

August: Kids Eat Right Month™

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Planning meals ahead of time can improve health while saving time and money. Getting children involved in planning and cooking meals can have benefits for the whole family, too. August is Kids Eat Right Month™, a nutrition education, information-sharing and action campaign created by the Kids Eat Right program, an initiative of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and its Foundation. Kids Eat Right Month™ spotlights healthy nutrition and active lifestyles for children and families, offering tips to help families cook healthy, eat right, and be active.



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Tips to cook healthy, eat right, and be active:

Get kids involved in the kitchen. When kids help out in the kitchen they learn cooking skills, important food safety practices, and better nutrition.



They also have the potential to further develop math, reading, science, and fine motor skills. At the same time, kids are having fun and increasing quality time together with family. Involve children in the cutting, mixing and preparation of

meals. Kids love control and creativity. Any way they can be included in meal planning or preparing will increase the likelihood of a successful dinner.

Kid friendly kitchen tasks. Children ages 3 to 5 can use cookie cutters, rinse produce, clear tabletops, mix simple ingredients, and use pieces of fruit to craft fun shapes. Six- to 7-year-olds can crack eggs



in a bowl, de-seed peppers and tomatoes, stir and prepare instant pudding, and prepare lettuce for a salad. Eight- to 9-year-olds can rinse and clean vegetables, use a can opener, beat eggs, measure

and mix dry ingredients, and use a food thermometer. Ten- to 12-year-olds can boil pasta and vegetables, simmer ingredients on the stovetop, follow a simple step-by-step recipe, slice and chop vegetables, and bake and microwave foods.

Don't forget food safety basics. Clean all countertops and kitchen surfaces prior to cooking.



Remember to pull back long hair. Never taste food until it is done cooking. When children are assisting with meal preparation, make sure there is always adult supervision. Always use clean utensils.

Wash hands in warm, soapy water before and after handling food.

Eat right and be active for healthy children.

Factors that can affect childhood nutrition include number of meals eaten away from home, portion



sizes, types of beverages consumed (especially those high in added sugars), and meal patterns and frequency. It's important to pay attention not only to nutrition, but also physical

activity levels. Encourage kids to participate in physical activities that are fun, age-appropriate, and provide variety. Current recommendations state kids should get 60-plus minutes of activity daily.



Learn more about how to cook healthy, eat right, and be active at

www.eatright.org/resources/or-kids. For more food, nutrition and health information from Nebraska Extension go to www.food.unl.edu.

Kid Friendly Recipe Ideas!

Serving up Salsa

- **Ingredients:** 4 cups fresh tomatoes, chopped, 1/4 cup finely chopped onion, 1 jalapeno, seeded and chopped, 1 tablespoon vinegar or lime juice, 1 teaspoon cumin, 1 teaspoon minced garlic, and 1 teaspoon salt, optional.

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- **Directions:** In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. For better flavor, let the ingredients stand in the refrigerator for at least one hour. Refrigerate until ready to eat. Serve with veggies, tortilla chips, quesadillas, or on a salad or baked potato. Makes 14 servings.
- **Source:** <http://food.unl.edu/servingupsalsa>

Berry Funny Face

- **Ingredients:** Blueberries and raspberries*, 1 grape*, Low-fat cream cheese, ½ of a whole-wheat mini bagel
- **Directions:** Spread cream cheese on bagel. Decorate with berries for eyes and mouth and a grape for the nose! *Cut berries and grape in half to reduce choking hazard for young children.
- **Source:** <http://food.unl.edu/fnh/berryfun>

Yummy Roasted Broccoli and Red Peppers

- **Ingredients:** 5 cups fresh broccoli florets (about 1 large bunch), 1 red bell pepper, cut into bite-sized pieces, 2 teaspoons olive or vegetable oil, 1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper, and 1 clove garlic, minced.
- **Directions:** Preheat the oven to 400°F. Add broccoli, pepper, oil, lemon pepper and garlic to a self-sealing plastic bag; shake until ingredients are combined (or mix together in a bowl). Spread the mixture out in an even layer on a baking sheet. Bake in the preheated oven until vegetables are tender enough to pierce with a fork, 15 to 20 minutes. Makes 6 servings.
- **Cook's notes:** Feel free to use a combination of other vegetables such as cauliflower, carrots, Brussels sprouts, etc.
- **Source:** <https://food.unl.edu/roasted-vegetables>

Additional Resources & Links:

All the Healthy Bites. *Healthy Bites* is a newsletter that focuses on a different food, nutrition and / or health theme for each month.

http://food.unl.edu/fnh/healthybites_archives

Cook it Quick. Our goal is to make you "hungry for healthy food" by offering tips and delicious, quick-to-prepare, inexpensive recipes.

<http://food.unl.edu/fnh/cook-it-quick-recipes>

Food Reflections. Food Reflections is a monthly email newsletter. Each issue provides a "how-to" message on food, nutrition, or food safety for health professionals, educators, and consumers.

<http://food.unl.edu/fnh/fr-archive>

Family Fun on the Run. Monthly newsletters are designed to help you achieve a healthier lifestyle by making walking an important part of your personal fitness program.

<http://food.unl.edu/family-fun-on-the-run>

Food Fun for Young Children. Serving up quick, healthy snack ideas for younger children.

<http://food.unl.edu/fnh/food-fun-for-young-children>

Nebraska Extension Food, Nutrition, and Health by the Month Calendar. National Food Days, Weeks, and Months for August.

<http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/august>

Sources:

1. Eat Right Pro (2015). During Kids Eat Right Month™, Academy Encourages All Families to 'Shop Smart, Cook Healthy and Eat Right'. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Accessed at: <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/media/press-releases/kids-eat-right-month/academy-enshop-smart-cook-healthy-eat-right>.
2. Eat Right Pro. (2015). Nutrition Guidance for Healthy Children Ages 2 to 11 Years Infographic. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Accessed at: <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/media/multimedia-news-center/infographics/nutrition-guidance-for-healthy-children-ages-2-to-11-years>.
3. Eat Right Pro. (2015). Kid-Friendly Kitchen Tasks Infographic. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Accessed at: <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/media/multimedia-news-center/infographics/kid-friendly-kitchen-tasks>.

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