

All about seeds

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Talk with your child about where fruits and vegetables come from and how they grow from seeds.
- ❖ Show your child some examples of seeds from your kitchen, e.g. dried beans or peas, poppy seeds, and pumpkin or sunflower seeds. Notice their different shapes and sizes.
- ❖ When you are eating together, look for seeds in fresh fruits and vegetables, e.g. tomatoes, grapes, apples, plums, avocados.
- ❖ Help your child make a space for a small garden outdoors or in a container.
- ❖ Decide which seeds you will plant. If the seeds are small, make a seed strip together.
- ❖ Plant and water the seeds.
- ❖ Water the garden regularly and watch for seeds to sprout.

A good read-together book

The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss

This activity helps children learn where foods come from and introduces them to new fruits and vegetables. Children are more likely to try fruits and vegetables if they have helped to grow and prepare them.

You will need some seeds that are easy to grow, some rich soil, small gardening tools and a garden space or container.



Hints for success

- ❖ Choose seeds that grow easily, e.g. sunflowers, lettuce, beans, peas or radishes. Lettuce and radishes are ready to pick in about 3 to 4 weeks.
- ❖ Use child-sized tools and a child-friendly space for the garden.
- ❖ If you use containers, choose ones with drain holes.
- ❖ Help your child water regularly but not too much.

Look! This apple has seeds on the inside!

Did you know that fruits and vegetables come from seeds that grow in the ground?

Ways to say it

More ideas for All about seeds

Try this way

- ❖ Make a citrus garden. Save seeds from oranges, tangerines, lemons or grapefruit and soak them overnight. Plant two or three seeds about 2.5 cm (1 in) deep in containers with drainage holes, e.g. egg cartons, milk cartons or peat pots. Keep them in a warm, sunny spot.
- ❖ Explore the seeds of fruits and vegetables to find out where they grow, e.g. under or above the ground, on vines or bushes or trees.

Let's make—a seed strip

What you need:

- A paper towel with dots marked to show where seeds will go
- A packet of seeds
- Seed glue made from 1 cup flour and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- A small dish or squeeze bottle for the glue
- Popsicle sticks for dabbing the glue

How to:

1. Show your child how to put a dab of glue and a seed on each dot on the paper towel.
2. Fold the paper towel over.
3. Allow the paper towel to dry for a few hours.

Early literacy and numeracy

Make a chart with your child to record the number of days it takes for a seed to grow into a vegetable or fruit. Mark off each day and add words to describe what you see.



Book links

Up, Down, and Around by Katherine Ayres
From the Garden: A Counting Book about Growing Food by Michael Dahl

Safety tip

Mung bean and alfalfa seeds sprout very easily but they are a source of bacteria. These sprouts must be very well cooked for children to eat them safely.

Let's make! Bean burritos

Food Flair recipes are a unique way to explore new and healthy foods with your toddler or preschooler. Learning to cook helps children take pride in what they make and encourages them to try new foods. These activities help families reconnect food and fun, so enjoy the experience of preparing food together!

Recipe for Bean burritos

What you need:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Cooked rice (brown or white)	125 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ can	(14 oz/398 mL) kidney, black or pinto beans, drained and rinsed	7 oz/ 200 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Corn kernels, canned or frozen	125 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup + 2 tbsp.	Mild salsa	87.5 mL
5	10-inch (25 cm) whole grain flour tortillas	5 x 25 cm
$\frac{2}{3}$ cup	Cheddar cheese, shredded	167 mL

How to:

1. In a non-stick pan, stir together rice, beans, corn and salsa.
2. Cook on medium heat for three to four minutes until warmed through.
3. Put some of the bean mixture on each tortilla.
4. Sprinkle with cheese.
5. Roll up the tortillas.
6. Cut each tortilla in half to serve.

Book link

The Food We Eat by Paul Humphrey

You will need the foods listed in the recipe, a large non-stick pan to heat the burrito filling, and a cheese grater.



