress from foods that are smooth to foods that are more difficult to chew. Use child-sized plates, bowls, spoons and forks and child-friendly dishes to help children learn to serve themselves.
- ❖ **Let a child's hunger and fullness cues guide you.** Appetites vary from day to day so offer small amounts and allow children to ask for more. Try not to play games or force children to eat.
- ❖ **Involve children in cooking and gardening.** Children who help to choose, prepare and grow food are more likely to eat well. Books, rhymes, songs and play activities can increase children's awareness of food and interest in healthy eating.

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INFORMATION SHEET



Practical checklists and worksheets are integrated throughout the resource, and are cross-referenced with page numbers whenever the information applies to more than one section.

Menu planner

Week: _____

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
| Morning snack Serve at least 2 food groups | | | | | |
| Lunch Serve 3-4 food groups | | | | | |
| Afternoon snack Serve at least 2 food groups | | | | | |

"Try This" boxes provide quick suggestions for getting the most from an activity or food experience.

TRY THIS

Make a chart showing the crunch range for different vegetables or fruit from quietest to loudest.

TRY THIS

"Why do you think they call this food ____?" (e.g. spaghetti squash, acorn squash, etc.).

SECTION-BY-SECTION OVERVIEW

Communicating with families

Sharing information is a key to involving children and their families in a sound nutrition program. Building relationships with families and caregivers around food is a two-way learning process. The sharing of different food preferences, eating rituals and other cultural practices is part of supporting families and children in your community.

This section contains ideas for both teaching and learning from families, including ways to build relationships and ideas for involving community members in sharing information.



Healthy food and beverages

Children learn their eating habits by watching and copying the adults and children around them. Adults can shape children's food preferences by providing healthy choices for both meals and snacks.

This section discusses things to consider in breastfeeding, choosing healthy meals and snacks, and many other aspects of planning for overall health and nutrition. See the table of contents for the range of topics included here.

Food safety

This section presents practical guidelines and suggestions for dealing with safety issues such as keeping food safe, hand washing, allergy awareness and choking.

Social aspects of food

Learning to eat well involves more than just choosing what to eat. A relaxed and social eating environment is an important feature of family life and a well-rounded childcare program. By making time to talk while cooking and eating, and by modeling good eating habits, adults teach children the benefits of both healthy eating and social interaction.

This section outlines a variety of ways that families and caregivers can serve as models for children, including suggestions on how to talk with children at the table, and what to avoid.

Fun and learning about healthy eating

Children may learn to try new foods because other people are eating them, especially if the experience is enjoyable. Caregivers can encourage them to try new tastes and textures through fun activities and special events, and by featuring foods as a highlight of the day.

This section introduces a wide range of ways to feature foods and eating in many different settings such as play centres, circle times, games and cooking experiences. It provides criteria for good activities involving foods, practical guidelines for including children in food preparation, and a list of children's books that introduce new foods and ideas about eating.

Bundles of fun

Having fun is an important component of meaningful learning. Furthermore, when enjoyable experiences are connected with one another, children are more likely to absorb the learning than if each activity is treated separately.

This section suggests many ways to have fun with nutrition through integrating poetry, songs, games and hands-on activities within themes such as "Going on a Picnic" and "The Five Senses." Each theme incorporates a wealth of ideas for including background



information, poems, songs, books, activities, and things to make that relate to food awareness or healthy eating.

Let's make

Young children learn best through active, hands-on experiences that are both fun and educational. In an early learning setting, cooking, baking and preparing foods together provide opportunities to learn the pleasures of making healthy dishes that can be shared at home.

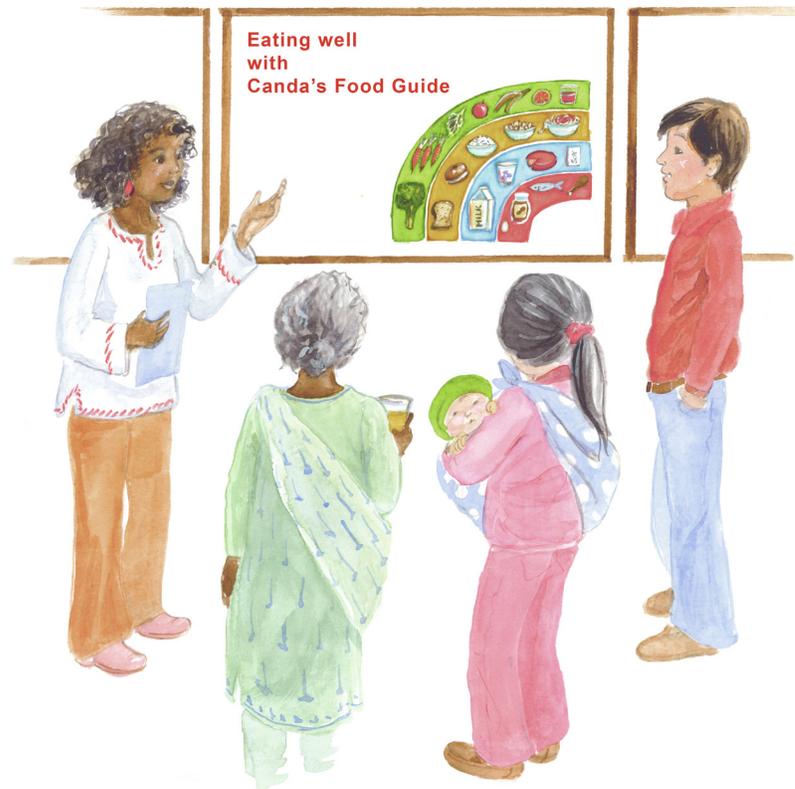
This section offers a selection of recipes for preparing foods that are healthy, easy to make, and appealing to both children and adults. Recipes are organized into sub-sections featuring fruit, salad and vegetables, grains and baking, and main dishes. Each recipe is presented in an easy-to-follow format for sharing with caregivers and families. Recipes are formatted on individual pages for copying and sending home with children.

Resources

This section lists resources that promote healthy eating for young children, including organizations, books, and Internet websites. Each resource is briefly described, with information on how to obtain it.



Communicating with families



Sharing information back and forth with families may be the most important part of your nutrition program.

Planning with families

Involve families in planning the menus, food and nutrition policies and other aspects of healthy eating, including field trips. This helps them understand their responsibilities and provides opportunities for nutrition education.

- ➔ Food and nutrition checklist (p.28)
- ➔ Steps in menu planning (p.31)



Encourage families to comment on, and ask questions about, nutrition programs and their children's eating. If families provide food, encourage them to send nutritious meals and snacks. For special occasions, invite families to share their favourite healthy recipes.

Learning with families

Every family has its own customs and culture. Family foods reflect their culture. Learn about the foods they enjoy and their eating customs. Talk with families about their child's eating habits.

- ➔ Food for special days (p.75)
- ➔ Eating around the world (p.120)

Teaching with families

Outline strategies or ways to help children develop healthy lifelong eating habits.

Families are a child's first and most important teacher. Honour this role, and respect and support them by:

Building relationships with families

- ❖ Families trust you with the children. One of the best ways to build mutual trust and respect is by talking regularly with families.
- ❖ Find out from families the best time to talk with them.
- ❖ Refer families to practical sources of information in their first language. The BC HealthFiles (available at www.bchealthguide.org) are easy-to-understand fact sheets about health and safety issues; many are available in Chinese, Punjabi, French and Spanish.

Creating opportunities for sharing information

- ❖ Create healthy eating experiences that children will want to share with their families. Send home names of books to borrow from the library and read together, as well as recipes for foods children have made and Food Flair information sheets.
- ❖ Post information on the bulletin board—such as healthy eating key ideas, your nutrition policy, menus and recipes. Give each family a copy of the things you post.
- ❖ Share or post pictures of their children doing different food-related activities such as preparing snacks, growing vegetables, eating together and playing grocery store or restaurant.



- ❖ Invite families to come and see what their children do. Organize a picnic or morning/afternoon tea that brings people together. This is a good time to model healthy food and beverage choices.
- ❖ Add Food Flair information to centre newsletters.

Addressing food issues

- ❖ When a food issue arises, make an appointment to talk about it.
- ❖ After a short time, follow-up to see whether the information you shared has been useful.
- ❖ Be sensitive to differences in language, culture or income among families.

Ten ways to be involved in healthy eating activities

1. Share family traditions around food. Check the calendar of events and festivals (p.76) for theme ideas—and include activities such as learning a dance or game, playing music, reading a book or telling stories.
2. Help develop or update food and nutrition policies and menus.
3. Take turns cooking lunch or eating with children at meal tables.
4. Offer families recipes for healthy choices their children love.
5. Plan field trips to places where healthy food is grown or sold.
6. Work with groups of children on cooking projects. Show them how to make healthy foods from their culture.
7. Collect appropriate food packages and other props to be used in role-playing activities.
8. Talk in circle time about family foods. Show families' unique foods (such as vegetables or fruit, dried beans or grains), special cooking equipment, dishes, utensils or table coverings.
9. Share family recipes for meals and snacks and make a cookbook.



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- ❖ **Involve children in cooking and gardening.** Children who help to choose, prepare and grow food are more likely to eat well. Books, rhymes, songs and play activities can increase children's awareness of food and interest in healthy eating.



Healthy food and beverages

Supporting breastfeeding

Breast milk is ideal for babies and toddlers up to two years of age or more. Breastfeeding can provide comfort and stability during the transition to childcare.

How can we support breastfeeding?

- ❖ Offer mom a comfortable chair in a cozy place for breastfeeding.
- ❖ Encourage families to continue breastfeeding their toddlers.

When feeding baby from a bottle:

- ❖ Feed baby when he is hungry—signs include bringing his hands to his mouth, sucking, rooting (turning his head toward you with his mouth open), irritability and crying.
- ❖ Hold baby while feeding her. This gives her the warm, comforting relationship so important for her well-being.
- ❖ Stop feeding when baby shows signs of fullness—he closes his mouth or turns away from the bottle, pushes away from the bottle or you, or seems very relaxed. Don't be too concerned about amounts and don't coax baby to finish the bottle if he's not interested.

Planning healthy meals and snacks

Use Canada's Food Guide to plan healthy choices that are tasty and appealing. Foods served every day, as well as for birthdays, celebrations and holidays, can be healthy and fun. With careful planning, children will get all the energy and nutrients they need.

Quick meal and snack ideas

- ❖ Make a "dip-it" lunch using dips such as hummus, bean dip, cottage cheese or peanut and nut butters with a variety of cut-up vegetables, fruit, tortilla triangles, bagel rounds or bread strips.

QUICK TIP

Families and caregivers are responsible for providing food and how it is presented. Children are responsible for whether to eat and how much.



- ❖ Make wraps filled with scrambled eggs, cheese and broccoli, peanut butter and bananas, tuna salad and cucumbers, or shredded chicken and coleslaw.
- ❖ Bake small potatoes and let children choose fillings, such as broccoli, cheese, ham, spinach, salsa, or chili.
- ❖ Serve breakfast foods such as eggs, French toast or pancakes for lunch.

Ensuring menus meet children's food needs

- ❖ Use Canada's Food Guide to plan your menu:
 - ◆ Offer foods from at least two food groups for each snack.
 - ◆ Offer foods from three or four food groups at each meal.
 - ◆ Offer healthy choices from Canada's Food Guide most of the time.
- ❖ Limit foods and beverages high in calories, fat, sugar or salt (sodium). Limit these choices: cakes and pastries, chocolate and candies, cookies and granola bars, doughnuts and muffins, ice cream and frozen desserts, French fries, potato chips, nachos and other salty snacks, fruit flavoured drinks, soft drinks and sweetened hot or cold drinks.

QUICK TIP

Food Guide servings may be larger than a young child can eat at one time. Children between two and eight years of age need one Food Guide serving per day from the meat and alternatives category.

For a preschooler this could be:

one hard-cooked egg ($\frac{1}{2}$ Food Guide serving)

+

60 mL ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) fish, poultry or lean meat ($\frac{1}{2}$ Food Guide serving)

= 1 Food Guide serving from the meat and alternatives category

Featuring vegetables and fruit

Vegetables and fruit provide the vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that help keep us healthy. Many toddlers and preschoolers do not eat enough vegetables and fruit. Choose local and seasonal foods when possible.

- ➔ Seasonally available B.C. vegetables and fruit (pp.44-45)

QUICK TIP

Have extra food available in case children arrive hungry, come without food or stay longer than planned.



Young children should have vegetables and fruit more often than juice. Juice contains vitamins and minerals, but not the fibre found in fruit or vegetables. If you choose to serve juice, limit servings to $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (125-175 mL) each day. Offer only pasteurized, 100 per cent vegetable or fruit juice.

QUICK TIP

Help children learn about healthy foods through books, songs and play as well as preparing and tasting foods and growing vegetables.

For more ways to eat vegetables and fruit visit the ActNow BC website at www.actnowbc.ca.

Vegetable and fruit ideas

- ❖ Offer raw vegetables to dip into salad dressing or a dip made with plain yogurt.
- ❖ Serve broccoli, carrot, squash, vegetable or minestrone soup.
- ❖ Grate carrots, beets or zucchini to add to salads, pasta sauce, pita, wraps, muffins or sandwiches.
- ❖ Add frozen green peas or sliced baby carrots to chicken noodle soup.
- ❖ Cut up melon cubes or cut up grapes for a snack.
- ❖ Add berries or cut-up fruit to cereal or yogurt.
- ❖ Use frozen berries, ripe bananas or canned peaches in smoothies.
- ❖ Help families explore options in your community to have fresh produce at a lower cost, such as a Good Food Box or Harvest Box.

Offering whole grain products

Whole grain products are naturally high in fibre, minerals and antioxidants that protect our health. Many young children do not eat enough whole grain foods. Choose whole grain breads, cereals, crackers and pastas by reading the ingredient list on the food label. Whole grain foods will have the words "whole" or "whole grain" followed by the name of the grain as one of the first ingredients.

QUICK TIP

Foods labeled with the words bran, cracked wheat, multi-grain, 100% wheat, seven-grain or stone-ground may not be whole grain products. Check the ingredient list.

The beginning of the list could say "whole grain wheat" or "whole grain oats."

Whole grain product ideas

- ❖ Bake bread, bannock, pizza, muffins or scones with whole wheat flour. In most recipes, you can replace half of the white flour with whole wheat flour.
- ❖ Use 100 per cent whole grain pita bread to dip in hummus or vegetable dips.



- ❖ Offer whole grain cereals such as oatmeal, shredded wheat, bran flakes or toasted oat rings.
- ❖ Serve whole grain pasta, whole grain couscous, brown rice, pot barley in soups and bulgur in tabouli salad.
- ❖ Offer crackers or crisp-breads with a whole grain as the first ingredient.

Including milk each day

Children need milk and alternatives for calcium and other nutrients. Children over 12 months need 500 mL (2 cups) every 24 hours to meet their need for vitamin D unless they are receiving vitamin D drops while breastfeeding or formula feeding.

Including iron-rich foods each day

Many infants and toddlers are at risk for iron-deficiency anemia. Iron is especially important for growth and brain development. To get enough iron, children need one Food Guide serving of meat and alternatives plus a variety of vegetables and fruit, as well as whole grain and enriched grain products each day.

Iron-rich foods children enjoy

- ❖ Hamburgers made with lean beef
- ❖ Meatball sandwiches
- ❖ Mild chili with beef
- ❖ Boiled eggs
- ❖ Burritos (refried beans, cheese and tomatoes wrapped in a whole grain flour tortilla)
- ❖ Whole grain cereals with less than 8 g of sugar per serving
- ❖ Chopped, dried apricots or raisins served in cereal or as a cookie ingredient
- ❖ Gingerbread cookies made with blackstrap molasses
- ❖ Split pea soup with whole grain crackers
- ❖ Whole grain or enriched bread with smooth peanut butter or chickpea butter and jelly



Choosing healthy oils and fats

Young children need fat for their brains, bones and bodies to grow. For young children, nutritious foods that contain fat should not be restricted. Healthy foods that are naturally high in fat include:

- ❖ Avocado
- ❖ Salmon
- ❖ Finely-chopped, unsalted nuts and seeds
- ❖ Peanut or nut butters

Use small amounts of vegetable oils in salad dressings, mayonnaise, baking and cooking. Choose canola, olive, and soybean oils or non-hydrogenated margarine made from these oils.

Look at the Nutrition Facts table on packaged foods to choose products with less saturated and trans fat. Eating too much of these fats increases the chance of heart disease later in life.

Follow these tips to limit saturated fat:

- ❖ Use less butter, hard margarine, lard, cream and cream cheese.
- ❖ Limit foods high in saturated fat such as fatty meats, bacon, sausage and high-fat wieners, deli or processed meats.

Follow these tips to limit trans fat:

- ❖ Read food labels and avoid food products that contain hydrogenated oil, partially hydrogenated oil, margarine or shortening.
- ❖ Buy margarine with the word "non-hydrogenated" on the label.
- ❖ Choose only trans-fat-free packaged foods. Check the Nutrition Facts table before selecting frozen dinners, pizza, muffins, pancake and cake mixes, pastries, pie crusts, cookies, crackers, chips, crisps and microwave popcorn.
- ❖ Use oil or non-hydrogenated margarine to cook or bake rather than vegetable shortening.
- ❖ Avoid deep fried and battered foods, such as French fries, breaded chicken, fish or vegetables.



Promoting dental health

What children eat and how often they eat affects their dental health. Sugars and starches feed the bacteria in the mouth that produce an acid that breaks down the tooth enamel, causing cavities.

Sources of these sugars and starches include:

- ❖ Soft drinks (pop), milk, juice and other sweet drinks
- ❖ Sticky foods such as dried fruit (fruit roll-ups and raisins) and candy
- ❖ Sweet foods such as cookies, granola bars, chocolate, cake, pastries, doughnuts, muffins and sweetened gum
- ❖ Starchy foods, such as crackers, cereal and chips, that stick to the teeth

QUICK TIP

Do not give children candy or sweet foods as a reward for good behaviour.

For further information about preschoolers' dental health, contact the dental staff at your local health authority or search BC HealthFiles on the Internet.

Infant dental care:

www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile19a.stm

Dental care for toddlers:

www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile19b.stm

Tooth friendly suggestions

- ❖ Offer healthy snacks one to two hours before a meal. Do not let children nibble on food throughout the day.
- ❖ Serve milk or water to drink with meals and snacks. If children are thirsty at other times, offer water.
- ❖ Offer sticky/sweet foods only at a meal and brush your child's teeth right away.



Ensuring menus reflect a variety of foods & cultures

Choose a variety of ingredients, combinations and cooking methods. Vary your food choices day to day and week to week.

Introduce children to a world of healthy foods. Prepare foods that children regularly eat at home. When your menu reflects the backgrounds of all the children, each child will be able to say, "My family makes this."

Encourage families to share food experiences from their own ethnic or cultural background. Combine food preparation with other activities, such as reading books and dancing, to help children learn about cultures different from their own. Learning to value foods prepared by other ethnic and cultural groups can add to the interest children already have in food and eating. Families are usually pleased to be asked to share food and recipes, as well as food practices associated with religious traditions and holidays.

Adapting menus for children with special needs

Adapt menus to meet the nutrition and feeding requirements of children with special needs. Include children with special dietary needs as fully as possible in all mealtime activities.

Have plans for handling special dietary needs such as food restrictions and allergies. Communicate these plans to all care providers and volunteers.

➔ Food allergies (p.50)

For help understanding children's special nutrition needs, call Dial-a-Dietitian in Greater Vancouver at 604-732-9191 or 1-800-667-3438 toll free in B.C.

QUICK TIP

CREATING A FEEDING PLAN FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NUTRITION NEEDS:

- ✧ Identify food restrictions.
- ✧ Describe necessary changes to food texture.
- ✧ Identify goals for eating and self-feeding.
- ✧ Describe special feeding equipment or routines to use.

QUICK TIP

Talk with children to explain why some children need different foods and beverages.



Food and nutrition checklist

This checklist can help you develop a written food and nutrition philosophy, policy or guide to help you handle food and nutrition issues.

Involve all the members of your child care community when you develop or update your food and nutrition guidelines. Use the checklists below to see how well you are doing and to identify food and nutrition topics that need attention.

When food is served at the centre:

COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES

Goal: To build relationships with families and promote healthy eating.

- Care providers learn about the food customs of children's families.
- Families of children on special diets provide details of special food needs.
- Care providers talk with families about their child's eating skills and when their child is not eating well.
- Care providers make resources about healthy eating available to families.
- Recipes for food served are available to families.
- Menus are posted.
- Families are given a copy of the most recent food and nutrition policy.

HEALTHY FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Goal: To plan and provide appealing, tasty and nutritious meals and snacks.

- Support breastfeeding mothers and breast milk feeding.
- Plan menus to meet children's food needs, with a variety of food offered from day to day.
- Provide tasty and healthy choices for meals, snacks, learning activities and special occasions.
- Offer familiar and popular foods along with unfamiliar foods.
- Make extra food available for children who are hungry when they arrive, forget their snack or lunch, or stay longer than eight hours.
- Offer cold water as the primary drink - available at all times.
- If you choose to offer juice, serve 100% fruit juice (125 to 175 mL) no more than once a day.



SAFE FOOD AND EATING

Goal: To provide food that has been stored, prepared and served safely to prevent food-related illness, accidents, or harm.

- Document correct storing/thawing/warming procedures for expressed breast milk and formula.
- Prevent accidental exposure to foods that trigger food allergies. Families may choose to provide all meals and snacks for children with severe food allergies, in order to limit the risk of exposure to a food allergen.
- Care providers know how to recognize and treat severe allergic reactions.
- Children and adults wash their hands before handling or eating food.
- Ready-to-eat food is not served with bare hands. Gloves or tongs are used.
- Work surfaces, equipment, utensils and food storage areas are clean.
- Separate cutting boards are used for raw and cooked meat and chicken. Utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods.
- Foods are cooked thoroughly and tested with thermometers.
- Perishable food, prepared food and leftovers are refrigerated or frozen within two hours. Food is stored at safe temperatures.
- Unrefrigerated foods are stored in clean, covered, insect- and rodent-proof containers made of glass, metal or hard plastic. Containers are kept on shelves at least 15 cm (6 inches) off the floor.
- Children are taught how to pass foods safely at the table.
- Care providers monitor activities to prevent contamination of food and utensils.
- Care providers know how to prevent and manage choking.
- Food that was served at the table and not eaten is thrown away.
- Leftovers that were not served at the table are refrigerated in small, covered containers with the date, and used within 24 hours.
- Choose reusable items over disposable items as well as minimal packaging whenever possible.
- Set up recycling and composting that children can use.



SOCIAL ASPECTS OF FOOD

Goal: To provide pleasant and social eating experiences.

- Eating routines are established.
- Before-eating activities help to calm and quiet the children.
- Distractions are removed while children are eating.
- Children use child-sized furniture with appropriate utensils for eating and serving.
- Care providers sit with the children and share the same food as often as possible.
- When possible children serve themselves and decide how much they will eat.
- People talk and smile at mealtimes. Adults talk about daily events and positive food experiences.
- Food is not used to reward, punish or pacify children.
- Special occasions are celebrated with culturally appropriate foods or no food at all.
- Families are invited to at least one food occasion each year.

LEARNING ABOUT FOOD

Goal: To make healthy eating activities part of everyday learning.

- Children learn that eating is an important activity.
- Children know they can choose whether or not to eat and how much.
- Children are encouraged to eat and try new foods. Children are not pressured to eat certain foods or certain amounts of food.
- Learning activities help children accept and enjoy new foods.
- Recipes and food awareness activities are chosen from a variety of cultures.
- Children are active participants in food preparation and food-related activities.
- Foods that children are eating are discussed with them in positive ways.

When food is brought from home:

The same points apply, with these additions:

- ❖ Provide families with a list of healthy food and beverages and encourage them to send only healthy choices.
- ❖ Remove food from carrying containers to store in a fridge set at 4°C (or lower) as soon as possible after a child arrives.
- ❖ At the table, take food out of containers and set onto plates. Children have place mats and napkins as well as utensils.
- ❖ Send home any uneaten food unless families have said not to.



