

## Kids in the Kitchen—Calcium as They Like It

Helping kids learn to cook gives them a head start on good nutrition and teaches a skill that will serve for a lifetime. Easy recipes with milk, yogurt and cheese are a great way to introduce kids to cooking. And growing bones need calcium-rich foods each day.

### Recipe for Learning

Cooking with kids is not only fun, but it also offers opportunities for learning. Here are just a few reasons to teach kids to cook.

**Promote good nutrition.** Seeing what goes into a recipe helps kids learn to make better decisions about the food they eat.

**Encourage adventurous eating.** Fixing their own food can encourage fussy eaters to try new foods. Kids are more willing to taste



**Berry Beary Banana Split**

foods that they have helped to prepare.

**Demonstrate kitchen and food safety.** Use this opportunity to teach kids the importance of washing their hands and other safety precautions, such as never touching a hot pan or always cutting properly with a knife.

**Bolster reading and speech skills, along with confidence.** Kids can develop language skills as they learn to read a recipe, follow the instructions and discuss new foods and cooking techniques. They'll build their vocabulary with new words, such as knead, mince and sauté and build confidence with each culinary success.

**Practice math skills.** Kids can learn math skills through counting, measuring and following step-by-step directions.

### “Cooking” At Any Age

Age	Cooking Tasks	Calcium-Boosting “Recipes”
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash fruits and veggies.</li> <li>Stir ingredients in bowl.</li> <li>Tear lettuce.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sprinkle shredded cheese on a casserole or salad.</li> <li>Stir small pieces of fruit into yogurt.</li> </ul>
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mash bananas with a fork or potato masher.</li> <li>Open packages.</li> <li>Peel oranges or hard-cooked eggs.</li> <li>Knead bread.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use animal cookie cutters to make cheese slices into fun shapes.</li> <li>Mix fresh herbs into plain yogurt. Use as a dip for fresh veggie strips.</li> </ul>
5-6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure ingredients.</li> <li>Cut soft foods with a blunt knife.</li> <li>Garnish food.</li> <li>Set the table.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice pouring milk from a pitcher into glasses. For a flavor boost, squeeze in some chocolate syrup and stir.</li> <li>Cut cheese slices into small squares with a table knife to make cheese and cracker mini sandwiches.</li> </ul>
7-8 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help plan the meal.</li> <li>Roll and shape cookies.</li> <li>Beat ingredients with a whisk.</li> <li>Find ingredients in a cabinet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make mini pudding tarts. Measure milk and follow instructions to make instant pudding mix. Spread pudding on graham crackers and top with a spoonful of fruit filling, such as cherry or strawberry.</li> </ul>
9-12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open cans.</li> <li>Use a microwave oven (with adult supervision).</li> <li>Prepare simple recipes with few ingredients.</li> <li>Use an oven (with adult supervision).</li> <li>Use a knife (with adult supervision).</li> <li>Shred cheese and vegetables.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make fruit and cheese kabobs. Cut fruit into chunks and cheese into cubes. Skewer fruit and cheese on toothpicks. Spoon fruit yogurt into a bowl to use as a dip.</li> <li>Top a veggie pizza with shredded cheese; bake as directed (with adult supervision when using the oven).</li> </ul>

**“Experiment” with science.** The kitchen becomes a science lab as kids see how food changes during preparation and cooking. They can learn about hot and cold, floating and sinking, dissolving, rising, melting and freezing.

### Ingredients for Success

Follow these pointers to make cooking with kids safe and fun.

- *Young cooks need constant supervision.* An adult should always help with using the stove, oven or microwave; handling hot pans or bowls; using electric appliances such as can openers, mixers and blenders; and cutting or slicing foods with knives.
- *Tell kids to wait until the dish is fully prepared before sampling.* Explain how this can help prevent the spread of germs that can cause illness.
- *Expect spills and messes.* Make cleaning up part of the cooking activity.

**Always put safety first.** Review some of these safety rules before you begin cooking:

- Point pot handles toward the back of the stove when cooking.
- Never put knives or other sharp objects into a sink full of water. Someone could reach in and get hurt.
- Keep electrical appliances away from water to avoid shocks. Never plug in or unplug electrical appliances with wet hands.
- Never add water to a pan that has hot oil in it. It could make the oil splatter and burn someone.
- Avoid cross-contamination. Don't put cooked food on an unwashed plate or cutting board that was used with raw food. Always use a clean plate and clean utensils.
- Keep dishtowels, potholders and paper and plastic packaging away from the range top and oven so they don't catch fire.

.....  
*Here are two great tasting food ideas that kids will love.*  
 .....

## Berry Beary Banana Split

Prep: 5 minutes  
 Total: 5 minutes

- 1 large banana, cut lengthwise in half
- 1 container (8 oz.) vanilla low-fat yogurt
- 1/2 cup TEDDY GRAHAMS Cinnamon Graham Snacks
- 1 cup sliced strawberries

PLACE one banana half in each of two sundae dishes or cereal bowls.

TOP with remaining ingredients.

SERVE immediately.

Makes 2 servings.

### Nutrition Bonus:

Nutritious and delicious, this berry-banana split is a good source of fiber from the bananas and strawberries. The yogurt is a good source of calcium, and the strawberries are high in vitamin C.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving:** 290 calories, 4.5g total fat, 1.5g saturated fat, 10mg cholesterol, 170mg sodium, 56g carbohydrate, 4g dietary fiber, 39g sugars, 7g protein, 2%DV vitamin A, 90%DV vitamin C, 20%DV calcium, 6%DV iron.

**Exchange:** 1 Fruit, 1 Milk (FF), 2 Carbohydrate

## Ham & Apple Waffle Melt

Prep: 10 minutes  
 Total: 12 minutes

- 4 frozen waffles (4 inch), toasted
- 4 slices OSCAR MAYER Smoked Ham
- 1 large apple, thinly sliced
- 2 tsp. Cinnamon sugar
- 4 KRAFT 2% Milk Singles

PREHEAT broiler. Place waffles in single layer on baking sheet; top with remaining ingredients, ending with 2% Milk Singles on top.

BROIL 2 minutes or until 2% Milk Singles begin to melt.

Makes 4 servings, one topped waffle each.

### Nutrition Bonus:

Try this open-faced sandwich as part of your breakfast or for a hearty afternoon snack. The 2% Milk Singles provide an excellent source of calcium.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving:** 190 calories, 6g total fat, 2.5g saturated fat, 30mg cholesterol, 790mg sodium, 24g carbohydrate, 2g dietary fiber, 10g sugars, 10g protein, 15%DV vitamin A, 4%DV vitamin C, 30%DV calcium, 10%DV iron.

**Exchange:** 1 Starch, 1/2 Fruit, 1 Meat (L), 1 Fat

Dietary Exchanges based on *Choose Your Foods: Exchange Lists for Diabetes* © 2008 by the American Diabetes Association and the American Dietetic Association.