Hints for success

- ❖ Toddlers can help bring the ingredients to the counter and sprinkle the burrito with cheese.
- ❖ Younger preschoolers can help measure and pour the salsa and put the filling onto the tortillas.
- ❖ Older preschoolers may be able to grate the cheese.
- ❖ Warm the tortillas before rolling to prevent them from cracking or breaking.

What other vegetables could we put in these burritos?

How many burritos have we made now?

Ways to say it

More ideas for Bean burritos

Try this way

- ❖ Talk with your child about where burritos come from and how they are made. Explain that burritos are made with tortillas and are a favourite food in Mexico. The word burrito means little donkey in Spanish.
- ❖ Burritos can be filled with meat or beans, as well as other foods such as rice, lettuce, tomatoes, onions, salsa, guacamole, cheese, sour cream or plain yogurt.
- ❖ Make a large pot of rice and freeze in portions to use in this recipe for a quick lunch or family dinner.
- ❖ Use lean ground beef or turkey instead of the beans. Be sure to cook the meat well in a frying pan before adding the rice.
- ❖ Add $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of one of these spices to give your child a new taste experience: chili powder, paprika, cumin, oregano, garlic powder and/or onion powder.



Activity links

Use this recipe card with other Food Flair activity cards:

- Eating around the world—Chopsticks
- Eating around the world—Tasting passports

Safety tips

- Help children wash their hands before cooking or eating.
- Refrigerate or discard leftovers right away to prevent spoiling.
- Supervise your child when using sharp tools such as a cheese grater.

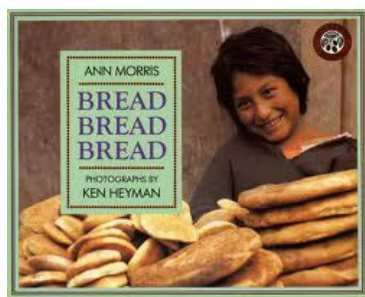
Bread

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Talk with your child about how bread is made.
- ❖ Play bakery with your child. Make pretend products out of playdough using rolling pins, measuring cups, bread pans, muffin tins and plastic knives.
- ❖ Pretend to make breads, cakes and cookies to sell to "customers."



A good read-together book



Bread, Bread, Bread by Ann Morris
and Ken Heyman

You will need some kitchen tools such as measuring cups, a rolling pin, bread pans, muffin tins and plastic knives. You will also need some playdough, either from the store or made at home.

This activity is good for learning how different foods are made, exploring raw foods, and developing imagination, cooperative play and vocabulary.

Hints for success

- ❖ Encourage your child to use imagination and think of different ideas for baked goods.
- ❖ Let your child set the scene and take the lead in pretend play.
- ❖ Play with your child. Pretend you are a customer or a helper in the bakery.

What kind of bread
should we make
today?

I'm going to squish
and stretch my dough
before I make a shape.
That's called kneading
the dough.

Ways to say it

More ideas for Bread

Try this way

- ❖ Have a bread tasting party. Choose three or four different kinds of bread, e.g. oatmeal, whole grain, rye, corn, raisin, pumpernickel, pita, bagels, chapattis, bread pretzels, hard rolls, bannock, bread sticks, French baguettes, hamburger buns, naan, and corn or flour tortillas.
- ❖ Show your child the different types of bread.
- ❖ Cut each type of bread into bite-sized pieces and put them on separate plates.
- ❖ Practice passing the plates around so you can try the different types of bread.
- ❖ Talk about different breads and how they are made.
- ❖ Make bread at home with your child.



Exploring grains

Put different types of grain in bowls for your child to explore. Try corn, rice, wheat, barley and oats. Use a magnifying glass, some measuring cups, large and small spoons and a sieve or sifter to encourage exploration.

Book link

The Little Red Hen, by Diane Muldrow
and J. P. Miller

Community connections

Take your child to a bakery. Look at all the different kinds of baked goods. Ask whether you and your child can visit the kitchen to see how breads are made there.

Safety tips

- Always begin activities in the kitchen by helping children wash their hands.
- Always supervise your child around sharp kitchen utensils and hot surfaces.

