Holiday Food Preparation with Young Children

What better way to spend time with your family during the holidays than in your kitchen? Making tasty holiday treats with your children can be fun and educational!

To ensure children have a fun, yet safe time in the kitchen, check out these tips in the chart below from USDA. Tips provided are general and depending on the child, some tasks may be completed at different ages.

Age Appropriate Tasks for Cooking with Kids

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>2 year-olds</th>
<th>3 year-olds</th>
<th>4 year-olds</th>
<th>5 year-olds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wash produce</td>
<td>Wash produce</td>
<td>Add ingredients</td>
<td>Peel eggs</td>
<td>Measure liquids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break cauliflower and broccoli into smaller pieces</td>
<td>Scoop and mash potatoes</td>
<td>Help set the table</td>
<td>Cut soft fruit with a dull or plastic knife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather ingredients</td>
<td>Squeeze citrus fruits</td>
<td>Crack eggs</td>
<td>Use manual egg beater</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throw things in the trash</td>
<td>Peel some fruit like bananas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wipe down table and counter tops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choking Hazards

We need to make sure when younger children are helping that we take some safety precautions. Here are some helpful and easy tips to avoid potential choking hazards:

- Always keep an eye on children. Parental supervision while eating is very important and can prevent many choking incidences.
- Have children sit down before they start eating. Walking and running while trying to eat increases the risk of choking.
- Be sure to cut your child’s food into at most ½-inch pieces. This will allow for easier chewing and swallowing, preventing food from becoming lodged in their throat and blocking the airway.

Sources:


Holiday Fruit Parfait

- ½ cup of red and green fruit such as green grapes, kiwi, strawberries, raspberries, etc.
- ½ cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- Maple syrup (optional)

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Rinse produce and pat dry with paper towel.
3. Cut fruit up into small pieces, ½ inch or less, safe enough for children under 5 years old.
4. Layer yogurt with fruit in a plastic glass. If desired, drizzle a teaspoon of maple syrup for an added touch of sweetness.

Makes one serving containing 143 calories, 0.1 g fat, 59 mg sodium, 33 g carbohydrate, 1.8 g fiber, 4 g protein.

Tip: Let children get involved by creating their own parfait and cutting fruit up with a plastic or dull knife. Children are more willing to try new foods if they help make them.

For more information check out Food Fun for Young Children:

[http://go.unl.edu/chi](http://go.unl.edu/chi)