Steps in menu planning

These steps are for serving lunch as well as morning and afternoon snack.

- ❖ Consider a four-week menu to include a good variety of choices.
- ❖ Make a list of the foods from each group of Canada's Food Guide and include mixed dishes that reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of your families.
- ❖ Choose children's favourites and new foods you would like to introduce.
- ❖ Use fresh produce in season when available.
 - ➔ Seasonally available B.C. vegetables and fruit (pp.44-45)
- ❖ Copy the menu planner and fill it in.
 - ➔ Menu planner (p.33)
- ❖ Plan three or four food groups for each lunch - for example:

LUNCH

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Select meat and alternatives: | | | | |
| Fish and veggie wrap | Egg sandwich | Chili | Chicken sandwich | Hummus |
| Select from vegetables and fruits: | | | | |
| Romaine lettuce, shredded carrots in wrap | Celery and cucumber with ranch dressing dip | Tomatoes and corn in chili | Sliced pepper sticks | Vegetable soup |
| Select grain products (if not included in the main dish): | | | | |
| Tortilla wrap | 100% whole grain bread | Cornmeal muffin | 100% whole wheat bread | 100% whole grain pita bread triangles |
| Select a healthy dessert (optional): | | | | |
| Yogurt | Melon slices | Canned peaches | Milk pudding | Oatmeal cookie |
| Select Milk and Alternatives (if not included in the main dish or desert): | | | | |
| — | Milk | Milk | — | Milk |



Plan at least two food groups for each SNACK.

- ❖ Include a second choice from the milk and alternatives group during the day.
- ❖ Make the afternoon snack more filling if children will not eat for another three hours.
- ❖ Serve water if milk is not on the menu.

MORNING SNACK

| | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|---|--------------------|--------------|
| Whole grain crackers | Applesauce | Toasted cheese sandwich (whole grain bread) | Orange sections | Fruit yogurt |
| Sliced cheese | Fig bars | | Raisin bran muffin | popsicle |
| Water | Water | Water | Water | Water |

AFTERNOON SNACK

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Apple slices | Oatmeal muffin | Carrot sticks | Kiwi slices | Banana bread |
| Multi-grain bagel | Milk | Bread sticks | Graham crackers | Sliced cheese |
| Cream cheese | | Ham slices | Yogurt | Water |
| Water | | Water | Water | |

Check that the foods you serve vary from day to day and week to week. Plan a variety of colours, flavours and textures. If your menu reads something like "Meatball Monday/Taco Tuesday" each week, children who only attend certain days will not get a variety of food.

For more information on menu planning and recipe choices go to:

- ❖ The City of Vancouver website (www.vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/childcare/tools.htm) for its Healthy Start Model Menu and Recipe Book.
- ❖ The Dietitians of Canada website (www.dietitians.ca/healthystart/) for an online course that includes menu planning and related topics.



Menu planner

Week: _____

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
| Morning snack Serve at least 2 food groups | | | | | |
| Lunch Serve 3-4 food groups | | | | | |
| Afternoon snack Serve at least 2 food groups | | | | | |



Packing meals and snacks

Does your child's bag contain foods from all the food groups?

ONE CANADA FOOD GUIDE SERVING

VEGETABLES AND FRUIT

✓ 2 or more

Vegetables—125 mL (½ cup)
Leafy vegetables, cooked—125 mL (½ cup), raw—250 mL (1 cup)
Fruit—1 fruit or 125 mL (½ cup)

GRAIN PRODUCTS

✓ 2 or more

Bagel, muffin, pita, roti or tortilla—½
Cooked rices, pasta or couscous—125 mL (½ cup)
Roll—1 small
Cereal, cold—30 g
Bread—1 slice

MILK AND ALTERNATIVES

✓ 1 or more

Milk or fortified soy beverage—250 mL (1 cup)
Yogurt—175 g (¾ cup)
Cheese—50 g (1½ oz.)

MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES

✓ ½ or more

Fish, poultry or lean meat—125 mL (½ cup)
Cooked legumes or hummus—175 mL (¾ cup)
Tofu—175 mL (¾ cup)
Eggs—2
Peanut or nut butters—30 mL (2 tbsp.)

For example: 125 mL (½ cup) milk + 80 mL (⅓ cup) yogurt = 1 Food Guide serving of milk and alternatives

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

MORNING SNACK

Small bran muffin
Milk

Applesauce
Milk

Flat bread
Yogurt

Cottage cheese
Sliced banana

Cold cereal
Milk

LUNCH

Rice
Cubes of chicken

Hummus
Whole grain pita

Hard cooked egg
Whole grain bread sandwich

Tortilla wedges
Bean dip

Sweet potato coins
Fish cakes

Mixed stir-fry vegetables

Snow peas

Cherry tomato halves

Jicama sticks

Zucchini and green pepper sticks

Orange sections

Carrot sticks

Milk

Pineapple tidbits
Milk

AFTERNOON SNACK

Sliced cheese
Kiwi slices

Banana bread
Milk

Apple slices
Mini bagel with peanut or nut butter

Pumpkin bread
Pears

Yogurt
Fruit salad

Whole grain crackers



Healthy eating on the run with young ones

Families with toddlers and preschoolers lead active and busy lives. Eating away from home is a reality. Plan to eat well whether you have a meal out, a snack when you are 'out and about' or a family picnic.

When to eat

Plan on three meals and two or three snacks at about the same times each day. Offer toddlers and preschoolers food every two to three hours. To help children eat well at meal times, serve snacks one to two hours before lunch or dinner.

QUICK TIP

Day-long nibbling on food or sipping on beverages can cause cavities and can upset healthy eating routines.

What to eat

- ❖ Make a snack from two or more food groups and a meal with foods from three or four food groups.
- ❖ The best snacks are tooth friendly. Do not serve sweet or starchy foods, such as candy, dried fruit and crackers, that can stick to their teeth.

Where to eat

- ❖ Stop to sit down together to enjoy food and chatting, whether you are in a park or waiting for a brother or sister to finish a game or lesson.
- ❖ Prevent choking. Do not feed young children while traveling in a car or bus, or while they are being pushed in a stroller.

Fast and easy meal ideas

- ❖ At the grocery store, buy a roasted chicken, bagged salad, baby carrots and whole grain rolls.
- ❖ At a fast-food restaurant, order milk with your meal and share a salad or cut-up veggies you brought from home instead of fries.

QUICK TIP

Be aware of choking hazards including hot dogs and grapes. Cut these lengthwise into quarters.

Snack ideas

- ❖ Applesauce and whole grain toast strips
- ❖ Apple or pear slices to dip in peanut or nut butter
- ❖ Bean dip and toast fingers
- ❖ Cheese strings and fruit pieces



- ❖ Cold cereal and yogurt
- ❖ Cold vegetable pizza
- ❖ Fruit cup and graham crackers
- ❖ Hard cooked egg on whole grain bread
- ❖ Hummus with pita and bell pepper sticks to dip
- ❖ Mini bagel with cream cheese and apple slices
- ❖ Nori-maki rolls (sushi) and tangerines
- ❖ Shredded wheat cereal mixed with fruit pieces and yogurt
- ❖ Sliced meat on bread rolled up and cut into pinwheels
- ❖ Tuna salad and celery stick dippers
- ❖ Whole grain mini muffin and yogurt
- ❖ Whole grain tortilla spread with peanut butter, rolled around a banana and cut into circles

What to drink

- ❖ Everyone needs to drink water regularly. If children are very active or if the weather is hot, they need to drink more water. Take along your own water bottles for family outings and hikes.
- ❖ Milk and watery vegetables and fruit such as celery, cucumbers, lettuce, tomatoes, oranges and watermelon also satisfy thirst.

Keep foods safe to eat

- ❖ Start clean. Make sure hands and all food preparation areas, utensils and containers are clean and dry before making a meal or snack.
- ❖ Keep refrigerated foods cold. Pack foods that spoil quickly (salad dressings, mayonnaise, meat, fish, milk and yogurt) in insulated bags with freezer packs.
- ❖ Freeze bottles of water to use as freezer packs to keep food cold and provide a refreshing drink when partly thawed.
- ❖ In cold weather, use a thermos to keep soups and stews hot.



Reading labels to make healthy food choices

Together, the ingredient list, nutrition claims and Nutrition Facts panel on a food label can help you make informed food choices.

INGREDIENT LIST

- ❖ Most packaged foods must include a list of ingredients.
- ❖ Ingredients are listed on the food label in descending order of proportion by weight (the ingredient present in the greatest quantity is listed first).
- ❖ The ingredient list is a source of information for people with allergies. Some people want to avoid certain ingredients or confirm the presence of an ingredient in a food.
- ❖ You can use the ingredient list together with the Nutrition Facts table to get a nutritional overview of the food.

NUTRITION FACTS

| Nutrition Facts | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Per 125 mL (87g) | |
| Amount | % Daily Value |
| Calories 80 | |
| Fat 0.5 g | 1 % |
| Saturated 0 g + Trans 0 g | 0 % |
| Cholesterol 0 mg | |
| Sodium 0 mg | 0 % |
| Carbohydrate 18 g | 6 % |
| Fibre 2 g | 8 % |
| Sugars 2 g | |
| Protein 3 g | |
| Vitamin A 2 % | Vitamin C 10 % |
| Calcium 0 % | Iron 2 % |

All of the information in the Nutrition Facts is based on a specified amount of food—always compare it to the amount you eat.

The % Daily Value tells you if there is a lot or a little of a nutrient in the specified amount of food. % Daily Values are based on recommendations for a healthy diet.

Nutrition Facts lists the calories and 13 core nutrients. Additional nutrients may be listed on some labels.

These numbers give the quantity of each nutrient in the specified amount of food. The quantity is listed even if it is zero.

NUTRITION CLAIMS

We often see claims such as “cholesterol-free” and “reduced in calories” on the front of food packages. This is eye-catching information, but it does not tell the whole story. Also read the new Nutrition Facts table to find out what a claim is really telling you.



CHOOSING CONVENIENCE FOODS

If you choose frozen or prepared foods:

- ❖ Choose only trans-fat-free packaged foods—be especially careful to read labels when selecting frozen dinners, pizza, pie crusts and frozen items/mixes for cakes, cookies, muffins, pancakes, waffles and other pastries.
- ❖ Avoid deep fried and battered foods—French fries, vegetables, breaded chicken or fish.
- ❖ Choose frozen vegetables without added butter or sauces.

Look for mixed entrée foods:

- ❖ If you choose frozen or prepared foods, check ingredient lists to ensure vegetables or fruit are within the first three ingredients (not counting water).
 - ◆ Burritos (bean or meat)
 - ◆ Chili
 - ◆ Curry
 - ◆ Falafel in pita with tomatoes and tzatziki
 - ◆ Pasta with vegetable-based sauce
 - ◆ Perogies
 - ◆ Pilaf with vegetables
 - ◆ Pizza with vegetables
 - ◆ Stews
 - ◆ Stir fries



About juice

Most children love juice because it tastes sweet. Fruit is a better choice than juice for toddlers and preschoolers. This is because juice contains vitamins and minerals, but not the fibre found in fruit.

A child who drinks too many sweet drinks, such as fruit juice, pop and fruit drinks, is filling up on sugar. He or she might not have enough room for healthy meals and snacks.

Sipping sweet drinks all day from a bottle or sip cup can lead to tooth decay.

Offer milk or water at meals and snacks. Offer water any time a child is thirsty.

Offer vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

Offer no more than 125-175 mL ($\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup) juice per day at meal or snack time.

Serve juice in a cup, not a sippy cup.

Choose 100% juice, NOT a vegetable or fruit drink.

Many fruit drink packages look like they contain juice. If the package says: "contains real juice," "drink," "punch," "splash," "blend," "cocktail," "beverage" or "_____ade," it is not 100 per cent juice.

QUICK TIP

JUICE

Look for these words on the package:

- ✧ 100% juice
- ✧ Unsweetened
- ✧ Pure fruit juice from concentrate
- ✧ No artificial flavours or colours added



Introducing new foods

Children learn to accept food when it is offered to them with no pressure. Children like to see others enjoying a food before they will try it. A child may need to see a food 15-20 times before accepting it.

QUICK TIP

Some children have taste buds that make it harder for them to like certain flavours and textures.

CREATE INTEREST IN FOODS

Use books and songs to increase children's interest in new foods. Check your library for *Eating the Alphabet* by Lois Ehlert for your toddler, or *I Will Never Not Eat a Tomato* by Lauren Child for your preschooler. Preschoolers can learn to spell the names of vegetables and fruit.

INVOLVE CHILDREN IN CHOOSING NEW FOODS

At the store or farmers' market, talk about the names, shapes, colours and sizes of vegetables and fruit.

Ask preschoolers to help choose a vegetable or fruit to buy. For example, they might choose broccoli or cauliflower, or red or green apples. They can help put the food into bags and count the number you need.

Involve children in preparing the new food. Toddlers can help scrub vegetables and fruit. Preschoolers can help tear greens for a salad and cut soft fruits with a table knife.

INTRODUCE ONLY ONE NEW FOOD AT A TIME AFTER CHILDREN HAVE LEARNED ABOUT IT

Offer a new food when children are hungry. Allow them time to look at and examine the food.

Offer a very small amount (one or two bites) of the new food at first, so the child learns new flavours and textures.

TRY THIS

This is a turnip. It has a strong taste. If you try it and don't want to swallow, ask me for a tissue so you can politely spit into it.

BE POSITIVE...

Introduce a new food in an upbeat way. Expect that the new food will be liked.

TRY THIS

Today I made the broccoli with lemon juice and a little butter. It is a bit different. See what you think.



SIT AND EAT WITH CHILDREN AND SHOW THEM HOW YOU ENJOY THE FOOD

Enlist the help of an eager child. It often helps to have a child, one who is open to trying new foods, taste the new food first. Other children will be more willing to try if a peer has tried and likes it.

Serve a new food with a familiar food. This can help reduce anxiety about the new food.

Point out how a new food is similar to a food that is already a favourite.

Use non-demanding language when introducing a new food.

Make an unusual food seem like a fun food. For example, introduce tapioca pudding as a special pudding that has bubbles in it.

KEEP TRYING...

If a child rejects a food, do not make a big deal about it.

Simply serve the same food again another day. The more familiar children become with a food, the more likely it is they will accept it. Young children may need to see a new food 20 times before they decide to like it.

If a food is not popular after several tries, change the way it is prepared and served, e.g. steam, roast or grate vegetables.

If children accept a new food, serve it again soon so they will become used to it.

TRY THIS

This is a burrito. Children in Mexico like eating these. See what you think.

TRY THIS

This is asparagus. It tastes a bit like broccoli.



Picky or choosy eating

It is normal for a child to eat very well one day and eat very little the next.

After the first year of life, children do not grow as quickly. If a child is in a growth spurt or has been physically active, you can expect a bigger appetite.

Most children go through periods when they are picky eaters or are choosy about the foods they eat. Some children have a short list of foods they will eat.

Other children simply refuse to try new foods. Expect some picky eating and times when a child wants the same food day after day.

QUICK TIP

Children who are more active have healthier appetites.

Children may not want to eat if they are:

- ❖ Tired
- ❖ Distracted
- ❖ Not hungry
- ❖ Not feeling well
- ❖ Not familiar with a new food
- ❖ Not able to have their favourite food
- ❖ In a slow growth period

Preschoolers are beginning to learn about independence and power as well as cooperation and sharing. Choosy or picky eating may be children's way of showing they can make their own choices. They know that their decision to eat or not to eat can get lots of attention.

CARE GIVERS PROVIDE—CHILDREN DECIDE

- ❖ Make every bite count by offering healthy, tasty and appealing food. It is up to the child to decide which foods to like and how much to eat.
- ❖ Avoid nagging or making deals with a child such as: "Just two more bites" or "If you eat your vegetables, you will get dessert." Let the child's fullness cues guide you.
- ❖ There is no need to reward a child for eating, just as you do not reward a child for everyday activities such as brushing his teeth or putting on his shoes.



SUGGESTIONS TO HELP CHILDREN EAT WELL

Try this:

Set regular meal and snack times.

Remind your child when the next meal or snack will be.

Offer healthy foods that are tasty and appealing. Give food fun names, such as apple moons, broccoli trees, or cheese building blocks.

Offer water to satisfy thirst without spoiling their appetite.

Give hugs, attention or gold stars instead of food.

Respect tiny tummies. Serve small amounts and allow for seconds.

Serve one meal for everybody with at least one food your child enjoys at each meal.

Offer new foods often. Even if your child wants the same sandwich for lunch, change the vegetables, fruit or soup you serve with it.

Let your child help you make meals and snacks to learn about what they are eating.

Sit and eat with your child to show you enjoy healthy foods.

Rather than:

Letting your child eat whenever he or she wants food.

Letting your child choose from less healthy "fun" foods that are higher in fat, sugar or salt.

Letting your child drink juice or milk between meals and snacks.

Using food as a reward.

Nagging or making deals with your child to eat or "clean their plate."

Preparing special food for the picky eater.

Serving a limited variety of foods or giving up after you offer a new food once or twice.

Making a food your child is not familiar with and is less likely to eat.

Expecting children to eat healthy foods if they don't see you eating them.



Seasonally available B.C. vegetables

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Beans | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | |
| Beets | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Broccoli | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | |
| Brussels sprouts | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Cabbage—red | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Cabbage—green | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Carrots | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Cauliflower | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | |
| Celery | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| Chinese vegetables | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| Corn | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| Cucumbers—field | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Kale | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Leeks | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Lettuce | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Mushrooms | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Onions—red/yellow | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Parsnips | ■ | ■ | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Peas | | | | | | ■ | | | | | | |
| Peppers—field | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Potatoes | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Radishes | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Rutabagas | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Snow peas | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Spinach | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Tomatoes—field | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| Turnips—white | ■ | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Zucchini | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |



Seasonally available B.C. fruit

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Apples | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Apricots | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | | | |
| Blackberries | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | | |
| Cantaloupe | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Cherries | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Currants | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | | |
| Gooseberries | | | | | | | ■ | | | | | |
| Grapes | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | | | |
| Honeydew | | | | | | | | | ■ | | | |
| Kiwi | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Nectarines | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | |
| Peaches | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Pears | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Plums | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Prunes | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| Raspberries | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Rhubarb | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | |
| Saskatoon berries | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | | |
| Strawberries | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| Watermelon | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |



Food safety

Whether food is prepared on-site or brought from home, safe food handling practices help to prevent food poisoning. Have you taken the FOODSAFE course? Go to www.foodsafe.ca for information.

Use safe food sources

- ❖ Buy food from approved sources such as commercial retail suppliers.
- ❖ Check packages and use food before the “best before” date.
- ❖ Accept donated food only if it is in sealed containers or unopened packages from commercial sources. **DO NOT** accept any food left over from catered events such as church suppers or wedding receptions.

QUICK TIP

If parents are responsible for group snacks, encourage them to bring in packaged food with labels.

Keep food safe

Keep food safe from harmful bacteria as well as insect and rodent infestation.

Bacteria can be spread throughout the kitchen and get onto hands, cutting boards, utensils, dish cloths, sponges, counter tops and food. Four steps to reduce the risk of food poisoning are:

CLEAN: Wash your hands before, during and after cooking.

Clean all surfaces that come into contact with food.

SEPARATE: Keep raw meat, poultry and seafood and their juices separate from one another and from other foods. Do not use tools or dishes that touched raw meat for cooked meat or other foods.

CHILL: Return foods to the fridge or freezer promptly after using.



COOK: Cook foods well. Use a food thermometer to check the temperature inside the food.

Find more information on food safety at www.canfightbac.org.

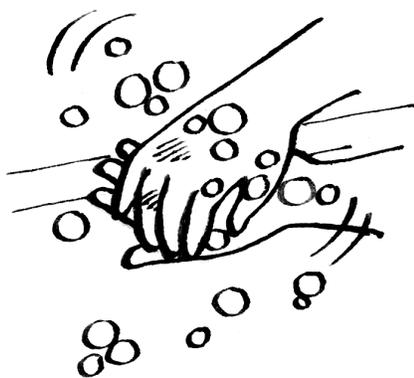
Hand washing

Children need clean hands before they eat and handle food.

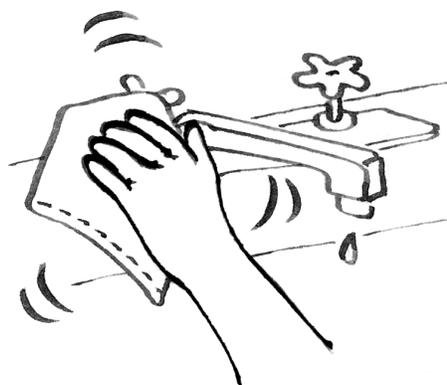
- ❖ Place posters by the hand washing sink and practice the steps.
 - ➔ How to wash your hands (p.49)
- ❖ Supervise hand washing to avoid the risk of burns from hot water.
- ❖ Wash hands under running water. Do not use a single damp cloth to wash a group of children's hands.
- ❖ Use paper towels for drying. Do not share a common hand towel.
- ❖ Alcohol-based hand sanitizers work well if hands are not visibly dirty. Wash hands as soon as you can after using these sanitizers.



How to wash your hands



Adults turn off the tap





Food allergies

Food allergies are reactions that involve the immune system. The part of the food that causes the reaction is called an allergen. Allergic reactions to food can range from very mild to life threatening.

Life threatening allergic reactions, or anaphylaxis, can occur within minutes of exposure to a food allergen; usually within two hours. The warning signs of anaphylaxis and the severity of the symptoms can vary from child to child and from one reaction to the next. The most serious signs of an allergic reaction include trouble breathing or a drop in blood pressure. Both can lead to death if not treated. For more information about severe food allergies visit www.allergysafecommunities.ca.

Other children may not be able to digest gluten (a protein found in wheat, rye and barley) because they have celiac disease.

Children with food allergies and celiac disease need to avoid all traces of the foods that cause reactions.

Create an allergy-aware environment to help prevent harmful reactions to otherwise healthy food.

Other harmful reactions to food (that do not involve the immune system) can be confused with allergies. Some children have low levels of the enzymes needed to digest food. For children with low lactaid levels, drinking too much milk can cause bloating and diarrhea.

Creating an allergy-aware environment

GATHERING INFORMATION

- ❖ Ask new families if their child has food allergies or has ever eaten eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish or shellfish.
- ❖ Collect information about each child's allergic condition and specific needs, such as a letter from the doctor. Request an update from parents at least once a year.
- ❖ Ask families to provide a list of foods that are unsafe.
- ❖ Complete an anaphylaxis emergency plan for each child with severe food allergies. A sample plan can be downloaded from www.allergysafecommunities.ca.

COMMUNICATING

- ❖ Make sure all staff and volunteers are aware of children's food allergies and know where further information is kept.
- ❖ Post this information in an easy-to-see place such as the fridge door.
- ❖ Make sure new staff and volunteers are informed about food allergies.



- ❖ Keep the anaphylaxis emergency plans handy.
- ❖ Let all families know that there are children in the centre with food allergies.
- ❖ Talk with children about allergies if they are at an age to understand.

AVOIDING ALLERGENS

Exposure to very small amounts of an allergen can cause a reaction. Children with allergies can be exposed to the foods they are allergic to in many different ways.

Contamination of safe foods and objects, such as utensils and toys, can lead to an allergic reaction. Avoid exposing the child with food allergies to allergens during preparation and cooking. Here are some suggestions for avoiding allergens and helping to prevent contamination.

- ❖ Have a policy in place, such as "No Peanuts Please."
- ❖ Ask parents of children with severe food allergies to provide food for their child for meals, snacks and special events, such as birthdays and Hallowe'en.
- ❖ Ensure all foods brought in have ingredient labels.
- ❖ Make sure all staff and children wash hands before and after handling and eating food.
- ❖ Sit near children with food allergies during meals and snacks to supervise.
- ❖ Never share food, drinks, straws, utensils, containers and napkins.
- ❖ Thoroughly clean tables and toys and other objects to remove food residue.
- ❖ When preparing for art activities, choose alternatives to allergen-containing food. Make sure products such as play dough are not contaminated with allergens. Avoid activities involving birdseed or peanut shells.