Eating around the world

Chopsticks

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Talk with your child about how people around the world use different utensils for eating. Explain that chopsticks are used in China and Japan instead of forks and spoons.
- ❖ Give your child some chopsticks and a bowl of one or two different foods cut into cubes, e.g. buttered whole grain toast, banana pieces, broccoli flowerets or cheese.
- ❖ Invite your child to try using the chopsticks to pick up the food. Let your child experiment for a while before showing how to use the chopsticks.



A good read-together book



Let's Eat: What Children Eat Around the World
by Beatrice Hollyer

You will need some chopsticks, a rubber band, a small piece of cardboard, and some small (about 1 cm or $\frac{1}{2}$ inch) cubes of food that are easy to pick up.

This activity is good for developing finger dexterity and eye-hand coordination and learning about different ways to eat.

Hints for success

- ❖ Chopsticks can be tricky to use. To make it easier for your child, try wrapping a strong elastic around the square ends of the sticks. Then slide a piece of folded paper up to the elastic to help wedge the chopsticks in an open position.
- ❖ Children are more likely to try new foods if they have a chance to learn about them and explore them in a fun way.



People use many different tools for eating. Which ones can you think of?

Chopsticks are like little pinchers to pick up food. Would you like to try them?

Ways to say it

More ideas for Chopsticks

Try this way

- ❖ With younger children, begin by talking about countries that use their fingers as tools. Compare eating with fingers to using forks and spoons.
- ❖ With older children, try eating foods that are harder to pick up with chopsticks, e.g. leafy greens such as spinach or gai lan (Chinese broccoli). Compare eating with chopsticks to using a fork.

Learning about the world

Talk about different ways people eat around the world—e.g. sitting on the ground or on a mat or at a table; eating with their hands, spoons, skewers or chopsticks.

Use the Internet or books from the library to learn about mealtime customs and utensils from different countries. Have a tasting party with foods, utensils and seating styles from each country.

Early literacy

Make a chart with your child showing mealtime customs from different countries. List the utensils used for eating, how people sit for meals and one or more special foods from each country.

Mark off each country as you try their customs. For instance, in Japan many people eat sushi with chopsticks while they sit on pillows on the floor or at a low table.



Safety tips

- Cut foods into 1 cm or $\frac{1}{2}$ inch pieces for children 1-4 years old to avoid choking.
- Chopsticks can be sharp. Keep an eye on your child when using new utensils.

Going on a picnic

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Plan a picnic with your child. Choose a place to go where you can eat outdoors.
- ❖ Talk about what kinds of food would be easy to pack and easy to eat with fingers.
- ❖ Talk about what foods need to be kept cold (e.g., milk, meat, salad). Show your child how you will keep these foods cold until it is time to eat.
- ❖ Let your child help you pack the picnic basket or cooler.



A good read-together book



The Best Picnic Ever by Clare Jarrett

You will need pencil and paper to make a list, a picnic cooler or basket, some healthy picnic foods, an ice pack to keep foods cool, and a cloth or blanket.

This activity is good for choosing healthy picnic foods, and learning how to make a list.

Hints for success

- ❖ Choose foods and drinks that are healthy and easy to carry (e.g., raw vegetables, fruits, sandwiches, water, etc.).
- ❖ Before you start packing, make a list together of what you will take.
- ❖ Invite your child to choose a snack to carry in his or her own bag or backpack.

What else do we
need for our picnic?

What shall we put in
the cooler?

Ways to say it

More ideas for Going on a picnic

Try this way

- ❖ Walk to a park, playground, community centre, nature trail or beach.
- ❖ Bring a ball, a flying disc or a jump rope to play with.
- ❖ Think of activities to do that everyone can enjoy.
- ❖ Have a "pretend" picnic using pictures, empty food packages, plastic containers, plastic fruits and vegetables, etc.

Music

Learn the song **Teddy Bears' Picnic** and sing it together.

Sing the song **The Ants Go Marching** while you march to your picnic.

