

2002

How Can I Involve My Children In Food Preparation?

Georgia Lauritzen

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/extension_histall

 Part of the [Food Science Commons](#)

Warning: The information in this series may be obsolete. It is presented here for historical purposes only. For the most up to date information please visit [The Utah State University Cooperative Extension Office](#)

Recommended Citation

Lauritzen, Georgia, "How Can I Involve My Children In Food Preparation?" (2002). *All Archived Publications*. Paper 321.
http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/extension_histall/321

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archived USU Extension Publications at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Archived Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact dylan.burns@usu.edu.





A weekly question/answer column

How Can I Involve My Children In Food Preparation?

Georgia Lauritzen answers:*

Even if flour ends up in places in the kitchen that you'd rather not see it, it is important to include children in food preparation. There will come a point in their lives when they will depend on these skills. Designate jobs that are age appropriate, use plenty of praise and try not to let the spills bother you. Also consider these suggestions.

- Two- and three-year olds can unload the dishwasher with help, wipe the table and counters, make toast, wash or scrub fruits and vegetables, and clear their place settings. Three- and four-year-old children can break eggs into a bowl and beat them, measure and mix ingredients, knead and shape dough, pour cereal and liquids, make sandwiches, and wash baking utensils. Five-year-olds can use a grater, peeler, blender and hand mixer, set and clear the table, and load the dishwasher. These tasks should all be performed with close supervision.
- Younger children may also be introduced to cooking with a small oven designed specifically for children. If you don't have the small mixes made for the ovens, try using regular mixes from the grocery store. Mix 2 tablespoons dry cake mix with 1 tablespoon water. Bake in a greased and floured pan for 11 to 12 minutes, and cool. Quality is not affected by eliminating the eggs and oil. Top with canned or home-prepared frosting with chocolate chips or marshmallows, if desired. For cookies, homemade dough or purchased tubes of refrigerator dough can be placed in the small pans, pressed to one-half to two-thirds the height of the pan, and baked for 10 minutes. Pizza can be made by pressing refrigerated biscuits into the pan and topping with spaghetti or pizza sauce and cheese. Baking time is approximately 12 minutes, but may vary with topping amounts.
- With a little supervision, children ages 8-12 can prepare simple meals such as macaroni and cheese with grated carrot salad, frozen pizza and tossed salad, canned chili and raw vegetable sticks, or scrambled eggs and hash brown potatoes. Children this age can learn responsibility by helping with regular food preparation. The kitchen provides a creative environment and is also a natural for developing science fair projects.

* Georgia Lauritzen is Utah State University Extension Nutrition Specialist