QUICK TIP

A cheese sandwich can get contaminated with peanut butter if it is cut using the same knife used to make a peanut butter sandwich.

QUICK TIP

For training to deal with severe allergic reactions, talk to the Allergy/Asthma Information Association BC/Yukon Regional Office or a public health nurse at your nearest health unit.

TREATING ALLERGIC REACTIONS

- ❖ Ensure an anaphylaxis emergency plan is in place for each child with allergies.
- ❖ Ensure epinephrine is kept in locations that are easily accessible and not in locked cupboards or drawers.
- ❖ Ensure all staff and care providers know where the epinephrine is kept.
- ❖ Ensure all care providers are trained to recognize the signs of a severe allergic reaction and know what to do in an emergency situation, including how to give epinephrine.



FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT ALLERGENS

- ❖ The Allergy/Asthma Information Association provides educational pamphlets and products (including videos, posters and buttons) on allergies and asthma. Visit www.aaia.ca or call the BC/Yukon Regional office at 1-877-500-2242.
- ❖ For more information on dealing with food allergies and special diets, contact Dial-a-Dietitian. In Greater Vancouver call 604-732-9191 or call 1-800-667-3438 toll free.
- ❖ For information on severe food allergies in children, visit www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile100.stm.



Recipe substitutions for food allergies and sensitivities

Common foods that trigger allergies in children are cow's milk, eggs, peanuts, wheat, soy, tree nuts (such as almonds and walnuts) and shellfish (such as shrimp, crab and clams). Children with food allergies should only eat foods brought from home.

Some children are sensitive to foods such as milk, eggs and wheat. You will need to experiment to see what works best for each recipe. Here are some common substitutes for baking.

QUICK TIP

The Allergy Asthma Information Association (www.aaia.com) offers posters and brochures for dealing with asthma and allergies, including peanut and nut allergies, milk allergies and egg allergies.

MILK

In baking, substitute:

- ❖ Fortified rice beverage
- ❖ Fortified soy beverage

EGGS

When baking with recipes that use one or two eggs, substitute each egg in the recipe with one of the following:

- ❖ 5 mL (1 tsp.) baking powder, with 25 mL (1½ tbsp.) water and 25 mL (1½ tbsp.) oil
- ❖ 5 mL (1 tsp.) baking powder, with 15 mL (1 tbsp.) water and 15 mL (1 tbsp.) vinegar
- ❖ 5 mL (1 tsp.) yeast dissolved in 50 mL (¼ cup) warm water
- ❖ 1 packet of unflavoured gelatin and 30 mL (2 tbsp.) of warm water
- ❖ Half a large mashed banana

WHEAT FLOUR

For 250 mL (1 cup) wheat flour, substitute one of the following:

- ❖ 220 mL (¾ cup) rice flour (white or brown) and 440mL (1⅓ cup) potato starch flour
- ❖ 250 mL (1 cup) corn flour (maize or masa)



Prevent choking

Young children who are building their chewing skills are at risk for choking. Foods that are hard, tough, round or sticky can block a child's small airway.

Young children gag. Food slips to the back of their tongue before they are ready to swallow. Gagging shoves the food back out again and is a normal part of learning to eat. If a child can cough, this is gagging, not choking. Encourage the child to try to cough out the food.

If a child is gagging because he/she has too much in his/her mouth, tell him/her to "spit it out." After the child recovers from gagging, talk about taking small bites and chewing well before swallowing.

If a child is not able to cough or spit out the food, then he/she is choking. All care providers should have training in infant CPR, which provides information on what to do if a child does choke. Contact your local public health nurse or St. John Ambulance for information on infant CPR training.

Never feed babies using propped bottles. Feed babies foods only when they are sitting up.

Insist that children sit down to eat and drink. Never feed a child who is laughing or crying. Always supervise young children when they are eating. As a role model, encourage children to take small bites, chew food well and eat at a relaxed pace.

Cut food into small pieces that are safe for the smallest child. For children less than 12 months, pieces should be around 0.5 cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch). For children up to the age of four, pieces should be around 1 cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch).

QUICK TIP

Do not allow children to eat or drink in a moving car or bus or stroller.



Choking hazards

WARNING: Do not give whole nuts, whole peanuts, popcorn, gum, cough drops, or hard candy to children under four. Do not use toothpicks and skewers.

Watch out for food that is:

Make food safer:

ROUND

Whole grapes, small tomatoes, large berries, hot dogs, sausages

Slice lengthwise and then into small pieces

HARD

Fruit with pits or seeds

Remove pits and seeds

Raw vegetables that can break into chunks, such as carrots

Grate or chop finely, cook and slice into thin sticks

Whole nuts or peanuts

Chop finely

Seeds

Chop finely

Candies

Do not serve

STICKY

Globs of peanut butter

Spread thinly on toast or crackers

Raisins and other dried fruit, marshmallows

Cut into small pieces

Gum

Do not serve

STRINGY

Celery and citrus fruits, such as oranges and grapefruit

Remove large stringy sections

Leafy vegetables

Cut into small pieces

CHUNKY

Chunky peanut butter or nut and seed butters

Choose smooth nut butters or seed butters and spread thinly on toast or crackers

Large chunks of meat or cheese

Cut into small cubes

EASY TO EAT BY HANDFULS WITHOUT CHEWING

Pretzels, chips

Serve small amounts on a plate or in a bowl to prevent eating out of the bag

BONY

Chicken and whole fish

Remove bones from chicken and fish; flake fish before serving. Rub fish between fingers to feel for bones.



Tips for choosing child-sized furniture and dishes

Help children learn to serve themselves and eat safely and well at meal and snack times by providing child-sized furniture and dishes.

CHILD-FRIENDLY FURNITURE

- ❖ Babies that can sit up need a high chair.
- ❖ Older children need small tables and chairs to feel comfortable with no danger of falling. Does the chair allow children's feet to rest on the floor or a firm surface? When seated, does the tabletop come between waist and mid-chest level?
- ❖ Seat children facing each other. Do not allow children to stand or kneel to eat.
- ❖ Keep extra eating and serving utensils and clean-up materials near the table.

TRY THIS

Include children with special dietary needs as fully as possible in all mealtime activities.

CHILD-FRIENDLY SERVING DISHES AND UTENSILS

- ❖ Non-porous, unbreakable serving bowls with rims
- ❖ Small platters
- ❖ Short-handled scoops or serving spoons or measuring cups
- ❖ Small plastic tongs (rather than the metal tongs with springs that can pinch fingers)
- ❖ Small pitchers with lids and stable bases so children can pour beverages

QUICK TIP

Choose utensils that are the size and weight children can easily handle.

CHILD-FRIENDLY EATING TOOLS

- ❖ Dishes that are non-porous and unbreakable, or heavyweight single-use paper
- ❖ Child-sized glasses and cups that are durable and easy to hold
- ❖ Child-sized bowls and plates with curved lips for scooping food
- ❖ Short-handled spoons and forks made from stainless steel or non-porous, heavy-duty plastic
- ❖ Napkins for children to clean their faces and hands.

QUICK TIP

Foam plates and cups are a choking hazard since children might bite off pieces.



Social aspects of food

Help create meal and snack times that are relaxed and happy times for everyone. You are a role model to show children how to enjoy healthy food and conversation. Help children pay attention to eating. When you serve healthy, appealing foods in a pleasant setting with child-sized tables, chairs, dishes and utensils, children will be more likely to enjoy foods and eat what they need.

QUICK TIP

Preparing healthy food and eating together help children learn new words as they cooperate and socialize.

Family-style dining



To encourage family-style dining, offer a variety of foods and ask children to serve themselves (possibly with help from an adult). Adults sit and eat with children.

When children bring food from home to child care, the meal can still be family-style. Set out placemats, plates and cups. Take food out of boxes. Seat children who need more help near an adult.



CHILDREN

- ❖ Serve themselves when they are able. They can start by taking small amounts, knowing they can have more if they like. This gives them control over the amount of food on their plate.
- ❖ Need enough time to eat until they are no longer hungry.
- ❖ Are able to look, feel, mash, smell and taste to explore food.
- ❖ Are not required to try or taste a food they refuse.
- ❖ Learn to help set the table and clean up.

ADULTS

- ❖ Help children pay attention to eating.
- ❖ Respect toddlers' messiness and slowness with eating.
- ❖ Acknowledge children's individual food likes and dislikes. This promotes their self-esteem.
- ❖ Do not pressure a child to taste a new food, eat any number of bites or clean their plate.
- ❖ Do not praise or scold children for the amount of food they eat, or for the type of food parents have provided.
- ❖ Do not make deals using food. Using food as a bribe, pacifier or punishment sends children the wrong message. Depriving children of food is never acceptable.

Pre-meal activities can help calm children and get them ready for eating. Do not expect children to eat immediately after very active playing. Small group and quiet activities help with the transition to meals and snacks. For example:

- ❖ Listening to a story or singing
- ❖ Helping make food to eat
- ❖ Washing hands
- ❖ Setting tables

At the table, you are a role model for healthy eating and pleasant conversation. Promote positive talk and do not use the terms 'good' and 'bad' foods. Children learn to cooperate at the table by watching and talking with adults sitting with them. Children are interested in the food that you eat.

- ❖ If your centre serves food—eat the same foods as the children.
- ❖ If you bring your own food—children may be curious about what you are eating (consider offering this kind of food at another time).



Eat the same foods, whenever possible. Present new foods in an enthusiastic manner. For example, model eating broccoli with your fork and show you enjoy eating it. Ask children if they would like “little trees” (broccoli).

Allow children to serve themselves small portions. Help those who need help and offer more food if children are hungry. Let children feed themselves even if they do it slowly and make a mess. Expect children to spill and drop food and respond calmly.

Older children can mop up their own spills.

Adults are at the table to:

- ❖ Eat with the children and show them how to enjoy eating a wide variety of foods.
- ❖ Keep children safe and prevent accidents.
- ❖ Be ready to respond if a child starts choking.
- ❖ Gently remind children to eat if they seem to be forgetting.
- ❖ Explain how to do things (e.g. not touching other people’s food at the table by talking about “yours,” “mine” and “ours”).
- ❖ Model good manners and let children know in advance what kind of behaviour you expect.
- ❖ Start chatting and guide the conversation by adding descriptive and action words and by asking open-ended questions.
- ❖ Keep mealtime pleasant—with no criticism, fighting or rudeness.
- ❖ Respond to children’s questions and comments with information and interest.
- ❖ Talk about children’s feelings and ideas. Talking about your feelings and ideas encourages children to do the same.
- ❖ Help children negotiate when conflicts arise or let them solve their own challenges.

QUICK TIP

Do not make desserts the reward for eating the rest of the meal.

QUICK TIP

Do not drink hot liquids near children. Do not place items, especially hot ones, where a child could pull them down.

After meals, plan a relaxed transition to the next activity by having time for:

- ❖ Clearing and cleaning the table
- ❖ Washing hands
- ❖ Brushing teeth



Talking during meals and snacks

Meal and snack times are important times to eat and talk together. Plan to make eating a relaxed and social time that helps children enjoy healthy food.

ENCOURAGING TODDLERS TO TALK ABOUT FOOD AND EATING

Toddlers communicate with a combination of gestures and words. Toddlers may point to a food they want or knock away a food they do not want. The role of the adult is to be patient and try to understand what the toddler is communicating.

QUICK TIP

Talk less if children are having a hard time focusing on eating and talking at the same time.

- ❖ Expand on toddlers' one and two-word communications and build sentences around their words.
- ❖ Give toddlers one direction at a time. For example, "You can sit in the chair next to me."
- ❖ Make the most of daily routines and talk through the sequence in which they will happen. For example, for hand washing before and after meals: "First I'll turn on the water. We will add the soap. Rub your hands together to get rid of all the germs."
- ❖ Reinforce with word labels what the toddler is doing.
- ❖ Label toddler emotions.

ENCOURAGING PRESCHOOLERS TO TALK ABOUT FOOD AND EATING

Preschoolers talk in sentences. They often talk to themselves when they are alone or working on tasks. They like to talk about their experiences and have imaginary friends.

- ❖ Ask questions about past events and probe for details. For example, "Tell me about a meal you had with your family. Who was there? Where did you eat?"
- ❖ Use explanations when you correct behaviour or offer alternatives, such as, "When you use the serving spoon, it is easier to scoop the mashed potatoes."
- ❖ Encourage talk about feelings, both positive and negative. Discuss possible causes for emotions.
- ❖ Create opportunities to engage in fantasy and pretend play about food and mealtimes, either alone or with friends. For example, "Let's pretend you are going to plan a meal for a firefighter/

TRY THIS

"Why do you like pears better than apples?"



princess. What would you serve? What foods do you think he/she likes? Where would you have the meal?"

- ❖ Offer choices when you can, such as, "Would you like apple or pear slices?"
- ❖ Encourage more advanced communications.

OFFERING HEALTHY CHOICES AND HELPING CHILDREN RECOGNIZE HUNGER AND FULLNESS

Phrases that help:

- ❖ "Yes, these pea pods are crunchy!"
- ❖ "These are ____ (A new food such as asparagus spears). See what you think."
- ❖ "Do you like that?"
- ❖ "Would you like more?"
- ❖ "Is your stomach telling you that you're full?"
- ❖ "Use your napkin."
- ❖ "Please move the serving bowl closer to your plate."
- ❖ "These oven fries are different looking, aren't they? I made them from potatoes and baked them in the oven."

TRY THIS

"This is a kiwi fruit. It's sweet like a strawberry."

Table talk topics:

- ❖ "What did you do on the playground today?"
- ❖ "Tell me the best part of the story your teacher read today."
- ❖ "What is the best thing that happened today?"
- ❖ "If I lived on a tropical island, I'd eat ____"
- ❖ "Talk about a good thing you or someone else did."

Inappropriate comments:

- ❖ "Eat that for me."
- ❖ "I wish you were a good eater like Sally."
- ❖ "You're such a big boy—you finished all your carrots."
- ❖ "See, that didn't taste so bad, did it?"
- ❖ "You have to take one more bite before you leave the table."
- ❖ "Sam, look at Nathan. He ate all of his bananas."
- ❖ "How do you know you don't like them if you haven't even tried them?"



Fun and learning about healthy eating

Helping children learn about healthy eating is a big job. You are “feeding young imaginations” while you are helping children learn important things about food and eating. The messages you send to children about food and eating will stick with them the rest of their lives.

QUICK TIP

Meal and snack time is the primary way children learn about food and healthy eating.

Food-based activities, planned activities with food themes, and toys/places to play can support healthy eating at meals and snack time.

As you plan, think about what a child might learn from each activity. Choose activities that match children's abilities and interests. Sorting foods into the groups described by Canada's Food Guide is not a good theme to use with young children. At this age, children can easily learn food colours and shapes but may not understand abstract concepts such as food groups.

Make it interesting and fun to learn about a wide variety of foods. Learning about healthy eating can be lively and varied, and take place in a variety of settings along with other activities. Learning can happen:

- ❖ While eating meals and snacks together.
- ❖ At circle time—talking about food and eating, and participating in activities using rhymes, stories, books, puppets, felt boards and pictures.
- ❖ During play time—using food and eating as ideas for activities.
- ❖ In the kitchen when children are helping to prepare food.
- ❖ While setting the table.
- ❖ While exploring food through growing food and participating in tasting parties.
- ❖ When using cooking and serving utensils to play with sand, water, clay or play-dough.
- ❖ When you are talking to parents about activities and sending home information, menus or recipes.



Good activities emphasize learning about healthy foods. Activities around vegetables and fruit could include:

- ❖ Counting—e.g. how many people a watermelon feeds.
- ❖ Drying food in a food dehydrator (e.g. drying grapes, apple rings or cherry tomatoes).
- ❖ Exploring and tasting vegetables or fruit prepared in different ways (tomatoes in spaghetti sauce, sun dried and in tomato juice).
- ❖ Helping to prepare a fruit or vegetable for a snack.
- ❖ Engaging in imaginary play, e.g. digging vegetables or picking fruit.
- ❖ Learning about vegetables and fruit from different countries/cultures.
- ❖ Learning colours and shapes.
- ❖ Learning about texture: smooth like an apple, bumpy like an orange, fuzzy like a kiwi.
- ❖ Making a collage of pictures of vegetables and fruit a child likes.
- ❖ Planting seeds or seedlings.
- ❖ Playing guessing games (What vegetables are red? What is the mystery food in the bag?).
- ❖ Reading a book about growing food.
- ❖ Shopping for food at a grocery store, farmers' market or shop specializing in ethnic foods.
- ❖ Singing a song or rhyming a rhyme.
- ❖ Talking about tastes, textures and sounds.
- ❖ Touring a garden or orchard.
- ❖ Washing off dirt before cooking or eating (and washing hands).

TRY THIS

"How does this taste—sweet or sour? Crunchy or chewy? How does it sound?"

Show children that vegetables and fruit come in a variety of colours, tastes, and textures. And they're fun!

Food-based activities

Choosing and preparing food, gardening and tasting activities are the best ways to engage children's five senses, teach them about healthy eating, and increase the variety of food they will eat. Give every child chances to learn about food and where healthy food comes from. Food-based activities help children extend their language skills as they talk about colours, smells, shapes and numbers, and their motor skills as they are doing tasks such as spreading and dipping.



Preparing food with children



Preschool-aged children love to help in the kitchen and are often more willing to eat foods they have helped to prepare. Child care settings are places to model, and teach about, healthy eating and safe food preparation.

Involving children in food preparation can be messy and take a bit of time. It is worth the effort, since helping to make meals and snacks increases children's willingness to eat a variety of foods. Children can learn a lot about food by helping to prepare it.

Help children learn about healthy foods they can enjoy with their families. Unfortunately, many children's cookbooks focus on sweet treats. See the Let's Make section (p.123) for some healthier alternatives.

Guidelines for involving children in food preparation in early learning settings

Children over the age of three can be routinely involved in age-appropriate food preparation activities for educational purposes with adult guidance and supervision for hand washing, personal safety and food safety. Activities can include preparing simple snack and meal items from relatively low-risk foods, as well as setting and clearing tables.



It is recommended that:

- ❖ The supervisor is FOODSAFE trained.
- ❖ Children prepare their own individual foods and beverages.
- ❖ Serve cooked, rather than raw food to others, e.g. muffins rather than salad.

QUICK TIP

Your Health Authority may have additional information—contact the Environmental Health Officer.

Gardening with children

It is exciting for children to watch a seed grow into food they can eat. Gardens are a great way to help children be active, and to help them learn about nature and how plants grow food. Preschoolers can help with most gardening tasks and take pride in what they do. Vegetable gardening can increase children's willingness to eat new vegetables.

- ❖ Create a garden indoors or outdoors.
- ❖ Visit a nearby nursery and select seeds or seedlings for potting.
- ❖ Choose plants that are easy to grow, such as sunflowers, tomatoes, beans, radishes, snow peas and herbs.

QUICK TIP

One book that uses easy-to-find materials is *Green Thumbs: A Kid's Activity Guide to Indoor and Outdoor Gardening* by Laurie Carlson.





If you are a gardener—you may have to relax your standards. Remember that children's ideas about gardening may be different than yours. Crooked rows and pet weeds are fine.

QUICK TIP

Provide every chance for success—use good soil and fresh seeds.

If you are not a gardener—start small, perhaps planting seeds in an empty egg carton. One of the best things you ever grow may be a gardener! A trip to the library can be part of the project.

Take your time, and enjoy watching children digging holes, looking for worms, interacting with ladybugs or toads and making mud pies. Teach them the difference between good pests and bad pests. Using dish soap on bad pests is safer and healthier than harsh chemicals. Show them how to weed, so plants grow strong and healthy. You may need to help keep children's gardens weeded and free of pests.

QUICK TIP

Get some red wiggler worms to make compost from kitchen scraps.

➞ How does your garden grow? (p.97)

Tasting activities

Taste testing is a fun way to get to know foods. Tasting parties enable small groups to sample foods and explore their smell, taste, colour and texture. Children who learn to try new foods are more likely to accept and enjoy different foods later in life.

QUICK TIP

Do not force children to eat foods they do not wish to try.

➞ The five senses (p.88)

Toys and play that support learning

Toys and play activities support mealtime learning to help children develop healthy eating practices. Give children opportunities outside of meal or snack time to explore equipment for serving and eating.

PROP BOXES

Prop boxes filled with materials based on a theme give children a chance to act out what they are learning. Items can include gardening or kitchen gear and empty food packages.

Ask families for ideas and contributions that promote

QUICK TIP

Choose educational materials, such as books and empty food packages, that show healthy food rather than junk food or fast food.



healthy choices and represent the different cultures of the community. Community businesses may contribute items (e.g. old menus with pictures) for prop boxes. Check that items are clean and safe for use.

PUZZLES

Puzzles help children identify shapes and name new objects, and provide a manipulative activity. Buy or make wooden or thick cardboard puzzles depicting food, farm animals and people.

PLAY CENTRES

- ❖ Sand and water tables with pitchers and cups for pouring practice
- ❖ Art centres with clay or play dough, rolling pins, cookie cutters and plastic knives for cutting
- ❖ Tables for exploring foods such as grains and seeds. (Carefully watch young children who might try to eat these and choke.)



Play restaurant

Play restaurant using household items or pretend props. Items you might use include:

- ❖ Bread baskets
- ❖ Cash register
- ❖ Cook's hats
- ❖ Phone
- ❖ Pens and pads
- ❖ Table settings—place mat, plate, cup, knife, fork and spoon
- ❖ Empty salt, pepper and Parmesan cheese shakers



- ❖ Table cloth and cloth napkins
- ❖ Tables and chairs
- ❖ Menus—ask restaurants for old menus

Play kitchen or bakery

Play kitchen or bakery using household items or pretend props. Items you might use include:

- ❖ Baker's hats
- ❖ Bowls
- ❖ Cash register
- ❖ Empty boxes that contained packaged foods
- ❖ Empty egg cartons
- ❖ Measuring cups
- ❖ Mixing spoons
- ❖ Muffin tins
- ❖ Oven mitts or pot holders
- ❖ Pans
- ❖ Plastic or box oven
- ❖ Play dough
- ❖ Posters/pictures of baked goods
- ❖ Rolling pins

QUICK TIP

Plastic food pieces need to be large enough so they are not a choking hazard.

Play grocery shopping

Play grocery shopping using household items or pretend props. Items you might use include:

- ❖ Cardboard boxes for the store, shelves and fridges
- ❖ Cash register
- ❖ Empty food cartons and cans of healthy foods (clean and with no sharp edges)
- ❖ Paper or cloth shopping bags
- ❖ Play money
- ❖ Shopping list with picture of foods
- ❖ Toy shopping carts



Play feeding animals

- ❖ Play feeding animals using household items or pretend props. Things you might do include:
- ❖ Talk about what toy animals and real animals eat.
- ❖ Show pictures of animals eating.
- ❖ Talk about foods that animals, birds and humans eat—such as oats, carrots, corn, seeds and apples.

Planning activities with a food theme

Young children learn by physically manipulating their environment. Activity-based programs with food themes help them learn about healthy eating and can help change their food habits.

Effective, activity-based learning about healthy eating is developmentally and age appropriate and can include stories, pictures, puppets, art projects, felt boards, cloth food models, puzzles, songs, rhymes, role playing, games, dramatic presentations, field trips and visitors to class.

Use your imagination or ask children for ideas for healthy eating activities.

ART

Art activities can introduce food-related concepts or enable children to tell stories and express their ideas. The best art projects encourage each child's creativity. Use materials that allow young ones to dabble and allow older children to think of their own creations. Free-form art is a better choice than colouring sheets or copying something an adult thinks up.

Write children's words to accompany their works of art.

- ❖ Create a collage with pictures of food from flyers or magazines.
- ❖ Decorate or design mini pizzas, muffins or salads for special events.
- ❖ Mold clay or play dough to look like different foods to use for a table centre piece.
- ❖ Finger paint, make collages from pictures, and draw pictures or make murals to display new foods, a field trip or a special event.

Many foods lend themselves to collages, jewelry, finger painting, dyes, prints and stamping. However, do not use food as art materials.

QUICK TIP

Do not use food as art materials.



