



# Cook Together

Adult Lesson (45 to 60 minutes)

## OVERVIEW

Children learn about cooking by helping parents and family members prepare foods. Cooking with children provides an opportunity to teach food and nutrition skills, share family traditions and culture, and have fun together as a family. This lesson encourages parents to identify ways to engage the family in cooking together.

## ANCHOR

Children enjoy helping in the kitchen and are often more willing to try foods they helped prepare. Cooking with children provides a variety of opportunities to teach basic cooking skills, develop family traditions, and have fun as a family.

### *Kitchen tool activity*

**Note to instructor:** Gather common kitchen tools (no knives) from your kitchen, thrift stores, etc., that will be used in this activity. Suggested tools: egg beater, pastry blender, hand juicer, vegetable peeler, colander/strainer, potato masher, spaghetti fork. Set ground rules for the group: we hope you will participate; however, if you are uncomfortable or choose not to share, that is okay, too. Refer to Leader's Guide for more discussion on ground rules.

Lay out all the tools on a table. Invite the participants to look over all the tools for a minute and think about ways in which they remember the tool being used when they were children.

 Have participants gather in small groups of three to four people to share their memories. Ask them to consider the following questions:

- Which tool were you using?
- With whom were you cooking?
- If you did not use this specific tool, what tool or utensil was used to accomplish the same task?
- What food were you preparing?
- What feelings came up?

Now think about cooking with your children or grandchildren.

- What do you like about the experience?
- What is easy?
- What is challenging?

 Have each group pick one story to share with the large group.

Ask the group:

- What are the benefits that come from cooking together?
- What benefits mean the most to you?
- How does it change with the age or skill level of the child?

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Identify the benefits of cooking together that mean the most to them,
- Identify appropriate skills for children to help prepare meals,
- Plan a meal to prepare together as a family.

## MATERIALS

- Chalkboard, overhead or poster paper
- Kitchen tools (no sharp knives)
- Five Easy Steps for Cooking with Kids written on poster paper
- A variety of vegetables (fresh or food models)
- Sticky notes
- Pens

## HANDOUTS

- Cook Together recipe card
- Guidelines for Kitchen Safety
- Cook Together Take Home Plan



## ADD

Cooking together means everyone has a task. One of the main tasks for the adult is to guide the process and make sure everyone understands kitchen safety, as well as keeping the experience fun!

Cooking together may take some planning. Select a time when the family is together and not too rushed or tired. Start with simple recipes. Review the recipe. Think about the tasks needed to make the recipe.

Children enjoy helping in the kitchen. It is important to give them tasks that are appropriate for their skill level and let them practice new skills as they progress. The Cook Together recipe card provides suggested tasks for different skill levels. Remember: children develop skills differently, and depending on how often the child helps, you may need to adjust the task. There is a job for everyone.

Here are some steps to get started in the kitchen.

**Note to Leader:** Write the following on poster paper or white board.

### **Cooking with Children in Five Easy Steps:**

1. Read the recipe aloud. This is a good time to check for ingredients and equipment.
2. Clear and clean the work area. Wash hands thoroughly.
3. Review safety rules from Kitchen Safety Handout and ETEB Guidelines for Using Kitchen Tools. Get out ingredients and equipment. Preheat oven if needed.
4. Follow recipe instructions carefully.
5. Cleanup—wash dishes and put ingredients away—before tasting the final product.

Ask the group to think about children in their lives and to pick one activity they could ask a child to help with in the next week.

## APPLY



*One Veggie brainstorm. Ask the group to work in pairs. Pass the basket around, have each pair select a vegetable. Then each pair lists different recipes or methods parents and children could use to prepare that vegetable. Allow two minutes for discussion.*



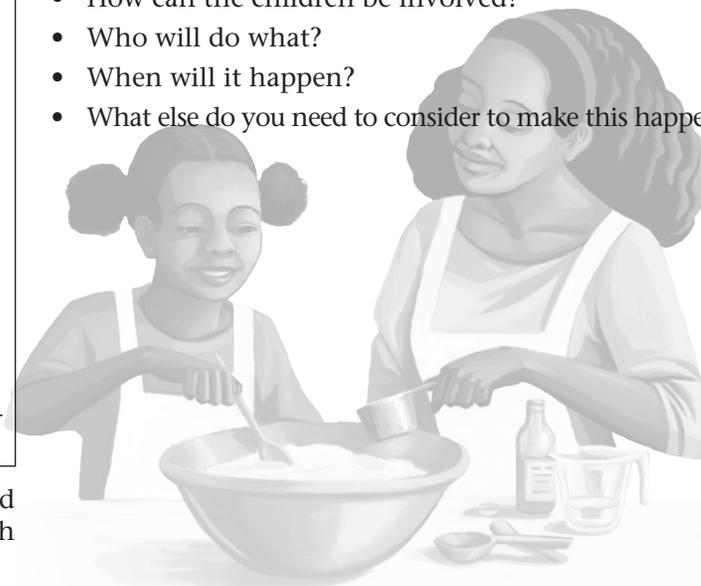
*Ask each group, how many ideas they listed. Who would like to share one or two ideas for vegetable recipes they could prepare with their children?*

## AWAY



*Ask participants to think about how they can involve their families in cooking and then to make a plan, using the Cook Together Take Home Plan. Ask them to share their plan with a partner.*

- What meal will you cook?
- How can the children be involved?
- Who will do what?
- When will it happen?
- What else do you need to consider to make this happen?



