

THE ENRICHMENT PROJECT

Badge Program

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COOKING BASICS

Steps

1. Why teach kids how to cook?

Not only does cooking reinforce reading, math, science and nutrition skills, the kids have fun learning! Cooking with kids takes time, patience and a high tolerance to the resulting “mess.” Do not assume your kids know anything about cooking. If one knows how to do a step, let them demonstrate for their friends. You want them to have a sense of accomplishment and pride when you are done.

2. Kitchen safety.

Work to create a list of safety rules specific to kitchen activities such as using a knife properly or how to handle a hot pot. Create a master list or poster with your kids that can be kept where they’ll be cooking.

3. Food safety.

Safety is also important for food. If it isn’t handled or prepared properly, it can be dangerous. From washing hands to maintaining a safe temperature for foods, there are many simple things a kid can do. Like the step above, create a master list or poster that shows these rules so they have a reminder.

4. Kitchen math.

Get physical items and learn to measure wet and dry goods. Find or create a chart of equivalent amounts including items like four quarts is the same as a gallon and three teaspoons equals a tablespoon. Have the kids test these measurements to help reinforce these ideas.

5. Kitchen hand tools.

Keep track of all the kitchen hand tools you use in a week. Keep your tool list to items that do not need power. Show a sampling for the kids to look at and touch.

6. Kitchen appliances.

Look at the appliances a kitchen might have. What do you have in your own kitchen? Discuss what each one does. Which ones are important to have and which are just more convenient?

7. Kitchen skills.

Chopping, stirring, combining . . . there are many skills that a cook needs to master. Choose one or two to practice and determine how you would teach that skill to a kid.

8. Recipe cards.

Explain what a recipe card is. Hand one out to the kids to review together. Review what is on the card and make sure they understand what everything means, including abbreviations. Discuss what might happen if directions weren’t followed. Hand out blank recipe cards and ask that each child find a recipe to share.



Cooking Basics

When learning something new, start with easy tasks that end with success. This encourages continued interaction. When learning cooking, start with simple recipes. This badge will cover how to introduce others to cooking to start the progression.



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9. Grocery shopping: Trip.

Before you're ready to cook, you need to make sure you have all your ingredients. With a recipe in hand, review what you have available to use and what you need to purchase at the grocery store. Take a trip to the store to complete your ingredients. If you cannot go to the store, set up a pretend store and let the kids find their ingredients.

10. Grocery shopping: Perishable items.

Discuss how to check the dates on perishable items. How can you tell if a fruit or vegetable is good? How can you tell if meat is good? How long can you leave something in the refrigerator before using it?

11. Grocery shopping: Nutrition labels.

Review the information on the label of a pre-packaged ingredient. Discuss what the information means and why it matters.

12. Name or generic brands.

Try a blind taste test to compare a variety of name brand and generic products. Let everyone vote and track the answers.

13. Substitutions.

Allergies, food dislikes and more cause people to adjust recipes. Ask each kid if they are allergic to any food items. Then, ask what food each doesn't like to eat. Discuss what items can be used as substitutes. Keep a list for future reference.

14. Cook.

Grab a simple recipe and try it. Make sure it is something you make frequently. Make notes on how to break up the steps to make it easier to share.

15. Herbs and spices.

Don't forget the spices. Try to use a spice you've never used before to add flavor to your new dish. Be creative.

NOTE: Check out the Enrichment Project badge program "Herbs and Spices" to explore this more.

16. Special diets.

Some people have to deal with allergies. Others choose a diet that they are more comfortable with such as vegetarian or gluten-free. Discuss these types of diets and try a dish or two that someone with a special diet might make.

17. Ethnic dishes.

Find a grocery that specializes in ingredients from that country and use those rather than substituting. You might also choose to find an ethnic recipe online or at your local library. Try a dish from another country for World Thinking Day or just for fun

18. Clean-up.

Discuss the proper way to clean up to make sure everything is sterilized. Make sure all leftovers are properly stored.



Sites to Explore

www.parents.com/recipes/tips/cookingwithkids/teach-your-kids-to-cook
www.kids-cooking-activities.com
kidscooking.about.com/od/howtocook/ht/rulesforkidcook.htm
extension.psu.edu/food
www.ncagr.gov/cyber/kidswrld/foodsafety/facts/Sffacts.htm
www.nutrition.gov/life-stages/children/kids-food-safety
www.dole.com/Company%20Info/Publications
www.squidoo.com/kids_can_cook
www.mondaycampaigns.org/the-kids-cook-monday
familyfun.go.com/recipes/teaching-kids-to-cook-714658
busycooks.about.com/od/summerrecipesandmenus/a/nocookdesserts.htm

Check out [larajla's](http://larajla.com) Enrichment Project to start your own adventure.