This is not a good idea because:

- ❖ Children become confused when told to eat a food at a meal or snack and not to eat it during playtime—for example, pudding used for finger painting.
- ❖ Food is wasted to create collages and art projects.
- ❖ Food may no longer be clean.
- ❖ Food, such as macaroni and instant pudding, can attract insects and rodents.

BOOKS

Books are an excellent way to introduce children to new foods and ideas about eating. Children are often more willing to try a food that is familiar. Many children's books have a food theme, such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle. The activities listed in the Bundles of Fun section (p.83) contain literacy links, which recommend books that promote literacy, as well as healthy eating and being active.

Books selection checklist

When selecting books to introduce children to new foods and ideas about healthy eating, check that they:

- ❖ Are age appropriate.
- ❖ Use engaging language and visuals with good balance between text and pictures.
- ❖ Promote healthy eating/movement/literacy and provide ideas for learning activities.
- ❖ Provide positive images and messages about cultural diversity, gender equity and body size.
- ❖ Are Canadian whenever possible.
- ❖ Are widely available in B.C. libraries.

Books on choosing, growing, cooking and eating food

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| <i>Green Thumbs—A Kid's Activity Guide to Indoor and Outdoor Gardening</i> by Laurie Carlson | (adult reading) |
| <i>From the Garden—A Counting Book About Growing Food</i> by Michael Dahl | (preschool—Grade 3) |
| <i>Our Community Garden</i> by Barbara Pollak | (preschool-Grade 3) |
| <i>Market Day</i> by Lois Ehlert | (ages 3-7) |
| <i>Farming</i> by Gail Gibbons | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>Let's Cook</i> by Robert Crowther | (ages 2-5) |
| <i>Soup</i> by Cathy Goldberg Fishman | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>Daddy Makes the Best Spaghetti</i> by Anna G. Hines | (preschool-Grade 2) |



Books that feature fruit and vegetables

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| <i>Baby Food</i> by Saxton Freymann | (infants-preschool) |
| <i>Eating the Alphabet</i> by Lois Ehlert | (ages 1-3) |
| <i>Growing Colors</i> by Bruce McMillan | (ages 2-4) |
| <i>Lunch</i> by Denise Fleming | (ages 2-7) |
| <i>Fast Food</i> by Saxton Freymann | (ages 4-8) |

Books about picky eaters

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Bread and Jam for Frances</i> by Russell Hoban | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato</i> by Lauren Child | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>Rabbit Food</i> by Susanna Gretz | (ages 5-8) |

Books about cooking

Choose cookbooks that help children learn to make healthy foods (rather than just sugary treats), such as those from the Dietitians of Canada and the Heart and Stroke Foundation. *Simply Great Food* by Dietitians of Canada (Robert Rose, 2007) includes “kid-approved” recipes. Other good books about cooking include:

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| <i>The Cooking Book: Fostering Young Children's Learning and Delight</i> by Laura J. Colker | |
| <i>The Kids' Multicultural Cookbook: Food & Fun Around the World</i> by Deanna F. Cook | |
| <i>Cooking (Learning Through Play)</i> by Lisa Feeney | |
| <i>Pretend Soup and Other Real Recipes</i> by Mollie Katzen | (preschoolers and up) |
| <i>Salad People and More Real Recipes</i> by Mollie Katzen | (preschoolers and up) |

Consider tasting, or making up recipes for, foods mentioned in a book such as *Ugly Vegetables* by Grace Lin (ages 4-8).

Making books

Help children make their own photo books about healthy eating, or create tasting passports. Book ideas can include a “Children’s Favourite Foods” book or a “What We Ate for Breakfast” book.

FIELD TRIPS

In the past, most Canadian children lived on farms or visited their families and friends on farms. Today, field trips are a good way to help children learn where food comes from. Field trips related to foods are a good way

QUICK TIP

At the store or farmers' market, talk about the names, shapes, colors, and sizes of vegetables and fruit.



to involve families in healthy eating activities. Family members may be able to talk about where food is grown or processed. They can help to supervise children and talk about what children have learned.

Ask older people or elders in your community to talk about traditional harvesting. They may be able to help you arrange berry picking trips or other foraging activities.

Before you go, read books and talk about field trips.

Books on field trips

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| <i>Out and About at the Bakery</i> by Jennifer Ericsson | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>Out and About at the Dairy Farm</i> by Andy Murphy | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>Out and About at the Supermarket</i> by Kitty Shea | (ages 4-9) |
| <i>Our Community Garden</i> by Barbara Pollak | (preschool-Grade 3) |

Encourage further discovery after the field trip by:

- ❖ Cooking and tasting foods.
- ❖ Growing plants.
- ❖ Making up stories or drawing pictures.
- ❖ Using props for dramatic play (such as pots and pans, big boxes, empty food packages, plastic dishes).

Field trip checklist

- ❖ The activity is developmentally appropriate and safe.
- ❖ Children are active learners, not just observers.
- ❖ The activity promotes healthy eating, physical activity and learning.
- ❖ Children and adults wash hands after touching animals or animal products.

Where does food come from?

Discover your local food system by visiting a farm, farmers' market, U-pick garden, community garden, dairy, fisherman's wharf or food production facility, such as a cannery, flour mill, cheese maker, or honey bee hives.

Find a list of farm tours in B.C. at www.aitc.ca/bc/ (B.C. Agriculture in the Classroom).

Where do we buy foods?

Visit your local stores and markets: grocery stores, fruit and vegetable stands, bake shops, butcher shops, natural foods stores, and fisherman's wharves.

- ❖ Look at the variety of foods available. Talk about food names, colours, shapes and textures.
- ❖ If possible, choose a new vegetable or fruit for tasting/cooking.



GAMES

Children love to play games. Here are some food-related games:

- ❖ I Am Thinking: Describe the colour, shape and form until someone can guess the answer.
- ❖ Riddles: Make up riddles.

TRY THIS

"I am thinking of a food that begins with the letter (or sound) ____."

Physical activity

Many children do not play vigorously. Link active play with healthy eating activities. Moving more is healthy and helps increase appetites. After a busy time playing with bean bags, make a recipe using beans such as Black and Orange Salad (p.137) or Bean Bag Chowder (p.167) or Hummus Dip (p.170).

TRY THIS

I am orange and long
I rhyme with "parrot"
I grow in the ground
I am a ____ (carrot).

Rhymes

Rhymes help children have fun while learning new words and ideas. Use well-known nursery rhymes about food or make up your own. After rhyming Miss Muffet, taste cheese curds and move around like spiders or sit on "tuffets" (small stools or mounds).

Songs, music and dance

Songs and rhymes about brushing teeth, growing foods or daily routines are fun for children. Some popular Canadian CDs for young children with songs about food and eating are:

- ❖ *Mealtime Fun* featuring Fred Penner and Sharon, Lois and Bram
- ❖ *Country Grocery, Singable Songs for the Very Young, and More Singable Songs for the Very Young* by Raffi
- ❖ *10 Carrot Diamond* by Charlotte Diamond

Songs such as "The Muffin Man" go along with baking muffins. Use Raffi's tune "Shake My Sillies Out" while mixing instant pudding in a shaker jar, or "Popcorn" while popcorn is popping.

Children enjoy dancing and pretending to be the wind blowing through the fields; water drops falling, bouncing and rolling off food; and food bubbling or sizzling.



Food for special days

Help children learn about foods from around the world and how food is tied to culture, religion, special events and celebrations.

- ❖ Find out about children's ethnic backgrounds and involve families in cooking food, and sharing recipes and traditions.
- ❖ Read a story, sing a song, show a picture or experience something related to the special day or theme, e.g. chopsticks, colouring hard cooked eggs, bannock.

BIRTHDAY AND PARTY FOODS

Today many celebrations feature candy and other less healthy foods. Plan other ways to celebrate. Talk to families about birthdays since some cultures or groups do not celebrate personal birthdays, and for others birthday cake may not be traditional. Include special birthday foods besides sweets in your celebrations.

- ❖ Feature a food from the child's heritage, such as dried salmon or dim sum dumplings.
- ❖ Children enjoy foods that match the colour of a celebration, such as eating red and pink vegetables and fruit for Valentine's Day while everyone wears red or pink.
- ❖ Make fruit or veggie pizzas in holiday shapes (e.g. pumpkin or Christmas tree) and decorate them for the occasion.
- ❖ Choose alternatives to candy at Hallowe'en, such as stickers.
- ➡ Try Pumpkin Possibilities (p.107).



CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

There are many food-related festivals, and some involve feasting and fasting. Common themes are the New Year, spring and harvest festivals, festivals of light and masquerades. Below you will find a calendar containing special days and potential themes for celebrations.

Talk with families about celebrating events that are important for their children. Be aware of children who cannot eat certain foods at certain times due to religious practices.

| January | February | March | April |
|---|---|---|---|
| New Year's Day Chinese New Year (sometimes in early February) Christmas (Orthodox) | Valentine's Day Mardi Gras (Christian) Flag Day (Mexico) Lantern Festival (Taiwan) | Nutrition Month St. Patrick's Day Doll Festival (Japan) Spring equinox | Oral Health Month Library Week Easter (Christian) Passover (Jewish) Earth Day |
| May | June | July | August |
| May Day Mother's Day First Salmon Ceremony (First Nations) Planting a vegetable garden | Dairy Month Summer fruits Father's Day Aboriginal Day Summer solstice | Canada Day Food we barbecue | B.C. Day Camping foods |
| September | October | November | December |
| Fall equinox Harvest time | Thanksgiving World Food Day Ramadan (Muslim) Diwali (Buddhist, Hindu; sometimes in early November) Hallowe'en | Remembrance Day National Child Day Rosh Hashanah (Jewish) | Chanukah (Jewish) Winter solstice Christmas (Christian) Kwanzaa (African American) |



Cooking to learn

Children who “cook” take pride in what they make and are more likely to try new foods. A cooking program that emphasizes healthy foods and safety first sets a good example.

MORE THAN COOKING...

Food preparation also gives you chances to:

Use words

- ❖ As you show “how to,” and as you talk and answer questions, you are helping children learn new words and concepts.
- ❖ Teach the names of different foods, cooking activities and equipment.
- ❖ Talk about the shapes you are cutting food into—circles, cubes, squares and triangles.
- ❖ Use pictures on food containers and recipe books to help children identify foods, letters and words.
- ❖ Play with words to give recipes fun names. We already know food names that aren't what they say they are, such as “hot dogs,” “Toad in a Hole,” or “Ants on a Log.” You could cook broccoli, sprinkle it with Parmesan cheese, and call it “Snowstorm Broccoli.” Other ideas?

Use numbers

- ❖ Practice numbers and measuring as you make a recipe.
- ❖ Sharing and eating pear slices teaches division and subtraction.

Learn about kitchen science

- ❖ As you add each ingredient, talk about what is changing. Talk about what the mixture feels or smells like. Talk about the changes you see as you cook food.
- ❖ Change ingredients and discover which tastes best—blueberry or blackberry pancakes?

Work together

- ❖ Giving step-by-step instructions or using picture recipe books helps children learn sequences.
- ❖ Children learn to cooperate and work as a group on a cooking project.
- ❖ Draw recipe steps or use measuring cup and spoon cut-outs to help children learn.



Plan ahead

- ❖ Cook with children on days you have help—ask families to volunteer. If possible, take a field trip to the grocery store to buy what you need for cooking.
- ❖ Work with small groups of children - up to four toddlers or up to six preschoolers at a time.
- ❖ Plan out the learning connections you hope to make with each cooking activity.
- ❖ Read the recipe to make sure you have what you need.
- ❖ Decide which parts of the recipe children of different ages can safely do.

QUICK TIP

PREVENT CUTS AND BURNS

- ❖ Talk about sources of danger. What is sharp? What is hot?
- ❖ Make it clear that cooking is serious business and fooling around is not allowed.
- ❖ Practice using the fire extinguisher. Have children practice what to do if their clothes catch fire—STOP, DROP and ROLL.
- ❖ Discuss safety in simple terms. "We are turning on the heat now. The pan will get very hot and could burn you if you touch it."

Before cooking

- ❖ Tie long hair back.
- ❖ Clear a workspace—using a low table makes it easier for children to work.
- ❖ Assemble all the equipment and ingredients that you will need. Gather materials and ingredients in advance so children won't have to wait too long.
- ❖ Place measuring cup and spoon cut-outs beside each ingredient to show the number of cups or spoons of each food to measure.
- ❖ Choose plastic measuring cups for liquids. They are lighter and safer for small hands.
- ❖ Talk about what you are going to do. Read the recipe through with the children before you start so that everyone knows what you are doing.
- ❖ Make sure children's clothing is appropriate. Short sleeves are best—rolled up sleeves and aprons help to keep clothes clean.
- ❖ Wash your hands and have the children wash theirs.
- ❖ Wash all fruits and vegetables before handling.

While cooking

- ❖ Never leave children alone in the kitchen.
- ❖ Describe and talk about what you and the children are doing. Encourage children to explain in their words what is happening as they beat eggs, or wait for cookies to bake.
- ❖ Consider letting the youngest children go first on a task that will be easy to do.



- ❖ Have children listen to cooking sounds and try to copy them (for example, the sizzling sound of pancake batter on a hot fry pan). This enhances children's awareness of the sounds of language, which is key to learning to read and write.
- ❖ Take pictures showing children's cooking efforts.
- ❖ Show children how to clean up spills and where to put dirty dishes.

While eating

- ❖ Have children talk about the food experience. How does the food look, smell, sound, feel and taste?

After the activity

- ❖ Remind children about what they have experienced and learned.
- ❖ Find out what children liked best about doing the recipe. Was there a part they didn't enjoy?
- ❖ Plan a field trip to a neighbourhood farm or garden to learn where food grows.
- ❖ Plant vegetable seeds to grow food to eat.
- ❖ Encourage children to re-create the cooking activity in the play area. They can pretend to run a restaurant where this food is served.
- ❖ Encourage children to talk to their families about what they have done. Send home the recipe.

Encourage families to involve their children in age-appropriate food activities at home.

- ➔ What can children do in the kitchen? (p.81)

QUICK TIP

RULES FOR CHILDREN

- ❖ Wash your hands before preparing food.
- ❖ Never reuse a spoon that has been used for tasting.
- ❖ No nibbling during cooking.
- ❖ If you cough or sneeze—use your sleeve, arm or elbow.
- ❖ If you wipe your nose—wash your hands again.
- ❖ Keep your fingers and cooking utensils out of your mouth.





Kitchen safety

Make safe food handling an important part of learning. Young children need frequent reminders. Always give cooking projects your complete attention.

FOOD SAFETY REMINDERS FOR EARLY LEARNING SETTINGS

- ❖ Serve only foods and beverages that are safe for children to eat.
- ❖ If children are not feeling well, or have colds or diarrhea, do not allow them to prepare food or set the table.
- ❖ Wash the tops of cans before opening; wash the can opener after using.
- ❖ Wash dishes and utensils in a dishwasher using the sanitizer cycle. If you do not have a dishwasher:
 1. Wash in hot, soapy solution.
 2. Rinse in clean, clear, hot water.
 3. Immerse in sterilizing solution for two minutes, e.g. 30 mL (2 tbsp.) bleach in 4.5 litres (1 gallon) of water.
 4. Allow dishes to air dry. Dish towels can harbour bacteria.

WASH VEGETABLES AND FRUIT

- ❖ Wash fresh vegetables and fruit under running tap water just before cooking or eating. This helps to remove dirt, insects, bacteria and pesticides.
- ❖ Scrub hard vegetables such as potatoes and carrots with a brush so you can eat the skins.
- ❖ Wash all fruit even when you do not eat the skin, for example oranges and melons.
- ❖ Wash soft fruit, such as berries, in a colander by spraying with a kitchen sink sprayer or dipping in and out of a large pot of water several times.
- ❖ Use paper towels to dry vegetables and fruit.
- ❖ Vegetable-fruit washes are safe to use, but these are no better than cold water and a scrub brush.
- ❖ Do not use antibacterial soaps or dish detergents to wash vegetables and fruit.

SHARP OBJECTS

- ❖ Keep sharp objects out of sight and reach of toddlers.
- ❖ Under close supervision, preschoolers can use serrated dinner knives or strong plastic picnic knives
- ❖ When cutting foods, limit groups to two or three children.



- ❖ Cut large fruits and vegetables into portions that children can easily cut into smaller pieces.
- ❖ Use a large, stable cutting board.
- ❖ Do not leave children holding knives if they are not cutting. Offer other children different tasks while they wait for a turn. When children are finished cutting, remove the knives.

STOVES AND MICROWAVES

- ❖ Keep children away from the stove; keep pot and pan handles pointed away from the edge of the stove.
- ❖ Only adults should put things in or take things out of the oven or microwave.
- ❖ Thoroughly mix food and beverages that have been heated in a microwave, and take their temperature before tasting.

WHAT CAN CHILDREN DO IN THE KITCHEN?

Children over the age of two can learn to help based on their physical ability and their ability to follow step-by-step instructions. Use child-size tools. If the counter is too high, use a sturdy step stool or have children sit at the kitchen table.

QUICK TIP

All ages can learn the importance of good hand washing.

Food handling skills develop over time. Below you will find examples of skills children are mastering at each age. Encourage children to learn words such as boil, broil, chop, dice, grate, knead, sauté, stir-fry, etc.

Two-year-olds can:

- ❖ Break cauliflower into flowerettes.
- ❖ Dip foods into dressings and sauces.
- ❖ Move ingredients from one place to another.
- ❖ Play with utensils (not knives).
- ❖ Scrub vegetables and fruit with a brush.
- ❖ Snap green beans.
- ❖ Tear lettuce greens.

Three-year-olds can:

- ❖ Knead and shape yeast dough.
- ❖ Mash soft foods using a masher or fork.
- ❖ Mix pudding or cake batter in a bowl with a large spoon.
- ❖ Place things in the garbage.



- ❖ Pour cold liquids from small jugs or measuring cups.
- ❖ Shake liquids in a jar to make instant pudding, salad dressing or butter (out of cream).
- ❖ Spread soft spreads, such as cream cheese or nut butter, on crackers, bread or celery sticks; top a pizza shell with tomato sauce, vegetables, cheese, etc.
- ❖ Stir to combine salad ingredients in a large bowl, using a large spoon or freshly washed hands.
- ❖ Wrap potatoes in foil for baking.

Four-year-olds can:

- ❖ Cut soft foods such as bananas, boiled carrots or cooked potatoes with a serrated plastic knife or table knife.
- ❖ Measure using measuring cups and spoons.
- ❖ Peel oranges or hard cooked eggs.
- ❖ Use a rolling pin or hands to make cookie dough or tortillas or roll bananas in cereal for a snack.
- ❖ Set the table and carry unbreakable items back to the kitchen.
- ❖ Use non-electric gadgets with adult supervision, such as an egg beater or a juice reamer (to make orange or lemon juice).

QUICK TIP

Whenever a child completes a recipe, send the recipe home. Encourage families to use cooking and eating experiences as times to be together, talk and build skills.

Five-year-olds can:

- ❖ Core, hull and remove pits from fruit such as strawberries, cherries or apples.
- ❖ Cut harder fruit, such as apples, and place them in a dehydrator.
- ❖ Grate with a plastic grater, shredding apples, cheese or carrots.
- ❖ Move chopped vegetables into containers with large openings, such as colanders or bowls.
- ❖ Push buttons on the blender, but not add or remove food from the blender or food processor.
- ❖ Scoop seeds out of a squash or pumpkin.
- ❖ Shell peas.
- ❖ Wash dishes.
- ❖ Wipe up spills.



Bundles of fun





Ready, set, eat

Learning to get ready for eating and talking at the table

These activities help support pleasant meal and snack times. Try tea parties, buffets and picnics for a change.

Literacy links

| | |
|--|------------------|
| <i>Eat Your Dinner, Please: A Pop-Up Book</i> by Allia Zobel-Nolan | (baby-preschool) |
| <i>How Are You Peeling? Food with Moods</i> by Saxton Freymann | (ages 3-7) |
| <i>How Do Dinosaurs Eat Their Food?</i> By Jane Yolen | (ages 4-8) |

Sing

WASHING OUR HANDS

Ensure hand washing is fun and lasts long enough by singing a song for at least 20 seconds, such as:

- ❖ The Alphabet song
- ❖ The Happy Birthday song
- ❖ Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Make up songs about washing your hands and enjoying mealtimes, such as:

Row, Row, Row Your Boat
Wash, wash, wash your hands,
Play our handy game.
Rub and scrub, scrub and rub,
Germs go down the drain, hey! (Repeat)

TALK ABOUT WASHING YOUR HANDS

When: Before and after you handle food or eat. Also after playing with animals or toys, or playing outside.

Why: Germs are everywhere. Washing your hands is the easiest way to stop germs from spreading and making people sick.

How: Talk toddlers through routines in the order in which things will happen.

QUICK TIP

Encourage children to use their table manners by modelling the use of "please" and "thank you."

TRY THIS

Have children copy you as you wash your hands and include friendly reminders.

First I'll turn on the water.
We will add the soap. Rub your hands together to get rid of all the germs.

- ➔ Follow the steps on the poster *How To Wash Your Hands* (p.49).

QUICK TIP

Children can help clear the table by putting food and containers back in the kitchen.



Let's make

Children can make centrepieces, menus and placemats.

CENTREPIECE

Children can decorate the centre of the table with items such as flowers, leaves or art.

PLACEMAT

What you need:

- ❖ Paper placemat for each child
- ❖ Crayons, markers or coloured pencils
- ❖ Pictures of the child, colourful foods or the season

QUICK TIP

Make a new "name" placemat every month or two or make a table tent with each child's name.

How to:

1. Give each child a paper placemat and materials to decorate.
2. Add their name and laminate or cover with a clear adhesive to use at the table.

PICTURE MENU

What you need:

- ❖ Cardboard
- ❖ Glue
- ❖ Pictures from magazines or grocery store flyers
- ❖ Crayons, markers or coloured pencils

How to:

Encourage children to make menus to use at meals and snacks or for a special party.

MEALTIME PHOTO ALBUM

What you need:

- ❖ Photo album with plastic pages to protect the photographs
- ❖ Photographs of each child at meal and snack times

How to:

1. Take photographs of children setting the table, serving themselves, using napkins, eating healthy foods, tasting new foods, talking nicely to friends and clearing their space. Ask parents to bring in pictures taken at home during mealtimes.
2. Put the photos into an album that has plastic pages to protect the photographs.
3. Look at the album together and learn what children have to say about the pictures.
What is Catrina doing in this picture? Can you tell what we had for lunch?



Let's play

GUESS WHAT'S FOR LUNCH GAME

When lunch is cooking, have children guess what they will be eating by sniffing the food smells. Talk about the foods the children think they smell.

I CAN FIND THE... (FOR TODDLERS)

Think of food that you can describe by its colour, shape or other characteristic. Ask the children to find it. Then ask the toddler to say what it is or, if the child does not know the word, respond with, "Yes, that is a red fruit, it is an apple."

I EAT MY... (FOR PRESCHOOLERS)

What you need:

- ❖ Knife, fork and spoon, chopsticks

How to:

Ask children to fill in the word when you say:

- ◆ I eat my cereal with a _____.
- ◆ I eat my meat with a _____.
- ◆ I eat my peas with a _____.
- ◆ I eat my lettuce with a _____.
- ◆ I eat my rice with _____.
- ◆ I eat my yogurt with a _____.
- ◆ I spread my butter with a _____.
- ◆ I eat my soup with a _____.

TABLE TALK AND MANNERS

Young children need to explore food and learn how to feed and serve themselves. Expect some messiness. Model and guide behaviour at the table as you eat and talk together. Use positive phrases, such as:

- ❖ No, thank you.
- ❖ No more, thank you. I'm full.
- ❖ Could you please open this (container)?

TRY THIS

- ❖ Who has something red to eat?
- ❖ Can you find something that is round and small?
- ❖ Who has a fruit that has a seed inside?
- ❖ Can you find something that is sticky?
- ❖ Can you find a food your mommy likes?
- ❖ Who has a _____ to eat? (e.g. carrot, apple, etc.).

QUICK TIP

If children show interest in a certain food, introduce it to the whole group.