Book links

Mother Bear's Picnic by Maurice Sendak
The Teddy Bears' Picnic by Jimmy Kennedy



Blackberries, Blackberries on the Hill

Blackberries, blackberries on the hill
How many pails can you fill?
Briers are thick and briers scratch,
But we'll pick all the berries
in the blackberry patch.

Author unknown

Safety tip

Remember to use ice or cooler packs if you take foods such as milk, salad dressing or meat.

Five senses

Pretend grocery shopping

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Plan a pretend grocery-shopping trip with your child. Make a shopping list together of foods you both like to eat.
- ❖ Make up a story about going to the grocery store. Act out the story together.
 - Walk, drive or take the bus to the grocery store.
 - Get your basket or shopping cart.
 - Choose some ripe tomatoes. They're orangey-red. Look for spots.
 - Find some nice apples—red and green. Don't bruise them!
 - Choose some yogurt. What flavour would you like to try?
 - Pick up a carton of plain milk. Watch out, it's heavy. Brrr! It's cold - let's keep these foods cold so they don't spoil and make us sick.
 - Choose some whole grain bread. Let's get brown. Don't squish it!
 - Take the groceries to the checkout and put them on the counter.
 - Pay the cashier.
 - Load the food into some bags.
 - Take the groceries home.



Hints for success

- ❖ Invite your child to suggest some groceries to buy.
- ❖ Encourage your child to describe the actions you are doing, e.g. "I'm going to open the box of eggs and check for cracks."

You will need pencil and paper to make a list.

This activity will help your child develop imagination, plan ahead and learn how to make a list.

My favorite fruit is apples. Let's put them on the list. What's your favorite fruit?

What groceries do we need to make your favourite snack? Let's make a list!

Ways to say it

More ideas for Pretend grocery shopping

Try this way

- ❖ For toddlers, take the lead and encourage them to follow along with the actions.
- ❖ For older children, make shopping lists together for different foods. For instance:
 - What groceries will we need for pizza?
 - What foods will we need for a long hike in the forest?
 - What groceries should we get for our breakfast?
- ❖ Invite your child to help you on a real trip to the grocery store. Talk about how to act in the store, such as taking care to drive the cart safely.
- ❖ On your next trip to the store, invite your child to choose an interesting new fruit or vegetable to try together.



Music and movement

Choose some music with a good beat and without any words. Find a space where you can move around and do the actions together. Move to the beat while you act out your trip. Give cues and actions for your child to follow. Stay active and encourage lots of movement.

Play the song **Corner Grocery Store** by Raffi and learn to sing it together.

Book links

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert

I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato
by Lauren Child

Safety tip

Find an open space to act out your shopping trip safely.

Let's make! Hummus

Food Flair recipes are a unique way to explore new and healthy foods with your toddler or preschooler. Learning to cook helps children take pride in what they make and encourages them to try new foods. These activities help families reconnect food and fun, so enjoy the experience of preparing food together!

Recipe for Hummus

What you need:

1	19 oz/540 mL can garbanzo beans (chickpeas), drained and rinsed	540 mL
1	Lemon	1
1	Clove garlic	1
1 cup	Plain yogurt	250 mL
1½ tsp.	Olive oil	7 mL
¼ cup	Tahini (sesame butter)	60 mL
Note: Possible allergen		

How to:

1. Drain and rinse the garbanzo beans.
2. Use a hand juicer to get the juice out of the lemon.
3. Mince or finely chop the garlic.
4. Put the garbanzo beans in a bowl and mash them with a potato masher.
5. Stir in the lemon juice, garlic, yogurt and olive oil.

You will need all the foods listed in the recipe, as well as a mixing bowl, a potato masher, a fork or spoon for stirring and a hand juicer. A blender or food processor is also useful.



Hints for success

- ❖ A toddler can help mash the beans.
- ❖ A young preschooler can help measure, pour and stir.
- ❖ Older preschoolers can also crush the garlic and use the hand juicer.
- ❖ As you prepare the hummus, read the recipe with your child. Talk about what you are doing in each step.

Would you like to try some pita bread with hummus?