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DSHS Community Service Office.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# Guidelines for Kitchen Safety

Fun in the kitchen means following some guidelines to keep you and the food you prepare safe.

## GETTING READY TO COOK

- Clean your workspace before you start.
- Read the recipe through. Gather the tools, equipment, and ingredients you need.
- Use an apron or tee shirt to protect your clothes. Tie your hair back if it is long.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling food or eating.

## HANDLING THE FOOD

- Wash hands and surfaces often. Wash fruits and vegetables under running water.
- Keep raw meats, fish, and poultry separate from other foods. Use separate cutting boards and cutting utensils for meats.
- Cook foods to the proper temperature. Use a food thermometer. Keep hot foods hot.
- Refrigerate foods promptly.

*<http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/index.html>*

## WHILE YOU COOK

- Know the safety rules for appliances. Use stove tops, ovens, microwave oven, sharp knives, and electric appliances only with adult supervision.
- Cut foods on a cutting board, not in your hands or on counter tops.
- Keep track of time with a timer.
- Use potholders when handling pots and pans. Keep dry potholders handy.
- Clean up spills as you go. Use paper towels, not sponges or cloth towels.

## CLEANUP

- Turn off all appliances.
- Put ingredients back after using them.
- Clean your workspace so it is ready for the next time.



# Take Home Plan

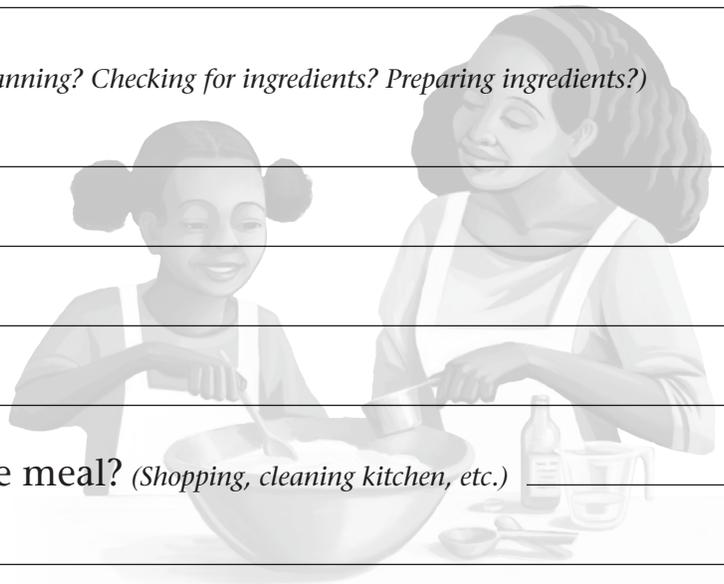
What meal will you cook? \_\_\_\_\_

How can the kids be involved? *(Meal planning? Checking for ingredients? Preparing ingredients?)*

Who will do what? \_\_\_\_\_

When will it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What needs to be done to prepare the meal? *(Shopping, cleaning kitchen, etc.)* \_\_\_\_\_



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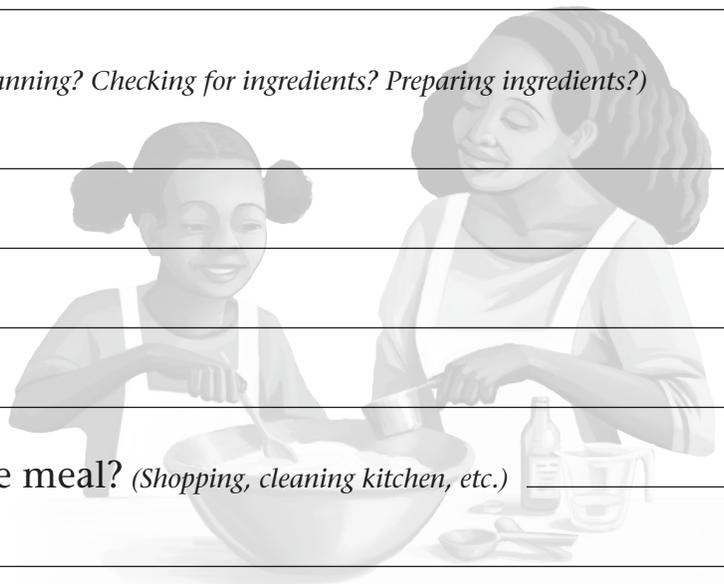
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