TRY THIS

Make up a song with the children about table manners.

TRY THIS

The book titled *How Are You Peeling? Foods with Moods*, by Saxton Freymann, uses "foods with faces" to show feelings. This can help children know if they are feeling hungry for food, or if they need something else such as a hug or a talk if they are feeling sad, hurt or lonely.



- ❖ Please, may I have more milk?
- ❖ Please put the food in your mouth.
- ❖ What's another way you can ask for that?

PLAY RESTAURANT

Create a make-believe restaurant in the play area. Decide who will set the table, take orders, serve the food and eat. Take turns. Switch for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Encourage children to order vegetables and fruit as well as milk with each meal.

PRACTICE HAND WASHING

Fill the sensory table or basin with warm water. Provide small bars of soap, containers of pump soap, scrub brushes, clothes and dry towels. Encourage children to wash their dolls' hands and their own hands.

POURING PRACTICE

What you need:

- ❖ Water table or plastic dish pans
- ❖ Cups and pitchers
- ❖ Empty plastic milk jugs
- ❖ Old shower curtain to protect the floor

How to:

1. Set up water play where spills can be cleaned up easily.
2. Move the water play outdoors on nice days.
3. Talk with children as they practice pouring while they play.
4. Mark cups with lines at different levels and ask who can pour close to the line.

SERVING PRACTICE WITH SAND

What you need:

- ❖ Unbreakable serving spoons, serving bowls and plates
- ❖ Measuring cups
- ❖ Sand table or dishpans that contain sand
- ❖ Large boxes or trays to catch sand that spills
- ❖ Whisk broom and dustpan for clean-up



How to:

1. Set out dishes at sand play areas.
2. Talk about how to use serving utensils at meals and snacks.
3. Let children play with things in their own way.
4. Talk about how to use serving utensils at meal and snack time.
5. Talk about what foods you would serve with the spoons.

TRY THIS

Add some sponges to the water table or dishpans for water play. Allow children to experiment. Talk about how sponges soak up water as you are wringing them out.

TABLE WASHING

Children can wash and dry tables before and after meals and snacks. Provide a bucket with a little water and a sponge and paper towels. Show children how to wring out the sponge over the bucket and collect scraps of food. After the children clean up, sanitize the table with a bleach solution before it is used for eating.

SETTING THE TABLE

Show children where to put dishes at each place. Draw an outline of the plate, spoon, cup, and glass on a paper placemat as a reminder.

- How to wash your hands (p.49)
- Talking during meals and snacks (p.60)

The five senses

Learning to choose, touch, taste, smell, name, observe and talk about food

For young children, trying new things, including new foods, can be scary. Use a book, story or song, or a food activity (such as shopping or cooking), before the tasting activity to make this easier.

QUICK TIP

Be aware of food allergies before offering children a new food.





Literacy links

| | |
|---|------------------|
| <i>Crunch Munch</i> by Jonathan London | (baby-preschool) |
| <i>Eating the Alphabet</i> by Lois Ehlert | (ages 1-3) |
| <i>I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato</i> by Lauren Child | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>Rabbit Food</i> by Susanna Gretz | (ages 5-8) |
| <i>Green Eggs and Ham</i> by Dr. Seuss | (ages 5-8) |

Sing/dance/recite

What you need:

- ❖ Music with a good beat and, if possible, without singing

How to:

1. Ask the children if they go grocery shopping.
2. Explain that they are going on an imaginary grocery shopping trip with music and dancing.
3. Make enough room for the children to move around. Start the music.
4. Give cues and actions, making a story about going to the grocery store. As the leader, be sure to stay active and encourage lots of movement. Some suggested actions:

TRY THIS

Talk about how to act in a grocery store, such as taking care to drive the grocery cart safely.

- ◆ Drive to the grocery store (or take the bus).
- ◆ Get your shopping cart.
- ◆ Choose some ripe tomatoes. Squeeze them gently. Look for spots.
- ◆ Find some nice bananas. Yellow and green.
- ◆ Pick up some eggs. Medium size. Brown ones. Gently put them in the cart.
- ◆ Lift up a carton of milk. Watch, it's heavy.
- ◆ Don't forget cereal. Pick up the one that Mommy likes.
- ◆ Reach for a can of kidney beans. Put in some garbanzo beans and black beans, too.
- ◆ Unload the cart.
- ◆ Pay the cashier.
- ◆ Load the food into the bags.
- ◆ Let's go home (drive the car or ride the bus).

TRY THIS

What do you need:

- ❖ For making pizza?
- ❖ For a long trek in the forest?
- ❖ For a Teddy Bear's picnic?
- ❖ For making breakfast?



Try this way:

- ♦ Ask the children which items they want to put into their imaginary grocery cart.
- ♦ Play and dance along to "Supermarket Tango" from the Mealtime Fun CD, or Raffi's "Corner Grocery Store."
- ♦ Sing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" and give vegetables and fruit "sounds" such as crunch, slurp, chomp, squish, MMMM.

TRY THIS

If you have a food dryer, children can explore changes to food and taste the difference.

Let's make

TASTING PASSPORTS

What you need:

- ❖ Small blank books (you can make books by punching holes in paper and tying the sheets together with ribbon)
- ❖ Old magazines
- ❖ Old postage stamps
- ❖ Glue
- ❖ Children's pictures (Polaroid, print or digital) or drawings
- ❖ Crayons or markers
- ❖ Stickers (optional)

TRY THIS

Themes such as trips to Italy, China, Greece or India can involve tasting foods from those countries.

How to:

1. Give each child a blank passport and let them decorate the cover using the items listed above.
2. For each food they try or country they "visit," children can decorate a new page with drawings, pictures, stamps or stickers.
 - ➔ Eating around the world (p.120)

Let's play

MYSTERY FOOD GAME

What you need:

- ❖ Food to "discover," such as a kiwi, rutabaga, snow peas, avocado, jicama, pear, string beans, etc.



- ❖ Mystery container (e.g. drawstring shoe bag, paper bag, shoe box with hole cut in the lid or empty coffee tin with sock attached to the top).
- ❖ A dish of the food cooked if the mystery food cannot be eaten raw, e.g. squash, pasta, kidney beans.

TRY THIS

Start with a familiar vegetable or fruit.



- ❖ A picture of the food showing where it grows.
- ❖ A knife and cutting board (and a way to wash the mystery food).

How to:

1. Put the whole mystery food into the container without the children seeing.
2. Have the children sit in a circle. Tell them, "We are going to pass around a Mystery Bag (or Box or Tin). No peeking! Do not tell anyone what is inside." Pass the container to the first child.
3. Put one hand into the mystery bag without peeking and feel the food. Pass the bag from child to child until everyone has had a chance to feel the food. Then ask the children:
 - ◆ How does it feel—rough or smooth?

TRY THIS

For younger children, put three foods outside the Mystery Bag, such as an apple, a pear and peach. Have another sample of one of these foods (such as an apple) "hiding" inside. Children feel inside and guess the name of the hidden food.



- ◆ What shape is it?
 - ◆ What might it be?
4. Reveal the food. Ask:
- ◆ What is the name of this food?
 - ◆ Have you eaten it before? How? Where?
5. Look at the food. Ask:
- ◆ What colour is the food?
 - ◆ Where does it grow? A nearby orchard or a plantation in Hawaii? (Show the picture.)
 - ◆ How does it grow (on a tree or a vine, on the ground, underground)?
 - ◆ What part of the plant is it—leaf, stem, flower, seed or root?
6. Wash and prepare the food. Cut it open and, before you chop the food into bite-sized pieces, ask:
- ◆ Does it have a skin, a core, seeds, a stone, a pit, or sections? Is it moist or dry?
7. Taste the food. Offer each child a taste of the food. Ask:
- ◆ What does it smell like?
 - ◆ How does it feel in your mouth? (Smooth, soft, chewy, hard, bumpy, etc.).
 - ◆ How does it sound when you eat it? (Slurpy, crunchy, etc.).
 - ◆ What do you like about the taste of the food?
8. Talk about the taste adventure.

TRY THIS

Talk about foods that children were shy to try, but liked after all.

QUICK TIP

Water is always a good beverage to serve anytime food is tasted.

TRY THIS

Talk about fun names such as "Snappy Vegetables" and "Dinosaur Dip."

TASTING TIME

Setting up tasting tables, or organizing tasting parties, is a good way to introduce children to foods that may be new or unfamiliar. Include a variety of choices that will expand children's world of food.

- ❖ Use some foods that are new to the children, as well as foods that they already know and like. For example, use apple, banana and mango. Compare the foods. After tasting a plain fruit or vegetable, dip it in yogurt, salad dressing or hummus.
- ❖ Introduce foods from the various cultures of the children and their families. For example, offer

TRY THIS

Ask children which vegetable or fruit makes the most sound when they crunch it.



crystallized ginger, fennel or bok choy. Their names alone will be fun to learn.

- ❖ Try foods in different physical states so children can observe changes. For example, present raw and cooked carrots; grapes and raisins; cherry tomatoes and sun-dried tomatoes; bananas and frozen bananas; grated, raw beets and cooked beet cubes.
- ❖ To help children explore special foods that others with allergies or special diets eat, consider a tasting party. For example, offer pea butter, soy beverage or a soup that contains a special thickener.
- ❖ As children taste different foods, encourage them to describe their experiences and compare and contrast foods by asking these types of questions:
 - ◆ Can you think of other foods that have a similar smell?
 - ◆ Is this food easy to chew? Does it stick to your mouth?
 - ◆ How does it taste? Can you think of other foods that have a similar taste?
 - ◆ How does it feel on your tongue? Does it taste different after you swallow it?

TRY THIS

Make a chart showing the crunch range for different vegetables or fruit from quietest to loudest.

Pick a theme

- ❖ Foods that grow underground, such as potatoes, parsnips, turnips and carrots. Try roasting and eating these winter vegetables.
- ❖ Foods that cool you off on a hot day, such as watermelon, cantaloupe and honeydew.
- ❖ Foods with similar names, such as cooked spaghetti pasta and cooked spaghetti squash, or sweet potatoes and Yukon gold potatoes.
- ❖ Compare drinking water that is plain with water that has a slice of lemon, a few berries or fresh herbs in the jug.
 - ➔ Introducing new foods (p.40)

TRY THIS

"Why do you think they call this food _____?" (e.g. spaghetti squash, acorn squash, etc.).

TRY THIS

"Does this look like another food? What does it smell like?"

Going on a picnic

Learning how to plan a picnic and make food to take along



Literacy links

The Best Picnic Ever by Clare Jarrett

(ages 2-5)

The Animal Picnic by Leslie D. Perkins

(ages 4-8)

Sing/dance/recite

How to:

Sing/dance to and recite:

- ❖ *Teddy Bear's Picnic*
- ❖ *The Ants Go Marching...*
- ❖ *On a Picnic We Will Go* (To the tune of: *Farmer in the Dell*):

*On a picnic we will go
On a picnic we will go
Let's fill our basket
On a picnic we will go*

TRY THIS

Walk to a park, playground, community centre or nature trail. Bring a ball, Frisbee or jump rope, or explore with a nature scavenger hunt. Think of ways to involve everyone.



(Child's name) brings a _____ (food item, e.g. apple)

Let's fill our basket up

On a picnic we will go.

REPEAT the verse for each child.

Try this way:

When the song is over, take the items out of the basket. Ask the children:

- ❖ What food would you take on a picnic?
- ❖ What food needs to go in a cooler? (Milk, meat, salad, etc.)

Let's play

GOING ON A PICNIC

What you need:

- ❖ Picnic basket
- ❖ Picnic foods for each child—you can use pictures, plastic fruits and vegetables, empty packages or real food

Let's make

How to:

1. Have children sit in a circle with their picnic foods.
2. Place the picnic basket in the middle.
3. Ask children to sing and take turns skipping to the basket to put in their food.

Play picnic:

Using props, children can go on their own picnics with their dolls and stuffed animals.

- ❖ Picnic foods—children can bring pictures, empty food packages, plastic containers, plastic vegetables and fruit, play dough foods, etc.
- ❖ Picnic basket or insulated bag and freezer packs.
- ❖ Picnic tablecloth or blanket and cloth napkins.
- ❖ Plastic plates, cups, knives, forks, spoons.

Picnic foods:

- ❖ Talk with children about what they can make and eat at a picnic.
- ❖ Help children prepare snacks in advance (and pack them in plastic containers).

QUICK TIP

Remember to use ice or cooler packs if you take foods such as milk, salad dressings or meat.



SNACK IDEAS

Banana crackerwiches

Children spread peanut or pea butter (if playmates are allergic to peanuts) on a graham cracker, add sliced bananas and top with another cracker.

Ants on a log

Children spread peanut butter or cream cheese on pieces of celery and top with raisins or crisp rice cereal.

Egg canoes

Children cut hard-cooked eggs into wedges.

- ➔ Let's Make: Crunchy trail mix (p.147)

Try this way:

- ❖ Bring along a large bottle of water and plastic cups.
- ❖ Bring water and soap (or hand sanitizer gel or wipes) to wash hands before you eat.
- ❖ Set out a tablecloth or blanket. Let children hand out colourful napkins, plastic cups and plates for each person.
- ❖ Help children to pour water and pass around the snacks.
- ❖ Eat and enjoy!
- ❖ Pack up your picnic, throw out your garbage and recycle what you can.

TRY THIS

Talk about food shapes and recipe names in fun ways to add new words and encourage creativity, such as broccoli trees and egg canoes.

TRY THIS

Have a theme picnic, such as "Teddy Bear's Picnic," or an indoor picnic or a picnic for each season.



How does your garden grow?

Learning about growing food, the parts of plants we eat, and making a salad



Food does not magically appear on the table. Talk about where vegetables and fruit come from.

Some seeds take a long time to grow and others are quicker.

Plants need light and water to grow well.

Literacy links

From the Garden—A Counting Book about Growing Food by Michael Dahl

(baby-preschool)

The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss

(ages 4-8)

Sing/dance/recite

Garden at Midnight from the *Mealtime Fun CD*

The Garden Song by Charlotte Diamond on *10 Crunchy Carrots CD*

The Seed Cycle (see next page for lyrics) to the tune of *Farmer in the Dell*



Did You Ever Mix a Salad? to the tune of *Did You Ever See a Lassie?*

How to (*The Seed Cycle*):

Have half of the children crouching in tight balls on the floor, all in a row (they are the seeds). The other children are standing (they will be the water, the sun and the farmer).

The farmer sows the seeds. (Children pat seeds crouched on the ground.)

The farmer sows the seeds.

Hi Ho the garden—oh,

The farmer sows the seeds

Other verses:

The rain begins to fall... (Children make raindrop motions with their hands.)

The sun begins to shine... (Children raise their hands above their heads like the sun.)

The seeds begin to grow... (Seeds start to grow from crouched balls to large balls.)

The plants grow big and tall... (Children stretch.)

The farmer picks the corn... (Children pick corn off tall plants.)

And now the harvest is on...

Sing again with different vegetables (beans, peas, tomatoes) and different farmers.

How to (*Did You Ever Mix a Salad*):

Demonstrate a mixing motion, or children can sway to the song as they sing. Ask children to suggest other vegetables, fruits, or salad foods that they can add to the song.

Did you ever mix a salad, a salad, a salad,

Did you ever mix a salad

in this way or that?

With lettuce and tomatoes,

Cucumbers and potatoes,

Did you ever mix a salad

in this way or that?

TRY THIS

WORDS

Name some foods that grow in the garden:

- ✧ On vines—grapes, kiwi, zucchini
- ✧ Pumpkins and beans
- ✧ On trees—apples, pears, plums, cherries, oranges
- ✧ On shrubs—blackberries, raspberries, blueberries
- ✧ On small plants—tomatoes, strawberries, bell peppers, eggplants
- ✧ Under the ground—carrots, potatoes, onions

Name parts of plants we eat:

- ✧ Stem—celery
- ✧ Roots—turnips, potatoes, carrots
- ✧ Flowers—broccoli and cauliflower
- ✧ Fruit—tomatoes, oranges, berries

Name some gardening tools:

- ✧ Fork, spade, wheel-barrow, hoe, rake

Name some gardening action words:

- ✧ Digging, planting, watering, growing



How to (*Five Fat Peas*—rhyme/finger play):

Five fat peas in a pea pod pressed (Children hold a hand in a fist.)

One grew, two grew, so did all the rest (Put thumb and fingers up one by one.)

They grew and grew (Raise hand in the air very slowly.)

And did not stop,

Until one day

The pod went POP! (Children clap hands together.)

Let's play

PLAY GARDEN

What you need:

- ❖ Child-size gardening tools for children, such as a wheelbarrow, trowels, forks, watering can, rake, spade, and hoe
- ❖ Buckets
- ❖ Sun hats
- ❖ Gardening gloves
- ❖ Rubber boots
- ❖ Assorted baskets—wicker or plastic

TRY THIS

Children can practice hoeing, digging, raking and watering, as well as picking vegetables and fruit.

MUD PIES

What you need:

- ❖ Soil from your garden
- ❖ Water

How to:

1. Add a little water to a handful of soil.
2. Make into a hamburger shape and let it dry.
3. Check your mud pie. If it:
 - ♦ Is heavy and sticky and forms a solid clump, your soil has clay in it.
 - ♦ Falls apart, and just will not keep its shape after you pat it, your soil is sandy.
 - ♦ Is dark brown and keeps its mud pie shape, but is loose and crumbly, it is loam, the best garden soil.



SEED STRIPS

What you need:

- ❖ Paper towels with dots marked on one half where seeds will go
- ❖ Packets of seeds, such as sunflower, peas, beans or carrots
- ❖ Glue (1 cup flour and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water) in small dish or squeeze bottle
- ❖ Popsicle sticks and small plastic tubs or squeeze bottles for glue
- ❖ Hoes, trowels or digging sticks
- ❖ Watering cans

How to:

1. Give each child some seeds and glue.
2. Cover dots on paper with spots of glue (using a Popsicle stick if you do not have a squeeze bottle).
3. Put a seed on each glue spot (two if small seeds).
4. Fold the paper towel over on itself. Press closed.
5. Let dry for a couple of hours.
6. Take the paper to the garden to bury it to the correct depth.
7. Water.

TRY THIS

For carrots, space dots on paper towel about 8 inches (20 cm) apart. Bury to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (2 cm) depth. Wait 15-20 days for plants to show.

QUICK TIP

Although alfalfa and mung bean seeds sprout easily, they are a source of bacteria. These sprouts must be very well cooked for children to eat them safely.

SCARECROWS

Ask families to bring things from home which the children could use to help build a scarecrow. Suggest mismatched mittens, socks and shoes, a scarf, an old coat, plaid pants, and a hat. Use crumpled-up newspapers, plastic grocery bags or cotton batting for stuffing. Paint a face on an empty plastic milk jug.

COMPOST

What you need:

- ❖ Plastic bin with a lid
- ❖ Blocks or bricks
- ❖ Tray
- ❖ Shredded paper
- ❖ Red wigglers or earthworms
- ❖ Vegetable peelings, fruit peelings, coffee grounds and paper filters, tea bags, egg shells

**How to:**

1. Punch holes around the side of the bin to let air circulate.
2. Place the bin on blocks with a tray underneath.
3. Dampen shredded paper so it feels like a wrung-out sponge. Fill the bin with the paper.
4. Add worms.
5. Add compostable scraps.
6. Remove the contents of the bin when you no longer see any paper.

Note: Worms will eat their weight in paper and scraps every day.

EGG CARTON TOMATO GARDEN

What you need:

- ❖ Half of a clean egg carton with a cover for each child
- ❖ Spoons
- ❖ Bucket of potting mix
- ❖ Bucket of dirt
- ❖ Water
- ❖ Sticks for digging
- ❖ Tomato seeds
- ❖ Plastic wrap

How to:

1. Give each child half an egg carton to fill with equal parts of dirt and potting mix.
2. Put 1 tbsp. water in each section.
3. Use a stick to poke a hole in the centre of the dirt in each section.
4. Drop one tomato seed in each hole.
5. Push dirt over to cover the seeds.
6. Water the covered seeds.
7. Cover the holes with plastic wrap.
8. Close the cover of the box.
9. Two days later, open the carton, lift off the plastic wrap and add a little water.
10. When the green sprouts show, remove the plastic wrap. Put the egg cartons where the plants will get sunlight.

QUICK TIP

WORMS AND COMPOSTING

Does your neighbourhood have a composting project as part of a recycling or gardening program?

For the location of Lower Mainland composting demonstration gardens, call the Compost Hotline at (604) 736-2250.

There are composting demonstration gardens in Comox, Enderby, Gibsons, Kelowna, Kamloops, Mayne Island, Prince George, Salt Spring Island and Victoria. Call the Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre at (250) 386-worm.

For more information, call B.C.'s Recycling Hotline at 1-800-667-4321.

TRY THIS

Children can paint their flower pots before adding soil and tomatoes.



11. When seedlings are about three inches (8 cm) high, they need more room. If the weather is not warm enough outside, transfer them to flower pots. Use a spoon to scoop out all the soil.
12. Water the seedlings in their new pots.

Try this way:

- ❖ Make a *Pizza Garden*—plant bell peppers (orange, yellow, purple, red, green) and a few hotter peppers, such as chile, along with some herbs (sweet basil, oregano, parsley), zucchini, onions, broccoli and cauliflower.
- ❖ Grow a *Citrus Garden*—save seeds from oranges, tangerines, lemons or grapefruit and soak them overnight. Plant two or three seeds about one-inch (2.5 cm) deep in containers with drainage holes (egg cartons, milk cartons, peat pots). Keep them in a warm, sunny spot.

CONTAINER GARDENING

Use good soil and fresh seeds. For good drainage, drill or punch holes in the bottom or around the sides of the container ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch, or 1 cm, from the bottom), and set it on bricks or flat rocks.

QUICK TIP

Starting seeds indoors instead of outdoors gives plants a better start.

| Depth needed | To grow these veggies | In these containers |
|-------------------|--|---|
| 10 cm (4 inches) | Leaf lettuce, arugula, radishes, beet, spinach | Old baby bath tub Rickety wagon |
| 15 cm (6 inches) | Short carrots, kohlrabi, turnip, swiss chard | Old drawer Old kitchen colander |
| 20 cm (8 inches) | Bush beans, peppers, eggplant, cucumbers, squash | Buckets Restaurant-size cans |
| 25 cm (10 inches) | Cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts | Old car tires stacked up or old tractor tires |
| 30 cm (12 inches) | Tomatoes, long carrots, parsnips | Old bathtub or barrel |



Harvest veggies and soup

Learning about growing seeds and making vegetable soup



Literacy links

Growing Vegetable Soup by Louise Ehlert

(ages 2-7)

Stone Soup by Ann McGovern

(ages 4-8)

Carrot Soup by John Segal

(ages 5-6)

Sing/dance/recite

How to:

Sing/dance to and recite:

- ❖ *We Are Making Veggie Soup* (to the tune of *London Bridge is Falling Down*):
We are making veggie soup, veggie soup, veggie soup
We are making vegetable soup, now put in the ____ (vegetable of choice).
Take the ____ and stir it up, stir it up, stir it up,
Take the ____ and stir it up while making veggie soup.



Let's play

VEGGIE SOUP GAME

How to:

1. Sit/stand in a circle.
2. Each child chooses the name of a vegetable.
3. The leader then pretends to be stirring a large pot in the centre of the circle.
4. Each child calls out the name of a vegetable as he/she adds to the pot.
5. The child with that vegetable name joins in stirring the pot.
6. Continue until all vegetables are in the pot.
7. Keep stirring and moving and making sounds to show the soup is boiling.

TRY THIS

As a sensory activity for older children, handle and sort vegetable seeds.

Let's make

BEAN BAGS

What you need:

- ❖ Small beans, lentils or popcorn kernels
- ❖ Funnel
- ❖ Balloons

How to:

1. Use the funnel to fill one balloon with beans, lentils or popcorn kernels.
2. Cut the neck off the balloon.
3. Cut the neck off a second balloon and stretch it over the first balloon so that no beans can come out.
4. Repeat, adding several layers of balloons so the bean bag is stronger.