Hummus makes a good dip for vegetables. Let's try it with celery.

Ways to say it

More ideas for Hummus

Try this way

- ❖ Try peanut butter (unsalted and unsweetened) or almond butter instead of tahini.
- ❖ Try mixing all the ingredients in a blender or food processor. Make the recipe both ways, and talk with your child about the difference in texture.
- ❖ Make and try a variety of dips, e.g. fruit dip made from $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plain yogurt, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup granola and 2 tablespoons of coconut; vegetable dip made from $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plain yogurt, 2 tablespoons mayonnaise and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried vegetable soup mix; etc. Give everyone their own portions to avoid "double-dipping."
- ❖ Explain that people in several countries of the Middle East like to eat hummus. Talk about how good foods come from many different places in the world.



Safety tips

- Help children wash their hands before cooking or eating.
- Refrigerate or discard leftovers right away to prevent spoiling.
- If there is a family history of allergies, introduce one new food at a time to your child. Watch your child for signs of allergy—such as vomiting, hives, swelling, itchy lips or throat or a hard time breathing.
- If your child is having a hard time breathing, call 911 right away. For more information on allergies, call HealthLink BC (811) or visit www.anaphylaxis.org/content/whatis/qa.asp

Activity links

Use this recipe card with other Food Flair activity cards:

- Eating around the world—Chopsticks
- Eating around the world—Tasting passports

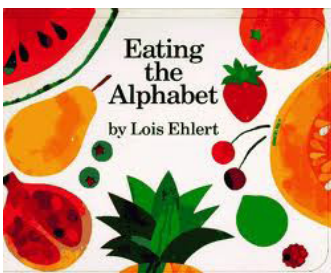
Five senses

Mystery food

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Put a mystery food in a container without showing it to your child. Use a bag, an ice cream pail or a shoebox with a hole cut in the lid.
- ❖ Invite your child to feel the mystery food without peeking.
- ❖ Encourage your child to use words to describe what the food feels like.
- ❖ Invite your child to guess what it is.
- ❖ Show the food and let your child feel it again. Talk about its shape, colour, how it grows and how to prepare it.
- ❖ Cut up the food and prepare it for eating.
- ❖ Invite your child to taste the food with you. Talk about how it smells and how it feels in your mouths.

A good read-together book



Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert

You will need some mystery foods such as kiwi, rutabaga, snow peas, avocado, jicama, pear, string beans, etc.

This activity is good for developing curiosity, learning new words and exploring unfamiliar tastes and textures in a fun way.



Hints for success

- ❖ Use familiar foods the first few times you play this game. Gradually introduce new foods to the game.
- ❖ Have an extra sample of the mystery food in case it gets damaged or bruised during the activity.
- ❖ Allow your child to choose which foods he will try from the foods you offer. Avoid making comments if your child does not want to try a food. Never force a child to eat.

Would you say this
mystery food is
hard or soft?

Look! This kiwi is
brown on the outside.
What colour do you
think it will be inside?

Ways to say it

More ideas for Mystery food

Try this way

- ❖ For a younger child, put three foods outside a mystery container, e.g. an apple, a pear and a peach. Hide another sample of one of the foods inside the mystery container. Invite your child to feel inside the mystery container and guess which of the three foods is inside.
- ❖ With an older child, play a guessing game by thinking of mystery foods. Describe a food by its shape, colour, texture, taste, etc. and invite your child to guess what it is. Invite your child to take a turn thinking of mystery foods for you to guess.
- ❖ Play "Guess what's for dinner" using the cooking smells from the kitchen.



Book link

Crunch Munch by Jonathan London

Over the lips

Over the lips,
Through the gums,
Watch out stomach,
Here it comes!

