



Cooking with Young Children

Involving children in the kitchen doesn't have to lead to chaos! There are numerous benefits to including young ones in food preparation, such as enjoying quality bonding time and allowing them to learn about and appreciate the art of cooking. Just be sure to bring plenty of patience and be prepared for some mess!

The food and drinks young children have throughout the day are important for his or her health. Fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy are a part of a healthy eating style and together provide the nutrients their bodies need. These whole grain cookies would pair perfectly with a glass of low-fat milk for a tasty snack.

Cowboy Cookies

- ½ cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 ⅓ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 ⅓ cups quick or old-fashioned oats
- ¾ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips



1. Wash hands with soap and water. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Break egg into a shallow dish. Wash hands with soap and water after cracking raw egg.
3. In a medium-sized bowl, mix together butter, egg, and vanilla. Add remaining ingredients. Stir together until mixture is well blended. (Note: you may need to use your hands to finish mixing dough.)
4. Shape the dough into walnut-sized balls. Wash hands with soap and water after handling raw cookie dough.
5. Grease a cookie sheet, placing dough balls 2 inches apart.
6. Bake cookies for 11 to 13 minutes. Once done, cool on a wire rack.
7. Makes 30 cookies. Each cookie contains 110 calories, 5 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 80 mg sodium, 17 g carbohydrate, 9 g sugar, 1 g fiber, 2 g protein.

Be creative! This is a fun recipe to have kids adapt and create something new. Try adding different types of dried fruit, nuts, or flavors of baking chips. Here are additional ideas to get you started:

- Peanut butter (½ cup)
- Chopped peanuts (1 cup)
- Cinnamon (¼ tsp.)
- Flaked coconut (½ cup)
- Chopped pecans or walnuts (½ cup)

Check out more Food Fun for Young Children Newsletters:

<http://go.unl.edu/food-fun>

Sources:

- MyPlate Tips for Preschoolers, USDA: <https://go.unl.edu/preschoolers>
- Kitchen Activities, USDA: <https://go.unl.edu/kitchen-activities-usda>