HARVEST CALENDAR COLLAGE

How to:

Make a collage for each month with pictures of vegetables and fruit that are in season.

- ➔ Seasonally available B.C. vegetables and fruit (pp.44-45)
- ➔ LET'S MAKE: Stone soup (p.146)



One potato, two potato

Learning about growing potatoes and foods made from potatoes



Literacy links

One Potato: A Counting Book of Potato Prints by Diana Pomeroy

(ages 3-8)

Let's play

POTATO HOP

What you need:

- ❖ 10 large potato shapes cut out of brown construction paper and numbered from 1 through 10. (If you have carpet, use felt potato shapes).

How to:

1. Tape the shapes to the floor in the proper sequence.
2. Let the children take turns hopping from one potato to the other as everyone recites the rhyme:

*One potato, two potato, three potato, four,
Five potato, six potato, seven potato more.*



*Eight potato, nine potato, here is ten,
Now let's start all over again.*

HOME GROWN MR. POTATO HEAD

What you need:

- ❖ Large pot or bucket
- ❖ Potting soil
- ❖ Seed potato
- ❖ Calendar

How to:

1. Plant a seed potato together.
2. Mark on the calendar when the potato shoot will appear.
3. Talk about what might be happening below the surface as you watch the first shoot appear, then the leaves and the flowers. Harvest your crop together.

TRY THIS

Make baked potatoes topped with leftover chili, salsa or chopped broccoli with shredded cheese.

Make mashed potatoes and mix with chopped, cooked spinach or mashed carrots to change the colour.

Have a tasting party for different potatoes: sweet, old, new, mashed, roasted, boiled, and baked potatoes.

SPROUT A SWEET POTATO

What you need:

- ❖ Sweet potato
- ❖ Jar and water
- ❖ Toothpicks
- ❖ Calendar

How to:

1. Fill a jar halfway with water.
2. Submerge a sweet potato in the water.
3. Add toothpicks to the sides of the sweet potato to keep it afloat.
4. Ask children to guess how long it will take for the sweet potato to sprout.
5. Invite children to observe the sweet potato each day.
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: One potato, two potato salad (p.135)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Oven-baked potato wedges (p.142)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Yummy yams (p.143)



Pumpkin possibilities

Learning about growing pumpkins and foods made from pumpkin

Literacy links

It's Pumpkin Time! by Zoe Hall and Shari Halpern

(ages 3-7)

From Seed to Pumpkin by Wendy Pfeffer

(preschool-Grade 2)

Pumpkin Soup by Helen Cooper

(ages 4-8)

Sing/dance/recite

How to:

Sing/dance to and recite:

- ❖ *Pumpkin Song* (to the tune of *I'm a Little Teapot*):

*I'm a little pumpkin
Orange and round.
Here is my stem,
There is the ground.
When I get all cut up,
Don't you shout!
Just open me up
And scoop me out!*

TRY THIS

Tour a Pumpkin Patch in October.

Let's play

PUMPKIN VOLLEYBALL

What you need:

- ❖ Orange balloons (one per child)
- ❖ Knee-high nylons (one per balloon)
- ❖ Extra-large garbage bags

How to:

1. Put each balloon inside a knee-high nylon. Inflate and knot the balloon.
2. Tie a knot in the knee-high so it forms a "balloon cover."
3. Place all the balloons in garbage bags and have the children stand in an open area.

QUICK TIP

SAFETY SUGGESTION

Use balloon covers (made from knee-high nylons) so that when balloons burst children are less likely to put balloon debris in their mouth and choke.



4. An adult pulls balloons out of the bag and taps the balloons into the air above the children's heads.
5. Children try to keep all the balloons OFF the floor.

Let's make

- ❖ Children can create a collage or picture of things that are orange including vegetables and fruit.
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Pumpkin soup (p.144)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Roasted pumpkin seeds (p.145)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Squashy muffins using pumpkin (p.160)

TRY THIS

What other vegetables and fruit start with the letter "P"? (Pineapple, peach, plum, papaya, pomegranate, and potato.)

What vegetables and fruit are orange? (Pumpkins, carrots, oranges, cantaloupe, peaches, and sweet potato.)

Fruit in trees

Learning about where fruit grows, exploring fruit and preparing a snack

Go on a field trip to learn more about fruit in trees. Visit an orchard or farmers' market or grocery store.

Literacy links

What's for Lunch? A Play-And-Read Book by Eric Carle (ages 1-4)

Handa's Surprise by Eileen Browne (ages 3-7)

Apple Pie Tree by Zoe Hall (ages 4-8)

Sing/dance/recite

How to:

Sing:

- ❖ *Two Red Apples:*

Way up high, in a tree (raise hands over head)

Two red apples smiled at me (form two circles with fingers)

So I shook that tree as h-a-r-d as I could (pretend to shake the tree)

TRY THIS

This activity uses apples but feel free to adapt it for other fruit, such as apricots, nectarines, peaches, pears, or plums.



*Down came the apples (move hands from up high to the ground)
Ummmm, they were good!!! (rub tummy)*

Let's play

APPLES AND OUR SENSES

What you need:

- ❖ Several different varieties of apples
- ❖ Cutting board
- ❖ Plastic, serrated knives
- ❖ Picture of an apple tree

How to:

Talk about exploring food:

- ❖ Show a picture of an apple tree.
- ❖ Explain that many fruits have seeds inside, which can grow into trees.
- ❖ "We use all five senses to learn about foods. Today, we'll learn about apples."

Sight: Hold up an apple and ask the children to look at it.

- ❖ Are all apples red?
- ❖ Is this apple shiny or dull?
- ❖ What shape is an apple?
- ❖ What fruit is bigger than an apple?
- ❖ Name a fruit that is smaller than an apple.

Touch: Give everyone a chance to hold the apple.

- ❖ What does it feel like?
- ❖ Is the apple heavy or light?
- ❖ Is it rough or smooth?
- ❖ Is the apple cool or warm?

Smell: Give everyone a chance to smell the apple.

- ❖ What does it smell like?

TRY THIS

"Where do apples come from?"
"What do they smell like?"

TRY THIS

What are different ways to eat this fruit? (As juice, sliced, cut-up in salad, mashed into a sauce, dried, in jam, baked into muffins or a pie? On a fruit pizza? In a quesadilla or other dish?)



Hearing: Give everyone a chance to listen to the apple.

- ❖ Does the apple make a noise when you shake it?
- ❖ What sound does an apple make when you eat it?

Taste: Cut the apple in half across the middle, and ask the children if they see any shapes (e.g. star). Count the seeds. Now cut the apple into thin slices and give everyone a chance to taste it.

- ❖ What does the apple taste like? Is it sweet, sour, salty or bitter?

TRY THIS

Where are different places that fruit grows? On vines (e.g. kiwi), plants (e.g. rhubarb and strawberries), bushes (e.g. blackberries).

TALKING ABOUT FRUIT

Look at different apples (or other fruit). Compare the colours, smells, shapes and textures of different fruit—pears, bananas, oranges, kiwi. Make a graph or draw the different ways to eat fruit.

Then try this:

- ❖ Choose, cut up and taste other fruit that grow on trees—pears, oranges, bananas.
- ❖ Draw or make a collage of the different kinds of fruit.
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Crock pot applesauce (p.125)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Instant banana pudding (p.133)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Apple cheddar quesadillas (p.165)



Berries

Learning about berries and different ways to eat them



EXAMPLES OF LOCAL BERRIES

Alder berries, blueberries, blackberries, blackcap raspberries, bunchberries, currants (black and red), gooseberries, huckleberries, Oregon-grape berries, salal berries, salmon berries, Saskatoon berries, soap berries, thimble berries, and wild or beach strawberries.

Berries ripen at different times from May to October. Wild berries are best from moist areas such as by the side of a lake or river. Leave some berries for wildlife and watch out for bears!

QUICK TIP

Change the activity to match the berries that are in season.

Literacy links

Jamberry by Bruce Degen

(ages 3-6)

Blueberries for Sal by Robert McCloskey

(ages 4-8)



Let's play

STRAWBERRY TOSS

Make three strawberry-shaped bean bags out of red felt. Dot them with a fine-tipped marker or embroider with yellow thread speckles. Fill bean bags with small beans or lentils before sewing them together. Find a bushel basket or bucket for the children to toss the bags into.

Sing/dance/recite

How to:

Sing/dance:

- ❖ *Pop Go the Berries* (to the tune of *Pop Goes the Weasel*):

All around the strawberry patch,

We picked some juicy berries

We brought them home and

washed them off,

Pop!—go the berries! (Substitute the type of berries you are picking.)

Let's make

BLUEBERRY ART

Put sponges, cut into small pieces, and blue paints in the art area to make blueberry pictures.

- ➔ LET'S MAKE: Cool berry smoothie (p.132)
- ➔ LET'S MAKE: Baked bannock with berries (p.148)
- ➔ LET'S MAKE: Berry pancakes using the rabbit pancake recipe (p.155)



Eggs

Learning about eggs and how to cook and eat them

Literacy links

Two Eggs, Please by Sarah Weeks

(preschool-Grade 1)

Scrambled Eggs Super! by Dr. Seuss

(ages 4-8)

Sing/dance/move/recite

Dance:

- ❖ Chicken or Birdie Dance
- ❖ Egg hunt for Easter

Sing:

- ❖ *Egg Salad Crackers* (to the tune of *Davy Crockett*):

Oh, yummy, yum, yum

Peel the egg, then mush it.

You are sure to have some fun.

Add a dash of salt

And a dab of mayonnaise

Spread it on a cracker

And you will be amazed

Recite:

- ❖ *Humpty Dumpty*:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

All the King's horses and all the King's men

Couldn't put Humpty together again.

TRY THIS

TALK ABOUT

- Where do eggs come from?
- What colour and shape are eggs?
- What recipes use eggs (e.g. muffins, pancakes, cake, cookies, French toast)?
- Where do you get your eggs (e.g. roadside stand, farmers' market, grocery store)?
- What are all the ways you can eat eggs (e.g. scrambled, hard cooked, in omelets, poached, fried)? Which ways do you like the best?
- What do chickens eat and drink?
- Go on a field trip to a farm that has laying chickens.

Let's make

EGG SALAD CRACKERS

Put onion skins in the water when you hard cook eggs to turn them a terra-cotta colour.

- ➔ LET'S MAKE: Egg salad crackers (p.173)



Bread

Learning about how bread is made and trying different types of breads



Literacy links

Bread, Bread, Bread by Ann Morris

(ages 4-8)

Sing/dance/move/recite

Sing:

- ❖ *Sandwiches are Beautiful* if you have the *Mealtime Fun* CD

Sing:

- ❖ *Making Bread* (to the tune of *Frère Jacques*):

Making bread, making bread.

Ummm, good, Ummm good.

Mix water, yeast and flour

And wait about an hour.

Ummm, good. Ummm good.

Kneading dough, here you go-oh.



*Now give it a punch
 And think about lunch.
 That felt good. That felt good.
 I can smell it baking.
 I can smell it baking.
 Smells so good
 Smells so good
 Making bread, making bread.
 Ummm good, Ummm good.
 Now it's time for tasting.
 Now it's time for tasting.
 Tastes so good.
 Tastes so good.*

Let's play

PLAY BAKERY

Assemble props for a bakery where children can pretend to make breads and baked goods to sell to their "customers." Make products out of play dough using rolling pins, measuring cups, bread pans, muffin tins and plastic knives.

SENSORY ACTIVITY

Place different types of grains on a sensory table for older children to explore. Examples include corn, rice, wheat, barley and oats. Provide magnifying glasses, pails, scoops, measuring cups, flour sifters and spoons to encourage active exploration.

BREAD TASTING PARTY

What you need:

- ❖ Three or four different types of bread: choose from whole grain, oatmeal, rye, corn, raisin, pumpernickel, pita, bagels, chapattis, bread pretzel, hard rolls, bannock, bread sticks, French bread (baguette), hamburger buns, naan, corn and flour tortillas.
- ❖ Three or four plates, a bread knife and a cutting board.

How to:

1. Show the children the different types of bread.
2. Cut each type of bread into bite-size pieces and put on separate plates.
3. Children pass around the plates and try different types of bread.
4. Talk about different breads and how they are made.



Let's make

TOAST

Young children can push the lever on a toaster to toast the bread.

SANDWICHES

Older children can help put the sandwich together and put it on the table.

➔ LET'S MAKE: Bread dough pretzel (p.161)

Pizza pizza

Learning about pizza and how to make it



Literacy links

Pizza at Sally's by Monica Wellington

(preschool-kindergarten)

Sing/dance/move/recite

Sing:

❖ *I Am a Pizza* by Charlotte Diamond



Let's play

PIZZA DELIVERY

What you need:

- ❖ Box oven or play oven
- ❖ Empty pizza boxes
- ❖ Pizza menus
- ❖ Play dough or clay pizzas children have made
- ❖ Table and chairs
- ❖ Telephones
- ❖ Tricycle and/or wagon

How to:

1. Children can play "pizza delivery," taking turns at ordering, delivering and eating the pizza.

Let's make

PIZZA ART

- ❖ Make pizza menus with pictures of foods that go on pizzas.
- ❖ Make play dough pizzas.
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Participizza (p.163)

For special days, make pizza treats, such as:

- ❖ Cookie cutter pizzas—for Hallowe'en cut pita bread or English muffins with a Jack-o-lantern cookie cutter and top with peppers, mushrooms and ham cut into shapes for eyes, nose and mouth.
- ❖ Holiday pizzas with dough shaped into a heart for Valentine's Day or an evergreen tree for a winter celebration.
- ❖ Fruit pizza—use slices of apple and banana, pineapple chunks, and seedless grapes cut in half.
- ❖ Pretend pizza cookies—cut cookie dough into round shapes. Bake cookies, cool and spread with yogurt and top with pieces of fruit and sprinkle with cinnamon.

TRY THIS

Use fresh oregano and basil to flavour the pizza.



Food from the land

Learning about local, traditional foods and food activities

If you are not familiar with local Aboriginal customs, check with elders or the cultural worker at a Friendship Centre to make sure your activities respect the culture. Invite local elders to tell stories about traditional foods and share recipes for snacks like Indian Ice Cream, which is made from soap berries.

Aboriginal people's traditional food

Aboriginal people have lived in British Columbia for thousands of years. Traditionally they hunted, fished and gathered from the land around them. It is traditional to dry or smoke food, such as salmon and berries, and store it in cedar boxes or in cold storage underground.

Coastal people traditionally ate salmon and other seafood, including mussels, clams, crab, abalone, sea cucumber, sea urchin and seaweed. From the land, they harvested berries, mushrooms and wild greens, such as cow parsnip, sheep sorrel, lamb's quarters and green shoots from salmon berries, fireweed and thimbleberries. They also ate wild roots such as camas bulbs.

Inland people traditionally ate salmon as well as deer, moose, water birds, roots, greens, berries and the inner bark of evergreen and poplar trees. They made pemmican from dried salmon mixed with salmon oil and Saskatoon berries.

Discover local traditions and food activities being practiced today.

Literacy links

A Salmon for Simon by Betty Waterton

(preschool)

Lessons from Mother Earth by Elaine McLeod

(preschool-Grade 3)

Let's play

HOOP GAME

What you need:

- ❖ Hoops or wheels
- ❖ Sticks

QUICK TIP

Traditionally, children rolled around hoops made of willow.

**How to:**

1. Children roll the wheels using sticks and take turns following the leader around. If the leader's wheel falls over, he or she goes to the back of the line.

LACROSSE FOR LITTLE ONES

What you need:

- ❖ An empty one or two litre plastic bottle (well-washed) for each child
- ❖ Newspaper
- ❖ Towel

How to:

1. Using a pair of scissors, cut off the bottom of the bottle.
2. Make an opening slanting back toward the handle or top.
3. Cover the cut edges with duct tape so the edges are not sharp.
4. Crumple up newspaper to make a ball.
5. Children take a bottle and scoop up the newspaper ball and run over to toss it on a towel on the floor.

Try this way:

- ❖ Children use the scoop to pick up small toys after they finish playing.

Topic for discussion:

- ❖ Lacrosse is the French name (la crosse or stick) for a game that Iroquois people in Canada have played for thousands of years. The Coast Salish played a similar game using a stick with a hook at each end, and a rawhide thong with big knots at each end.

THE TALKING STICK

During circle time, young children often want to talk at the same time. One way to help them take turns is to use a talking stick or eagle feather as a visual cue. This is a tradition with some Aboriginal people. Decorate your talking stick. Hold your stick or feather while you speak, and then pass it on when it is time for another person to talk. This helps young children learn to wait and listen.

CORN, BEANS AND SQUASH

What you need:

- ❖ Corn, bean and squash seeds
- ❖ Corn, bean and squash plants
- ❖ Edible fresh vegetables: corn, beans and squash (or pictures of the edible vegetables)



How to:

1. Show the fresh vegetables (or pictures) to the children. Name the vegetables. Discuss the different types of squash, beans and corn.
2. Show the seeds. Explain how the vegetables grow from planting the seeds into the ground. Identify which seeds are beans, which are squash and which are corn. Pass the seeds around so the children can touch them.
3. Show the plants. Explain how the seeds grow to become the plants, which grow the vegetables. Pass the plants around, encouraging the children to touch the different parts of the plants. Explain the different parts of each plant: leaves, flowers, stalks, roots, etc.
4. On the plains, Aboriginal people traditionally saved dry seeds in leather pouches for the next year. Children can save seeds in small paper bags with colourful yarn.

HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR SALMON?

Have a tasting party to try salmon two or three different ways: canned, smoked, barbecued or baked. Children can talk about the look, smell, feel and taste of different types of salmon.

- ➔ LET'S MAKE: Baked bannock and berries (p.148)
- ➔ LET'S MAKE: Salmon patties (p.176)

Eating around the world

Learning about different cultures and the ways they cook, serve and eat foods

Include ethnic foods on the menu throughout the year, especially those eaten in children's homes. Learn about foods from around the world at the grocery store or speciality markets. Plan special days such as a "Trip to India" or "China Day" to enable children to taste new foods and use different eating utensils, as well as learn about stories, music, dances, toys, games, dolls and puppets.

- ➔ Food for special days (p.75)

TRY THIS

Invite families to plan menus, help with special days and go on field trips to places that grow or sell specialty foods.



Literacy links

| | |
|--|------------|
| <i>A Salmon for Simon</i> by Betty Waterton | (ages 3-7) |
| <i>How My Parents Learned to Eat</i> by Ina R. Friedman | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>My Mom Loves Me More Than Sushi</i> by Filomena Gomes | (ages 4-8) |
| <i>Yoko</i> by Rosemary Wells | (ages 4-6) |

Sing/dance

Ask families to help you learn songs and dances from different countries. Dress up and move around.

QUICK TIP

Make a centre cookbook filled with children's family recipes.

Let's play

CHOP STIX PICK-UP

What you need:

- ❖ 1 pair of chopsticks for each person
- ❖ Plastic bowls with small cubes of cheese for each person

How to:

1. Explain that not everyone eats with forks and spoons. Pass around chopsticks and bowls.



2. Ask children how they could use chopsticks to pick up the cheese. Let children experiment with ways to pick up the cheese.
3. Give children lots of time to try before you demonstrate how to eat with chopsticks.

TASTING PASSPORTS (see p.72)

Try this way:

For each country children visit using their tasting passport, they can draw or cut out pictures of:

- ❖ Exotic fruit or vegetables such as mangoes, tangillo, avocado, Asian pears, eggplant.
- ❖ Breads from different countries, e.g. French stick, pita bread, tortillas, chapattis or naan, Portuguese buns.
- ❖ Cooked grains from different regions, e.g. rice (Asia), couscous (North Africa), bulgur (Middle East). Sample a bit of plain grain, then taste it when made into a recipe, e.g. couscous and apricots.
- ❖ Cooked pulses (legumes) that play a role in Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Indian dishes, such as lentils, split peas, kidney and cannellini beans, or chick peas.

For families:

- ❖ Send home blank recipe cards for children to bring back a family recipe.
- ❖ Send home recipes for new foods.
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Sunomono salad (Japan) (p.138)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Japanese rice balls - Onigiri (Japan) (p.149)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Terrific turkey taco (Mexico) (p.162)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Bean burrito (Mexico) (p.166)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Khichri (India) (p.169)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Hummus (Middle East) (p.170)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Crispy tofu lettuce wrap (Asia) (p.171)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Let's try stir fry (China) (p.172)
 - ➔ LET'S MAKE: Baked vegetable frittata (Italy) (p.174)



Let's make

Helping in the kitchen can be an adventure for children. Involve them regularly so they do not get too excited about "cooking." Repeat their favourites and send recipes home for families.

Help children learn to prepare food that is healthy and safe. We suggest recipes that the whole family would like to eat. Studies show that making "cute snacks" (such as food shaped like people or animals) does not help children eat well.

QUICK TIP

Serving sizes in this section are based on child-sized amounts of food.

HEALTHY RECIPE CHECK

- ❖ A healthy recipe includes mostly healthy ingredients. Minimize choices that are not in Canada's Food Guide such as marshmallows or candy.
 - ◆ Feature vegetables and fruit
 - ◆ Enjoy whole grains
 - ◆ Choose healthy oils and fats
- ❖ Ensure foods are simple to prepare so children can participate.
- ❖ Ensure food is safe to eat.
 - ◆ Children under four are at risk for choking. If recipes include nuts or seeds, these need to be chopped finely.
 - ◆ Do not use foods that might trigger allergies.
 - ➔ Food allergies (p.50)
- ❖ Have each child prepare only the food he or she will eat (or make sure food is thoroughly cooked before it is eaten by other children).

For more ideas on healthy choices and involving children in food preparation, go to:

- ➔ Seasonally available B.C. vegetables and fruit (pp.44-45)
 - ◆ Use this guide to choose when to enjoy the taste of B.C. produce from a local farm, farmers' market or grocery store.



- ➔ Cooking to learn (p.77)
 - ◆ This section suggests ways to help children learn while they are involved in food preparation.
- ➔ Kitchen safety (p.80)
 - ◆ Check this section for tips on keeping children safe while they help you with food preparation.

The following pages contain fun and healthy recipes that children will enjoy eating and helping to prepare. Look for these symbols:

 Shows recipes children can make for themselves



EGG ALERT

Shows recipes using eggs

Please note: In all recipes you will find imperial measures on the left and metric measures on the right.

WARNING

Do not include foods that pose a high risk to young children because of disease-causing micro-organisms, including:

- ❖ Honey for children under 12 months of age
- ❖ Raw or partially cooked eggs or foods containing raw eggs, such as cookie dough and cake batter
- ❖ Raw or under cooked meat, hamburger, chicken, fish or shellfish (including sushi)
- ❖ Raw or lightly cooked sprouts, such as alfalfa and mung bean sprouts
- ❖ Unpasteurized soft cheeses, such as Camembert, Brie, feta, Mexican-style cheese (queso blanco fresco) or blue-veined cheese
- ❖ Uncooked or under cooked deli meats and hot dogs
- ❖ Unpasteurized juice or unpasteurized cider
- ❖ Unpasteurized milk
- ❖ Unwashed vegetables and fruit



FRUIT

Crock pot applesauce

Serves 10-12 children

What you need:

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------|--------|
| 8-10 | Large apples | |
| 1 tsp. | Lemon juice | 5 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Water | 125 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Cinnamon | 2 mL |
| $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. | Nutmeg | 0.5 mL |

How to:

1. Choose naturally sweet apples such as Golden Delicious, Red Delicious or Gala.
2. Peel apples, core and slice thinly.
3. Combine apples, lemon juice and water in crock pot.
4. Cover and cook on low for four hours or until apples are very soft. (If you don't have a crock pot, simmer in an uncovered saucepan for about 10 minutes.)
5. Add cinnamon and nutmeg.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What does cooking do to the apple?
- ✦ What ingredient sweetens the taste?
- ✦ Cinnamon is from the bark of a tree found in India.
- ✦ Nutmeg is a seed from the fruit of the calabash tree, which grows in Africa.