Author unknown

Eating around the world

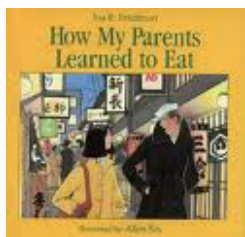
Tasting passports

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Talk with your child about how different countries have different foods.
- ❖ Try exploring foods from different countries. For instance:
 - exotic fruits like mango, tangelo, avocado, Asian pear and eggplant
 - breads such as French bread, pita, tortillas, chapattis, naan and Portuguese buns
 - cooked grains such as rice (Asia), couscous (North Africa) or bulgur (Middle East).
- ❖ Make a "tasting passport" and use it to keep track of different countries you "visit" as you try their foods.



A good read-together book



How My Parents Learned to Eat
by Ina R. Friedman

You will need small amounts of foods from other cultures that your child has not tried before. You will also need materials to make passports such as paper, a stapler or ribbon, old stamps, old magazines, scissors, glue and crayons or markers.

This activity is good for learning about different cultures, new foods and different ways to eat.

Hints for success

- ❖ Try only one or two new foods at a time.
- ❖ Allow your child to choose which foods to try from the foods you offer. If your child doesn't want to try a food, avoid making comments.
- ❖ Never force a child to eat.
- ❖ Talk about the polite way to spit out food if your child tries something and doesn't like it (e.g. spit it quietly into a napkin).

This is a tortilla from Mexico. Would you like to try some?

This fruit is called a mango. I think it tastes sweet and also a little sour

Ways to say it

More ideas for Tasting passports

Try this way

- ❖ Try a bit of plain cooked grain, then taste it when it is used in a recipe, e.g. in rice pudding.
- ❖ Make recipe cards together of foods or dishes that your child really likes. Decorate the cards with pictures of the ingredients and the flag or shape of the country where it is popular.

Let's make—a passport

What you need

- Small blank books (you can make books by stapling paper sheets together or punching holes in paper and tying the sheets together with ribbon)
- Old magazines
- Old postage stamps
- Glue
- Your child's picture or a drawing; crayons or markers; stickers (optional)

How to

- Give your child a blank passport. Decorate the cover using the materials.
- For each country you "visit," decorate a new page with drawings, pictures, stamps or stickers.

Physical activities

Explore some music and dances from around the world. Dress up and move around! Try the Salsa and the Conga (South America) or a stomp dance (Africa) to get started.

Book link

Let's Eat: What Children Eat Around the World
by Beatrice Hollyer



Safety tips

- If your family has a history of allergies, introduce one new food at a time to your child. Watch your child for signs of allergy such as vomiting, hives, swelling, itchy lips or throat or a hard time breathing.
- If your child is having a hard time breathing, call 911 right away. For more information on allergies, call HealthLink BC (811) or visit www.anaphylaxis.org/content/whatis/qa.asp.

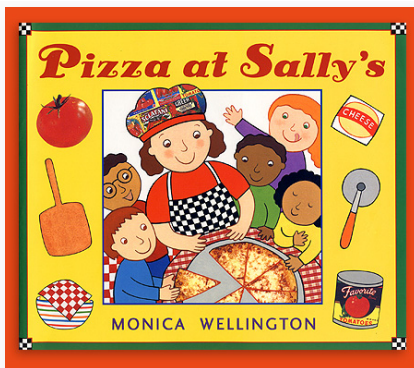
Pizza pizzazz!

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Play "pizza delivery" with your child. Let your child lead the pretend play.
- ❖ Choose who will order the pizza and who will deliver the pizza. Talk about what kind of pizza you want to eat and who will be making it.
- ❖ Pretend to eat pizza together. Sit down and enjoy a conversation while you eat.



A good read-together book



Pizza at Sally's by Monica Wellington

This activity is good for developing imagination, learning about where food comes from and practising meal-time conversation.

Pizza is a healthy meal because it includes all food groups. Children are more likely to try fruits and vegetables if they have a chance to learn about them in a fun way.

Hints for success

- ❖ Get down to your child's level when you pretend together. Sit down so you can have a conversation eye-to-eye.
- ❖ Help your child lead the pretend play by asking questions that encourage imagination, e.g. "What kind of car does the delivery person drive?"
- ❖ Add some props, e.g. a menu for take-out pizza and a telephone to order the pizza.