Fruit kebab

What you need:

Choose a variety of ripe, fresh fruit to make into different bite-size shapes, such as:

- ❖ Apple half-circles
- ❖ Banana rounds
- ❖ Cantaloupe or honeydew melon cubes
- ❖ Grape halves
- ❖ Kiwi circles
- ❖ Orange moon shapes
- ❖ Watermelon triangles

How to:

1. Remove rinds and make fruit easy for children to cut.
2. Arrange fruit on a small plate and sprinkle with cinnamon.
3. Children can spear fruit with a fork. (This is less dangerous than a wooden skewer or toothpick.)

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What are the names of these fruit?
- ✦ What colours are the fruit?
- ✦ What shapes are the fruit pieces?
- ✦ How many pieces of fruit do you have?



Dip for fruit

Serves six children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup | Vanilla yogurt | 175 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Low-fat granola | 50 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Unsweetened, shredded coconut | 30 ml |

How to:

1. Mix yogurt, granola and coconut together in a bowl.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What are the different shapes of fruit pieces you dip? Apple slices? Orange sections? Pineapple spears?



Fruit yogurt parfait

Serves one child

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Yogurt, any flavour | 125 mL |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cup | Fruit—fresh, frozen or canned | 80 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Dry cereal or granola | 60 mL |
| 1 | Tall, clear tumbler or cup | |

How to:

1. Show children how to layer yogurt, cereal and fruit. Let them fill their cup with ingredients in any order.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What is your favourite fruit?
- ✦ What is your favourite cereal?
- ✦ In French, parfait means perfect. Parfaits are usually served in tall parfait glasses. Other parfaits are made with ice cream and whipping cream. We are making parfaits with yogurt.



Fruit pizza

Serves 30 children

What you need:

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 12 inch | Prepared thin-crust pizza crust | 30 cm |
| 8 ounces | Light cream cheese | 250 grams |
| 1 | Banana, peeled and sliced | |
| 4 cups | Assorted fresh fruit, such as pineapple chunks or slices, blueberries, strawberries, honeydew, cantaloupe, pitted cherries, apricot, and apple, peach or pear slices | 1,000 mL |
| | Non-stick cooking spray | |

How to:

1. Coat pizza pan with cooking spray.
2. Place the crust on pizza pan and bake at 350°F for 8-10 minutes. Cool.
3. Spread light cream cheese over cooled crust.
4. Arrange banana slices and assorted fruit on pizza. Cut into 20 pieces.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ The word pizza means pie.
- ✦ Does fruit pizza taste the same as pizza with vegetables?



Fro-yo on a stick

Serves four children

What you need:

| | | |
|-----------|--|----------|
| 1 cup | Plain yogurt | 250 ml |
| 1 cup | Fresh or frozen fruit—blueberries, strawberries, peaches, cherries | 250 mL |
| 1-2 tbsp. | Honey* | 15-30 mL |
| 4 | Popsicle® sticks | |
| 4 | 5 oz/140 mL paper cups | |
| | Aluminum foil | |

* Do not serve to children younger than 12 months old. Substitute corn syrup for the honey.

How to:

1. Slightly thaw the frozen fruit.
2. Place the yogurt, fruit, and honey in a blender. Blend to the desired consistency—some children like chunky fruit and others like it smooth.
3. Pour into paper cups, filling them three-quarters full. Cover the cups with foil. Make slits in the centre of the foil covers and insert Popsicle® sticks.
4. Put in the freezer for about five hours or until frozen solid. When ready, remove the foil and peel the paper cup to eat.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Fro-yo is a fun name for frozen yogurt.
- ✦ Unlike many store-bought pops, this frozen yogurt is made with real fruit.



Counting fruit salad

Serves one or two children

How to:

Count out the salad ingredients into a bowl. For example:

- ❖ 1—spoonful toasted coconut
- ❖ 2—pieces orange
- ❖ 3—slices apple
- ❖ 4—small cubes of cheese
- ❖ 5—slices banana
- ❖ 6—pieces melon—cantaloupe, honeydew or watermelon cut into small pieces
- ❖ 7—grapes (cut in half and remove seeds)
- ❖ 8—stir 8 times

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What different fruit could we put into a fruit salad?

TRY THIS

Children can help cut the fruit and cheese and count the pieces as they are added to the salad.



Cool berry smoothies

Serves four children

What you need:

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--------|
| 1 cup | Frozen berries | 250 mL |
| 1 cup | Milk | 250 mL |
| 1 cup | Vanilla or lemon yogurt | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. | Cinnamon | 1 mL |
| 2 tsp. | Sugar | 10 mL |

How to:

1. Place berries, milk, yogurt, cinnamon and sugar in the blender.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy.
3. Serve into four tumblers or put in the fridge.

TRY THIS

Frozen berries work best—choose blueberries, raspberries, blackberries or a combination. If you have fresh berries, wash them first and then freeze them.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ A smoothie is a drink made by blending fruit with yogurt, milk or ice cream (or a non-dairy milk, such as soy) until it is thick and smooth.
- ✦ What are other fruits we could put into a smoothie?



Instant banana pudding

Serves four children

What you need:

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------|--------|
| 1 | Small banana | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Applesauce | 125 mL |
| 2 tsp. | Plain yogurt | 10 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Cinnamon | 2 mL |

How to:

1. Mash the banana in a bowl with a potato masher.
2. Add applesauce, yogurt and cinnamon.
3. Serve immediately.

TRY THIS

Make instant pudding in a shaker.



SALAD AND VEGETABLES

Salad in a bag

Serves one child

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--------|
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Romaine lettuce or spinach leaves, chopped | 125 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Grated carrots | 30 mL |
| 3-4 | Mandarin orange sections | |
| 2 tsp. | Ranch or Italian salad dressing | 10 mL |
| 2 | Whole grain crackers | |
| 1 | Plastic, sealable sandwich bag | |

How to:

1. Set out bowls of prepared salad fixings.
2. Let each child each fill their own bag.
3. Pour in salad dressing and close the bag for them.
4. Children shake their salad then open it and eat with their forks as a snack (with whole grain crackers) or to start a meal.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Does your family eat salads at home?
- ✦ What other vegetables could we use to make a salad next time?



One potato, two potato salad

Serves one child

What you need:

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| 1-2 | Small potatoes |
| 1-2 tbsp. | Mayonnaise |
| Dash | Salt |
| Dash | Pepper |
| Dash | Cinnamon |
| Dash | Ground nutmeg |

15-30mL

QUICK TIP

Dash = 1 shake from a shaker jar.

How to:

1. Cook potatoes until soft, then let them cool.
2. Cut potatoes into small pieces and put in a cup.
3. Measure mayonnaise into the cup.
4. Add a shake each of salt, pepper, cinnamon and nutmeg.
5. Mix well with a spoon.

TRY THIS

Children can scrub potatoes. While the vegetables are cooking, read a story about potatoes. After the potatoes are cooked and cool enough to touch, children can cut them with table knives and mix the salad.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What are different ways we eat potatoes? (Baked, boiled, mashed, scalloped, in potato soup, potato pancakes, etc.)



Grate salad

Serves 16 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------|
| 5 cups | Cabbage, grated | 1250 g |
| 2 cups | Apple, diced or grated | 500 g |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cup | Plain yogurt | 80 mL |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cup | Mayonnaise | 80 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Lemon juice | 15 mL |

How to:

1. Grate cabbage and apple.
2. In a large bowl, mix together cabbage, apple and lemon juice.
3. If you are not ready to serve, cover and keep in the fridge so the cabbage stays crisp.
4. If you are ready to serve, mix mayonnaise and yogurt together, and add to the cabbage mixture.

TRY THIS

Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL) shredded carrots, or chopped celery, or $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (75 mL) finely cut-up raisins or dates.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Coleslaw comes from the Dutch words that mean cool cabbage.
- ✦ Why do we use a grater?
- ✦ Does grating a vegetable or fruit make it taste different?



Black and orange salad

Serves eight children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--------|
| 1 | 19 oz/540 mL can black beans, drained and rinsed | |
| 2 cups | Diced carrots, fresh or frozen, cooked | 500 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Ketchup | 30 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Cider vinegar | 30 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Dijon mustard | 15 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Sugar | 15 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Vegetable oil | 60 mL |

How to:

1. In a large bowl, toss together the beans and the carrots.
2. In a small bowl, mix together the ketchup, vinegar, mustard and sugar. Gradually whisk in the oil until smooth. Toss the dressing with the beans and carrots and refrigerate for several hours, to allow the dressing to soak in.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Black beans are sometimes called turtle beans.
- ✦ Why do you think they have this name?
- ✦ What is a salad dressing?
- ✦ What flavours of salad dressing do you like?

TRY THIS

For Hallowe'en, serve the Black and Orange Salad spooned into orange bell peppers that have been cut around the top like a Jack-o-lantern, with the seeds removed. If you have time, carve a face into each one with a small, sharp knife.



Sunomono salad

Serves 12 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------|
| 1 | Cucumber | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Vinegar | 125 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Honey* or sugar | 60 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Soy sauce | 15 mL |

* Do not serve honey to children under 12 months.

How to:

1. Slice cucumber as thin as possible; do not peel. Let children taste raw cucumber.
2. In a small bowl, mix vinegar, honey or sugar to taste, and soy sauce.
3. Add cucumber and marinate for 10 minutes, stirring frequently.

TRY THIS

To eat in a traditional Japanese manner, have children remove their shoes and sit on flat pillows or mats at a low table.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Sunomono is a sugary-vinegary Japanese salad.
- ✦ Did you know many pickles are made from cucumbers?
- ✦ What are other ways to eat cucumbers? (Cut up for a snack, in a salad with lettuce and tomatoes, or in a raita dip which is popular in India.)



Dinosaur dip

Serves six children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------|
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup | Plain yogurt | 200 mL |
| 3 tbsp. | Mayonnaise | 50 mL |
| 4 tbsp. | Dried vegetable soup mix | 60 mL |

How to:

1. In a bowl, mix together yogurt, mayonnaise and soup mix.
2. Refrigerate for at least one hour.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Why do we call this dinosaur dip? (Many dinosaurs ate plants. Both "dinosaur" and "dip" start with the same sound.)
- ✦ What vegetables are good to eat with dip? (Broccoli or cauliflower "trees," carrot or celery "sticks," bell pepper or turnip "strips," or cherry tomatoes.)



Kermit's dip

Serves 13 children

What you need:

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------|--------|
| 1 | Ripe avocado | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Plain yogurt | 125 mL |
| 2 tsp. | Lemon juice | 10 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Ground cumin | 2 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Hot sauce | 2 mL |

How to:

1. Cut avocado in half, remove the pit and spoon out the pulp from the skin. Place it in a medium-size bowl.
2. Add the yogurt, lemon juice, cumin and hot sauce.
3. Mash the avocado mixture with a fork or potato masher.
4. Cover with plastic wrap and put in the fridge for an hour so the flavours mix together.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Avocados grow on trees in warm countries such as Mexico.
- ✦ Avocados are sometimes called avocado pear or alligator pear. Can you think why?



Spinach dip

Serves 13 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--------|
| 5 oz | Fresh spinach (or $\frac{1}{2}$ package frozen spinach, chopped and thawed) | 150 g |
| 1 cup | Cottage cheese | 250 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Lemon juice | 15 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Sour cream or yogurt | 125 mL |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cup | Fresh parsley, chopped | 80 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Salt | 5 mL |
| | Pepper to taste | |

How to:

1. If using fresh spinach, wash, trim and cook spinach until wilted. There is no need to cook frozen spinach.
2. Thoroughly drain spinach. Use a salad spinner or paper towels to squeeze out excess water. Chop coarsely.
3. In a food processor, blend cottage cheese and lemon juice.
4. Add the spinach, sour cream, parsley, salt and pepper. Mix well.
5. Cover and refrigerate before serving to blend flavours.

TRY THIS

Children can spin spinach, measure ingredients and push buttons on the food processor.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ We eat the leaves of the spinach plant. What other leaves do we eat? For example, we eat lettuce and cabbage leaves.
- ✦ Popeye likes to eat spinach—who else?



Oven-baked potato wedges

Serves six to eight children

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|--|-------|
| 4 | Large potatoes (e.g. russet, Yukon Gold or sweet potatoes) | |
| 1 tbsp. | Vegetable oil | 15 mL |
| 2 tsp. | Mixed herbs or 2 tbsp. (30 mL) fresh herbs finely chopped | 10 mL |
| 1 | Sealable plastic container | |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Wash potatoes with scrub brush.
3. Cut the potatoes into wedges.
4. Put oil into the plastic container with the herbs.
5. Add the potato wedges to the container.
6. Close tightly and shake.
7. Put potatoes onto a baking tray and place in the hot oven.
8. Bake for 15 minutes, then turn with flipper and bake another 15 minutes until brown.

TRY THIS

Children can scrub potatoes and count the number of pieces you are cutting. They can take turns shaking the container.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What are other ways you can cook with potatoes? (You can make fish cakes, potato bread, scones or soup).

QUICK TIP

Baking potatoes with only a little bit of oil is better than frying them in a lot of oil.



Yummy yams

Serves 16 children

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|-------|
| 2 | Medium sweet potatoes or yams | |
| 1 tbsp. | Canola oil | 15 mL |
| | Salt and pepper to taste | |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (190°C).
2. Peel potatoes and slice into rounds $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch (1 cm) thick.
3. Brush oil onto potatoes or dip them in oil.
4. Place on baking sheet and bake for 25 minutes. Loosen potatoes with flipper and turn over. Continue baking until brown on the outside, but very tender inside—about 5 to 10 minutes.
5. Cool and eat.

TRY THIS

Children can scrub and peel yams.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Sweet potatoes are sometimes called yams—they can be orange or white-yellow inside.
- ✦ Do these Yummy Yams taste like cookies?



Pumpkin soup

Serves 10 children

What you need:

| | | |
|--------------------|---|--------|
| 1 | 16 oz/540 mL can solid pack pumpkin, unsweetened (not pumpkin pie filling) | |
| 1 tbsp. | Soy sauce | 15 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Honey* | 30 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Garlic salt | 5 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Powdered ginger | 2 mL |
| 3 cups | Milk or soy milk | 750 mL |

* Do not serve to children younger than 12 months old. Substitute corn syrup for the honey.

How to:

1. Put the pumpkin, soy sauce, honey, garlic salt, ginger and milk into a saucepan.
2. Stir soup together well with a whisk.
3. Cook on low heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Pumpkins are large, round orange fruit. Pumpkins are members of the gourd family—so are honeydew, watermelon and squash. Gourds grow on vines.
- ✦ Some hollowed, dried gourds are used as musical instruments.



Roasted pumpkin seeds

Serves eight children

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| 2 cups | Pumpkin with seeds | 500 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Salt | 30 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Melted non-hydrogenated margarine | 30 mL |
| 4 cups | Water | 1 litre |
| | Cooking spray | |

How to:

1. Pull the pumpkin seeds out of the shell.
2. Rinse the seeds well.
3. In a large saucepan, pour in water and add salt. Add the seeds and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Drain well in colander. When cool, place the seeds on paper towels and pat dry.
5. In a large bowl, toss pumpkin seeds with melted margarine until seeds are coated.
6. Pre-heat the oven to 350°F (175°F).
7. Spray the roasting pan with cooking spray.
8. Spread the seeds over the tray.
9. Bake for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally until the seeds are golden brown.
10. Cool and chop the seeds into small pieces to taste.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What happens when we plant a pumpkin seed?
- ✦ What other foods can we make from pumpkin? (For example, muffins, loaves, soup or stew.)



Stone soup

Serves 12 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---------|
| 1 | Quartz stone | |
| 2 cups | Assorted fresh or frozen vegetables: potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, pepper, zucchini, corn, green beans, peas, shredded cabbage, etc. | |
| 2 tbsp. | Vegetable oil | 30mL |
| Dash | Salt | |
| Dash | Pepper | |
| 4 cups | Chicken or vegetable broth (or water and bouillon) | 1 litre |
| 1 cup | Cooked rice | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cup | Parmesan cheese (optional) | 80 mL |

How to:

1. Place the stone in a pot.
2. Slice fresh vegetables.
3. Add oil to a fry pan and sauté vegetables for 2-3 minutes on medium-high heat.
4. Add sautéed vegetables to pot.
5. Add broth to pot and bring to boil.
6. Lower heat and simmer soup.
7. Add rice and fresh/frozen vegetables and cook until tender. Season with salt and pepper if needed.
8. Use slotted spoon to remove stone.
9. Allow soup to cool.
10. Ladle soup into bowls.
11. Sprinkle cheese over each bowl of soup.

QUICK TIP

Use a quartz stone that has been cleaned and boiled. Other stones may explode when heated.

TRY THIS

Help children wash or carefully cut vegetables and simmer soup until snack time.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Do you know the fable of the stone soup?
- ✦ What vegetables can we add to our soup?



GRAINS AND BAKING

Crunchy trail mix

Serves 16-24 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------|
| 2 cups | Toasted O cereal | 500 mL |
| 2 cups | Rice square cereal | 500 mL |
| 2 cups | Corn square cereal | 500 mL |
| 1 cup | Raisins | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Dried cranberries | 125 mL |

How to:

1. In a large bowl, measure together cereal and dried fruit.
2. Divide into re-sealable plastic bags or serving dishes. Shake to mix it up.
3. Help children use a measuring cup to scoop the trail mix into individual bags or bowls.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What other cereal or fruit could go into the trail mix?
- ✦ What are the different shapes of cereal?
- ✦ What are the kinds of dried fruit we can eat? (Raisins, apricots, plums, apples...)
- ✦ Where could we go to eat the trail mix snack?



Baked bannock with berries

Serves 16 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--------|
| 3 cups | Flour (use at least half whole wheat flour) | 750 mL |
| 3 tbsp. | Sugar | 45 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Baking powder | 30 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Salt | 5 mL |
| 1 cup | Berries | 250 mL |
| 1 cup | Water | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Oil or melted margarine | 60 mL |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. In a large bowl, mix dry ingredients with a fork.
3. Stir in berries.
4. Stir together oil and water and add to the bowl with dry ingredients.
5. Work mixture together with hands to form a ball. Knead about 10 times.
6. With floured hands, pat into a circle on a greased cookie sheet.
7. Bake for 30 minutes.



Japanese rice balls (Onigiri)

Serves one child (makes two rice balls)

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|--|-------|
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Cooked, enriched long grain rice | 60 mL |
| 2 pieces | Diced, cooked carrot or plum (fresh or canned) | |
| 2 tbsp. | Toasted sesame seeds | 30 mL |

How to:

1. Have children wash and dry their hands. Have children wet hands again, then sprinkle salt on their wet hands so they can form rice balls.
2. Shape rice into small balls about the size of a ping-pong ball.
3. Push a bit of carrot or plum into the middle and re-shape.
4. Roll rice ball in toasted sesame seeds. (Caution: Possible allergen.)
5. Place balls on a dish covered with wax paper and refrigerate until ready to eat.

QUICK TIP

One cup of raw rice yields three cups cooked.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Rice grows in fields of water called rice paddies.
- ✦ In Japan, rice balls are a traditional lunch-time meal.
- ✦ Who likes to eat sushi rolls?



Flatbread

Makes four round breads

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|
| 1 cup | Whole wheat flour | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Water | 125 mL |
| | Flour for dusting | |
| | Non-stick vegetable spray | |

How to:

1. Rub a bit of vegetable oil onto your hands to keep dough from sticking.
2. Combine ingredients by hand to form dough.
3. Knead dough well until it is elastic.
4. Let dough sit for 15 minutes.
5. Divide dough into four balls of equal size.
6. Press down on each ball, dust with flour and roll with a rolling pin. Roll into eight-inch (20 cm) rounds.
7. Heat skillet over medium-high heat and cook one round at a time. When bubbles start rising on top (about 40 seconds), turn over to cook the other side for about 30 seconds.

TRY THIS

Children can roll out balls of dough.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Flat breads are eaten in many countries.
- ✦ This recipe can be used to make a Mexican tortilla, an Indian chapatti or a roti from Fiji or Jamaica.



Flatbread dippers

Makes four round breads

What you need:

- 2 Whole grain pita bread rounds
- Non-stick vegetable spray or vegetable oil

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Cut pita bread rounds in half and separate top and bottom sections.
3. Cut pieces into wedges.
4. Place in a single layer on a lightly oiled baking sheet.
5. Bake six to 10 minutes until brown and crisp.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Pita is round bread made with yeast that may be flat or have a pocket.
- ✦ This bread is traditional in many Middle Eastern countries and Mediterranean cooking. Let's find these countries on a map or globe (Greece, Turkey, etc.).



Bagel dippers

Serves four children

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (105°C).
2. Slice bagel into quarter-inch (0.5 cm) coins and arrange on ungreased baking sheet.
3. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until crisp and light brown.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Bagels are made from wheat flour and yeast.
- ✦ The dough is made into a ring and boiled in water and then baked.



Tortilla triangles

Serves one or two children

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Cut each tortilla into six wedges using a knife or scissors.
3. Arrange on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 10-11 minutes or until crisp.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ A tortilla is a kind of thin, flat bread (made with no yeast or baking powder) that is traditionally eaten in Mexico or Central America. Let's find these countries on a map or globe.
- ✦ Corn tortillas are used for tacos, and flour tortillas are used to make burritos.



Puffy pancake EGG ALERT

Serves eight children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Non-hydrogenated margarine | 60 mL |
| 4 | Eggs | |
| 1 cup | Milk | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | All purpose flour | 125 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Whole wheat flour | 125 mL |

Favourite toppings: yogurt, berries or pieces of fruit, apple sauce and/or syrup

How to:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Measure the margarine into a nine-inch (22 cm) cast iron fry pan or a pie plate and place it in the oven to let the butter melt while the oven preheats.
3. In a large bowl, crack four eggs and whisk together. Stir in the milk.
4. Add the flour to the bowl and continue blending the mixture until smooth.
5. Remove the fry pan or pie plate from the oven and pour the batter carefully into the hot pan.
6. Place the hot pan back in the oven and bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until puffed and golden.
7. Serve with your favourite toppings.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ These pancakes are sometimes called Dutch pancakes.
- ✦ Watch the batter puff up and make mountains and valleys.



Rabbit pancake EGG ALERT

Makes 16, four-inch (10 cm) pancakes

What you need:

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Milk | 325 mL |
| 5 tsp. | Lemon juice or cider vinegar | 25 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Whole wheat flour | 125 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Oats | 125 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Sugar | 15 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Baking powder | 5 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Baking soda | 2 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Salt | 2 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Vegetable oil | 15 mL |
| 1 | Egg, lightly beaten | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Grated carrots | 125 mL |
| | Non-stick vegetable cooking spray | |

How to:

1. Make sour milk. Warm the milk slightly in the microwave or in a pot on the stove. Add lemon juice or cider vinegar and stir well. Allow this mixture to rest while you assemble the rest of the ingredients.
2. In a medium bowl, mix together the flour, oats, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir well.
3. Add the vegetable oil, sour milk, egg and carrots.
4. Beat the mixture with a hand beater until smooth.
5. Spray griddle with non-stick cooking spray. Heat griddle to a medium heat. (To see if the griddle is hot enough, sprinkle with a few drops of water. If bubbles skitter around, the temperature is just right).
6. Using a measuring cup, pour about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of batter onto the hot griddle for each pancake. Cook until pancakes are puffed and dry around edges. Turn and cook the other side until golden brown.
7. Top with applesauce, fresh fruit or yogurt.



Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Why is this recipe called "Rabbit Pancakes"?
- ✦ What other foods do rabbits eat?
- ✦ If you made pancakes with berries, would you call them "Bear Pancakes" or "Berry Pancakes?"



Oatmeal cookies

Makes sixteen, 4-inch (10 cm) pancakes

What you need:

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|--------|
| 1 cup | Non-hydrogenated margarine | 250 mL |
| 1 cup | Brown sugar | 250 mL |
| 2 cups | Rolled oats | 500 mL |
| 1 cup | Skim milk powder | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Water | 125 mL |
| $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups | Flour (use half whole wheat flour) | 560 mL |
| 3 tsp. | Baking powder | 15 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Salt | 5 mL |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (165°C).
2. In a large bowl, cream together margarine and sugar.
3. Add rolled oats, milk powder and water. Beat well with a spoon or hand mixer.
4. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt.
5. Stir flour mixture into the creamed mixture.
6. Divide dough into small portions and chill.
7. Sprinkle extra flour on a table and distribute pieces of dough to each child.
8. Roll dough to one-quarter-inch (0.5 cm) thickness and cut out cookies.
9. Transfer cookies to baking pans.
10. Bake cookies 10 to 15 minutes.

TRY THIS

Children can roll out cookie dough.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Oatmeal comes from the oat plant, which is a grain. Wheat is another grain.



Banana muffins EGG ALERT

Makes 12 medium-sized muffins

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--------|
| 1 cup | Whole wheat flour | 250 mL |
| 1 cup | Quick-cooking oatmeal | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Packed brown sugar | 125 mL |
| 2 tsp. | Baking powder | 10 mL |
| 1 | Egg | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Skim or 1% milk | 125 mL |
| 1 cup | Mashed banana | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Vegetable oil | 60 mL |
| | Non-stick cooking spray | |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Lightly spray a muffin tin with non-stick spray or use paper baking cups.
3. In a large bowl, mix flour, oatmeal, sugar and baking powder.
4. In another bowl, beat the egg and mix in the mashed banana, milk and canola oil.
5. Stir the banana mixture into the dry ingredients and mix lightly.
6. Bake 18-20 minutes or until muffin tops are browned. Loosen muffins and serve warm.

TRY THIS

Children can measure and mix.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ How do the ingredients change when we mix muffins?
- ✦ How does the batter change when we bake muffins?
- ✦ What are other fruit or vegetables that we use to make muffins?



Veggie fruit mini-muffins



Makes 24 mini-muffins

What you need:

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------|
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Vegetable oil | 50 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Brown sugar | 125 mL |
| 1 | Egg | |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup | Applesauce | 175 mL |
| 1 cup | Grated carrots | 250 mL |
| 1 cup | Grated zucchini | 250 mL |
| 1 cup | Whole wheat flour | 250 mL |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup | All-purpose flour | 175 mL |
| 2 tsp. | Baking powder | 10 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Cinnamon | 5 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Nutmeg | 2 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Salt | 2 mL |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Use non-stick mini-muffin trays or lightly spray trays with cooking spray.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together the oil and sugar. Beat in egg, then applesauce. Stir in carrots and zucchini.
4. In another large bowl, mix together both kinds of flour, as well as the baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt.
5. Fold dry ingredients into wet, until just mixed. Spoon batter into the trays, to the very top of the muffin cups.
6. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until a toothpick or cake tester comes out clean when inserted in a muffin.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Why do we grate vegetables? (Grating makes them easy to mix into muffins and the vegetables make the muffins tasty.)



Squashy muffins EGG ALERT

Makes 12 large or 36 mini muffins

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|--|--------|
| 1¼ cups | Whole wheat flour | 300 mL |
| 1 cup | Cornmeal | 250 mL |
| ⅓ cup | White sugar | 80 mL |
| 4 tsp. | Baking powder | 20 mL |
| ½ tsp. | Salt | 2 mL |
| 2 | Eggs | |
| 1¼ cups | Leftover mashed squash (or sweet potato, or canned pumpkin) | 300 mL |
| ⅓ cup | Milk | 80 mL |
| ¼ cup | Vegetable oil | 60 mL |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Use 12 large or 36 mini non-stick muffin cups or paper-lined muffin tins.
3. In a large bowl, stir together the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder and salt with a whisk or wooden spoon.
4. In another bowl, beat together the eggs, squash (or sweet potato or pumpkin), milk and oil.
5. Add the wet mixture to the dry mixture and stir, just until combined. Leave the batter a little lumpy.
6. Spoon batter into muffin cups and bake for 20-25 minutes. If a toothpick stuck in the middle comes out clean, they are done.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ We can make muffins using squash, sweet potato or pumpkin.
- ✦ What are other ways to eat these foods? (Baked in a loaf, as a vegetable, in a stew or soup.)



Bread dough pretzel shapes

Serves 12 children

What you need:

| | | |
|----------------------|--|--------|
| 1 tbsp. | Quick-acting yeast | 15 mL |
| 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cups | Very warm water | 330 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Sugar | 15 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Salt | 5 mL |
| 3 cups | Whole wheat flour | 750 mL |
| 3 tbsp. | Canola or vegetable oil | 45 mL |
| 1 | Egg | |
| | Sesame seeds (Note: Possible allergen) | |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°F).
2. Measure the water, sugar and yeast into a bowl and mix. Wait two or three minutes for the yeast to soften.
3. Stir in one cup of flour, then add the oil, salt and remaining flour. Sprinkle flour onto a wooden breadboard and place the dough on it. Knead dough for about five minutes.
4. Place dough in a bowl and cover it, letting it rise for about 45 minutes in a warm place away from drafts and open windows.
5. Punch the dough down and work it into a ball.
6. Divide dough into 12 pieces.
7. Use hands to roll the dough into ropes and then mold into different shapes—for example, the first initial of a child's name.
8. Place pretzels on baking trays.
9. Brush pretzels with a beaten egg and sprinkle sesame seeds.
10. Put baking trays in oven for about 11 minutes, until pretzels are light brown.
11. Cool and serve.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What letters and shapes can we make with dough ropes?
- ✦ Let's watch to see how the bubbling of the yeast makes the dough puff up. How does baking change the dough?



MAIN DISHES/MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES

Terrific turkey taco

Serves one child

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Corn tortilla | |
| 2 tbsp. | Cooked ground turkey, finely chopped | 30 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Shredded cheese | 15 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Shredded lettuce | 30 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Chopped tomatoes | 30 mL |
| 2 tsp. | Salsa | 10 mL |

How to:

1. Wash tomatoes and lettuce. Spin lettuce or dry with towels.
2. Shred cheese.
3. Chop tomatoes.
4. Put turkey, cheese, lettuce, tomatoes and salsa on tortilla.
5. Fold soft tortilla in a U shape to eat.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Taco is a Mexican dish made from corn tortillas. Tacos are served flat or in a U shape.

Try this way:

- ✦ Try making tortillas from masa (flour made from corn or maize) and water.



Participizza

Serves one child

What you need:

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Small round of pizza dough | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup each | Mushrooms, bell peppers and onion | 125 mL |
| 1 | Slice ham (optional) | |
| 6 | Pineapple pieces | |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Grated mozzarella cheese | 60 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Grated Parmesan cheese | 15 ml |
| 2 to 4 tbsp. | Tomato sauce | 30-60 mL |

Small aluminum pie plate, labeled with the child's name

Plate for veggies, ham, pineapple and cheeses

Cup for tomato sauce

Small paintbrush or teaspoon (or allow washed fingers)
to paint the pizza with sauce

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 500°F (250°C).
2. Cut up mushrooms, peppers, onion, ham and pineapple into bite-size pieces.
3. Flatten the dough into a round shape in the pie pan.
4. Paint the dough with tomato sauce.
5. Arrange vegetables, ham and pineapple on the pizza.
6. Sprinkle with two cheeses.
7. Bake in hot oven for about 10 minutes.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What happens when cheese and other foods are heated?

Try this way:

- ❖ Use crusts that are already baked - such as flatbreads, tortillas, Greek-style pita without the pocket, English muffins or bagels. Reduce heat to 400°F (200°C) and heat until the cheese melts and bubbles.
- ❖ Make Top Hat Pizza. Use a seven-inch round, whole-wheat pita with a pocket. Using kitchen scissors, cut out a circle from the top layer of the pita bread, leaving one



inch (2.5 cm) all around to form an edge or border. Put the ingredients on the pizza and put the small circle on top to make a "top hat."

- ❖ Children can help wash and cut up vegetables, ham and pineapple into small pieces. Name the ingredients as you spread toppings on the pizza.
- ❖ Sing Charlotte Diamond's "I am a Pizza" while you are waiting for the pizza to be cool enough to eat.



Apple cheddar quesadillas

Serves six children

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|----------------------------|--------|
| 1 or 2 | Apples | |
| 6 | Whole wheat tortillas | |
| 1½ cups | Cheddar cheese, shredded | 375 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Non-hydrogenated margarine | 30 mL |

How to:

1. Thinly slice apples into 24 slices, one-quarter-inch (0.5 cm) thick.
2. Sprinkle two tablespoons of cheese over one half of a tortilla.
3. Place four apple slices, carefully overlapping, on top of cheese.
4. Then sprinkle two more tablespoons of cheese on top of the apples and fold tortilla.
5. Heat one teaspoon of margarine in a large skillet over medium-high heat and cook the quesadilla until the cheese melts and the tortilla is golden brown on both sides (about two minutes per side).
6. Repeat with the other five tortillas.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Quesadilla (pronounced kaysah-DEE-yah) is a dish from Mexico. Queso is Spanish for cheese and Quesadilla means cheesy little thing. What are other vegetables and fruit we could put into quesadillas another time? (Pear slices, thinly sliced bell peppers or tomatoes.)



Bean burritos

Serves 20 children

What you need:

| | | |
|---------------------|---|--------|
| 1 cup | Cooked rice (white or brown) | 250 mL |
| 1 | 14 oz/398 mL can kidney, black or pinto beans, drained and rinsed | |
| 1 cup | Corn kernels, canned or frozen | 250 mL |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup | Mild salsa | 175 mL |
| 10 | 10-inch (25 cm) flour tortillas, warmed | |
| $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups | Shredded Cheddar cheese | 300mL |

How to:

1. In a non-stick pan over medium heat, stir together rice, beans, corn and salsa.
2. Cook for three to four minutes or until warmed through.
3. Divide mixture evenly between tortillas.
4. Sprinkle with cheese.
5. Roll up tortillas.
6. Cut in half to serve.

TRY THIS

Children can measure ingredients and sprinkle burritos with cheese.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Burrito, which means little donkey in Spanish, is a rolled-up tortilla dish from Mexico.
- ✦ The burrito can be filled with meat or beans and other ingredients such as rice, beans, lettuce, tomatoes, salsa, guacamole, cheese and sour cream.
- ✦ What foods do you like in a burrito? What other vegetables can you put into a burrito?



Bean bag chowder

Serves 12 children

What you need:

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------|
| 1 cup | Dried navy beans | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Chopped onion | 125 mL |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup | Chopped celery | 175 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Non-hydrogenated margarine | 30 mL |
| 2 tbsp. | Flour | 30 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. | Salt | 2 mL |
| Pinch | Pepper | |
| $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups | Skim or 1% milk | 375 mL |
| 1 | 19 oz/540 mL can diced tomatoes | |
| 1 cup | Frozen corn, thawed and drained | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Grated old cheddar cheese | 125 mL |
| | Bottled hot sauce (optional) | |

How to:

1. Rinse and sort beans. Place in a pot and add eight cups of water. Bring to a boil. Turn off heat, cover, and set aside for at least one hour.
2. After soaking, drain the beans and add four cups (1 litre) of fresh water and salt. Cook beans at a slow boil until tender, approximately two hours. Do not drain again.
3. Sauté onion and celery in margarine in a separate saucepan. Blend in flour and pepper. Stir in milk and bring the mixture to a boil.
4. Add the milk mixture to the beans, along with the corn, tomatoes and cheddar cheese. Heat to boiling and serve.
5. If desired, add a few drops of hot sauce prior to eating.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Chowder is a type of soup that is thickened with flour.
- ✦ Who has eaten clam chowder? Who likes to eat fish chowder?



Black bean fuente

Serves 10 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--------|
| 2 | 28 oz/796 mL cans tomatoes | |
| 2 | 19 oz/540 mL cans black beans, drained and rinsed | |
| 1 | 12 oz/355 mL can kernel corn, drained | |
| 1 tsp. | Pepper | 2 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Chili powder | 2 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Paprika | 2 mL |
| 3 cups | Finely chopped cabbage | 750 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Plain yogurt | 125 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Shredded cheddar cheese | 125 mL |

How to:

1. Finely chop the cabbage and put in a bowl. Put the cheese in a second bowl and the yogurt in a third bowl.
2. In a large saucepan, combine tomatoes (chop them up with a knife or scissors), drained beans and corn.
3. Heat the saucepan over medium-high heat and let the mixture bubble for five to eight minutes.
4. To serve, put about one-third of a cup of cabbage in each child's bowl. Ladle in about a half cup of the bean mixture. Stir in a large spoonful of yogurt, and top with a large spoonful of cheese.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Black beans are also called turtle beans.
- ✦ They are popular in central and south America and the Caribbean.
- ✦ The beans have a sweet flavour and are tasty in soups.
- ✦ What do you think about putting red cabbage or lettuce or different greens in the soup instead of green cabbage?



Khichri

Serves four to six children

What you need:

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| 1 cup | Basmati or long grain rice | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Small yellow lentils | 125 mL |
| 1 | Potato, diced | |
| 1 | Carrot, diced | |
| 1 cup | Chopped cauliflower | 250 mL |
| 1 cup | Peas | 250 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Salt | 5 mL |
| $1\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp. | Non-hydrogenated margarine | 45 mL |

How to:

1. Wash rice and lentils together a few times until the water is clear. Soak for at least an hour or overnight.
2. Wash rice and lentil mixture one more time and place in a large pot to boil with three or four cups (750-1000 mL) of water.
3. Once the mixture boils, add vegetables and salt. Lower heat to medium and cook for about 25 minutes, until soft. Add more water if needed.
4. Remove from heat and add margarine.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Khichri is a dish from India or Pakistan made from a mixture of rice and lentils. What are other ways to eat lentils?



Hummus dip

Serves eight children

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|---|--------|
| 1 | 19 oz/540 mL can garbanzo beans (chickpeas), drained and rinsed | |
| 1 | Lemon | |
| 1 | Clove garlic | |
| 1 cup | Plain yogurt | 250 mL |
| 1½ tsp. | Olive oil | 7 mL |
| | Tahini (optional) (Note: Possible allergen) | |

How to:

1. Drain and rinse the garbanzo beans.
2. Use a reamer to get the juice out of the lemon.
3. Mince or finely chop the garlic.
4. Put the garbanzo beans in a bowl and mash with a potato masher.
5. Stir in the lemon juice, garlic, yogurt and olive oil.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Hummus is a thick Middle Eastern sauce made from mashed chickpeas, seasoned with lemon juice, garlic and olive oil. When tahini (sesame seed butter) is added, it becomes hummus bi tahina. What are good foods to dip into hummus? (Cucumber and carrot slices or warm pita bread).



Crispy tofu lettuce wrap

Serves 12 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|--------|
| 2 cups | Washed and chopped vegetables: carrot, celery, bell peppers, snow peas, water chestnuts, bamboo shoots | 500 mL |
| 1 | Clove garlic, minced | |
| 1 tsp. | Ginger, minced | 5 mL |
| 5 tsp. | Canola oil | 25 mL |
| 5 tsp. | Oyster sauce | 25 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Soy sauce | 15 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ package | Extra firm tofu | 175 g |
| 12 | Iceberg lettuce leaves, rinsed | |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cup | Hoisin sauce | 80 mL |

How to:

1. Heat a wok or large frying pan, add oil and sauté garlic and ginger in oil.
2. Add vegetables and cook for two to three minutes.
3. Add oyster sauce and soy sauce.
4. Stir in crumbled tofu when vegetables are tender. Cool. Filling can be made ahead and stored in the fridge.
5. Spoon filling and some hoisin sauce onto lettuce leaf and wrap.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ This type of lettuce wrap is popular in Asian cooking.
- ✦ Tofu is also called bean curd.
- ✦ Tofu is like a cheese made from soybeans instead of milk.



Let's try stir fry

Serves 12 children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--------|
| 1 cup | Firm tofu, diced into half-inch (1 cm) cubes | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Teriyaki sauce | 125 mL |
| 1 tsp. | Brown sugar | 5 mL |
| 1 | Carrot, sliced | |
| 1 | Medium green or red pepper, sliced | |
| 1 cup | Broccoli florets | 125 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Vegetable oil | 15 mL |
| 1 | 8 oz/250 mL can pineapple chunks, drained | |
| 3 cups | Cooked rice (white or brown basmati) | 750 mL |

How to:

1. In a medium bowl, gently toss tofu cubes with teriyaki sauce and brown sugar until well coated. Cover and refrigerate for at least 10 minutes.
2. Cut up carrot, pepper and broccoli.
3. Heat oil for one minute in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
4. Carefully put the carrot and pepper into the skillet and cook for one minute, stirring with a wooden spoon.
5. Add the tofu and sauce, broccoli and pineapple chunks. Stir and cook one minute more or until broccoli is tender.
6. Serve over rice.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ A stir-fry is a quick way to fry small pieces of food in a large pan over very high heat while constantly and briskly stirring the food. For Asian cooking, a wok is used. A small amount of oil is used and food is cooked until tender yet crisp.



Egg salad crackers EGG ALERT

Serves one child

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------|
| 4 | Crackers (or 1 slice bread) | |
| 1 | Hard boiled egg | |
| 1 tbsp. | Mayonnaise | 15 mL |
| Dash | Salt | |

TRY THIS

Choose whole grain crackers.

How to:

1. Boil and cool eggs.
2. Crack and peel the eggs.
3. Crumble the egg into a cup.
4. Add the mayonnaise and a dash of salt.
5. Mix well.
6. Spread the egg salad on crackers. If using bread, cut into quarters to serve.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ What are different ways to cook eggs? (Boiled, scrambled, poached, in omelets...)



Baked vegetable frittata EGG ALERT

Serves one child

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Broccoli, cooked and chopped | 125 mL |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Stale whole wheat bread, cubed | 125 mL |
| 4 | Eggs | |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Milk | 60 mL |
| Pinch | Salt | |
| Pinch | Pepper | |
| Pinch | Dried basil | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Cheddar cheese, grated | 125 mL |
| | Non-stick cooking spray | |

How to:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F or 180°C. Spray an eight-inch (20 cm) square baking pan with cooking spray.
2. In a bowl, combine broccoli and bread cubes, then sprinkle the mixture evenly over the bottom of the baking pan.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Pour over broccoli-bread mixture in the pan.
4. Sprinkle with cheese and basil.
5. Bake for 20 minutes or until knife inserted in the centre comes out clean.



Easy cheesy macaroni tuna and vegetables

Serves eight children

What you need:

| | | |
|---------|--|--------|
| 2½ cups | Water | 625 mL |
| 2 | Chicken or vegetable bouillon cubes, or 1 tbsp./15 mL bouillon powder | |
| 2 cups | Whole wheat pasta spirals or elbows | 500 mL |
| 1 cup | Milk | 250 mL |
| 2 cups | Fresh, frozen or canned green beans, peas or broccoli, cut into half-inch (1 cm) pieces | 500 mL |
| ¼ tsp. | Black pepper | 1 mL |
| 1½ cups | Cheddar cheese, shredded | 375 mL |
| 1 | 6.5 oz/184 g can chunk tuna, drained | |

How to:

1. In a medium saucepan, bring the water and bouillon cubes or powder to a boil over high heat.
2. Add the pasta and bring back to a boil and keep stirring.
3. Lower the heat to medium-low and cook for eight minutes or so, stirring occasionally to prevent the pasta from sticking to the bottom of the pot.
4. Add the milk, veggies and pepper and continue to cook, partially covered, for another five minutes, stirring frequently.
5. Remove from heat, add the cheese and tuna and stir until the cheese is melted.

TRY THIS

Use frozen mixed vegetables.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ We are making macaroni using whole grain pasta and grated cheese.
- ✦ Macaroni and cheese is called macaroni cheese in the United Kingdom or mac'n'cheese in the United States.



Salmon patties EGG ALERT

Serves four children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | 7.5 oz/213 g can salmon, drained | |
| 1 cup | Mashed potatoes | 250 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Finely chopped green onion | 60 mL |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Finely diced red bell pepper | 60 mL |
| 3 tbsp. | Chopped fresh dill | 45 mL |
| 3 tbsp. | Milk | 45 mL |
| | Salt and freshly ground pepper | |
| 1 | Egg, beaten | |
| | Vegetable cooking spray | |

How to:

1. In a medium bowl, combine salmon, potatoes, green onion, red pepper, dill and milk. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
2. Gently stir in the egg. Form the mixture into four, three-quarter-inch (1.5 cm) thick patties.
3. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or overnight to let flavour develop.
4. Heat a large non-stick skillet over medium heat. Spray with vegetable cooking spray. Add patties and cook for about two minutes per side, or until browned on both sides and hot in the centre.

TRY THIS

You can use leftover cooked salmon with the bones removed.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Would you like to eat your salmon patties with a fork or in a bun like a hamburger?
- ✦ What are different ways to eat fish? (In patties or sandwiches; cooked in a pan, the oven, or a barbecue; or in a soup.)



Fish and veggie wrap

Serves six children

What you need:

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--------|
| 1 | 7.5 oz/213 g can salmon | |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | Spreadable cream cheese | 60 mL |
| 1 tbsp. | Green onion, chopped | 15 mL |
| 2 tsp. | Lemon juice | 10 mL |
| | Salt and pepper to taste | |
| 2 | 10 in./25 cm flour tortillas | |
| 2 | Romaine or leaf lettuce leaves | |
| 1 cup | Raw vegetables: chopped or thinly sliced beets, broccoli, carrot, celery, bell pepper | 250 mL |

How to:

1. In a bowl, mash together the salmon, cream cheese, green onion and lemon juice. Mix with a fork until everything is combined, then season with salt and pepper.
2. Lay the tortillas out on the counter and, with a knife or spatula, spread the salmon mixture evenly to within half an inch (1 cm) of the edges.
3. Cover the salmon layer with a lettuce leaf and put a row of vegetables down the middle.
4. Roll as tightly as possible and tuck in the ends.
5. Cut into rounds about three-quarters of an inch (2 cm) wide.

Topics for discussion:

- ✦ Wraps were first made in California.
- ✦ What are other foods we wrap up? (Burritos, bananas in a tortilla, bread and meat roll-ups...)



Resources

Resources on healthy eating for young children

With so much information about nutrition out there, how do you know what is reliable? Here are some key resources that support healthy eating for young children.

INTERNET

BC HealthFiles—easy-to-understand factsheets on health and safety topics. A number of factsheets have been translated into other languages, including Chinese, Farsi, French, Punjabi, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Search for topics such as: Baby's First Food, Helping Your Toddler to Eat Well, Meal and Snack Ideas for Toddlers, Severe Food Allergies in Children, etc.

www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide and Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide—First Nations, Inuit and Métis are available from your health authority or Health Canada.

www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide

Books and videos by Ellyn Satter—these resources about feeding children may be available through your library or health authority, or you can order resources through the website.

www.ellynsatter.com

Foodbites: Nutrition Education through Food Exploration—resource available from Western Canada Family Child Care Association of B.C.

www.wcfcca.ca

LEAP BC™—provides families and caregivers of children up to age five with tools and resources to encourage physical activity, language learning and healthy eating through fun activities and play.

www.2010LegaciesNow.com/LEAP_BC/



ActNow BC—Healthy Eating section includes information for families.

www.actnowbc.gov.bc.ca

Healthy Start for Life: Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity During the Toddler and Preschool Years—online resource and course for families and caregivers.

www.dietitians.ca/healthystart

Nutrition for Kids—includes a free online newsletter written by Registered Dietitian Connie Evers.

www.nutritionforkids.com

You can get more information on nutrition labelling by calling 1-800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232) or visiting:

www.healthcanada.ca/nutritionlabelling

AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

Dial-a-Dietitian is a free nutrition information line for British Columbians. Translation services are available in 130 languages. Greater Vancouver: 604-732-9191. Toll-free: 1-800-667-3438. Visit www.dialadietitian.org.

Health authorities provide a range of health care services, including community nutritionists. Consult the blue pages of your phone book for contact information for your local health authority.

BOOKS

Feeding Your Toddler—fact sheets and videos available in English, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Punjabi and Spanish. Visit vch.eduhealth.ca/ to view the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority's Print Health Education Materials resource catalogue.

Meals Without Squeals: Child Care Feeding Guide and Cookbook by Christine Berman, RD, and Jacki Fromer (Bull Publishing).

Toddler's First Steps: Best Chance Guide to Parenting Your Six-Month to Three-Year-Old—book available to parents from the B.C. Ministry of Health. Contact your local health authority to obtain a copy.



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