I like mushrooms
on my pizza. What
do you like on your
pizza?

Let's play pizza
delivery! Who will
order the pizza and
who will deliver it?

Ways to say it

More ideas for Pizza pizzazz!

Try this way

- ❖ Make pizza menus with pictures of foods that go on pizzas.
- ❖ Make individual pizzas using different breads as bases, e.g., English muffins, pitas, bagels or tortillas.
- ❖ Encourage your child to choose her own toppings.
- ❖ For special days, make pizza treats.
 - Cookie cutter pizzas: for Halloween cut pita bread or English muffins with a jack-o-lantern cookie cutter. Add peppers, mushrooms and ham cut into shapes for eyes, nose and mouth.
 - Holiday pizzas with dough shaped into a heart for Valentine's Day or an evergreen tree for a winter celebration.
 - Fruit pizzas: use biscuit dough as a base, yogurt for "sauce" and slices of apple, banana, pineapple chunks, and other fruits as toppings. Sprinkle with cinnamon.



Physical activity

Mark a line several meters from a hoop or other round object that could be a pretend pizza crust. Place a variety of objects (e.g. bean bags, playing cards, small balls or toys) behind the line. Invite your child to decorate the pizza with "toppings" by carrying one item at a time and putting them on the pretend pizza crust.

Dramatic play

Read **Pete's a Pizza** - and together act out the pizza making, with your child as the "pizza."

Music

I am a Pizza by Charlotte Diamond.

Book link

Pete's a Pizza by William Steig

Safety tips

- Help your child to wash her hands with soap and water before and after preparing food.
- Supervise your child when using knives or other kitchen utensils.
- For active play, make sure the area is clear of obstacles before playing.

Ready, set, eat!

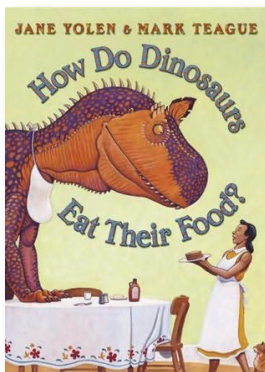
Pouring and serving

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Help your child practice pouring drinks. Talk with your child as he practices.
- ❖ Mark cups with lines at different levels and practice pouring close to the lines.
- ❖ Wash hands before and after every meal. Sing a song or say a poem for at least 20 seconds while you wash, e.g. **Happy Birthday**, **Twinkle Twinkle Little Star** or the **Alphabet Song**.
- ❖ Practice table talk and manners while you have a snack together.



A good read-together book



How Do Dinosaurs Eat Their Food? by Jane Yolen

You will need containers and water or sand to practice pouring.

This activity develops fine motor skills. It also helps children learn to serve themselves and to practice table talk and manners.

Hints for success

- ❖ Practice pouring during bath time using water, plastic cups and pitchers. Let your child play in her own way.
- ❖ Practice pouring sand in the sandbox or use a dishpan filled with sand.
- ❖ Encourage children to serve themselves at meals and snack time with foods that are okay to spill (e.g. dry cereal, shredded cheese, fruit slices).

No more, thank you.
I'm full.

Can you pour the
water up to the line
in the cup?

Ways to say it

More ideas for Ready, set, eat! Pouring and serving

Try this way

- ❖ Add some sponges to the bath when practicing pouring. Talk about how the sponges soak up water and show your child how to wring them out.
- ❖ Learn some other songs or poems to say while you wash your hands.
- ❖ Sit down with your child for snacks as well as meals, to show that eating can be a time to enjoy one another's company.

Language development

Table manners go together naturally with serving and pouring. This is an excellent time for your child to learn and practice the right words to say.

Physical activity

Encourage children to practice pouring and serving while playing. This will help them be successful at meals and snack time.

Book link

How Are You Peeling? Foods with Moods
by Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers



Oh, Before I Eat My Meals

(Sung to the tune of

If You're Happy and You Know It)

Oh, before I eat my meals, I wash my hands,
(scrub, scrub)

Oh, before I eat my meals, I wash my hands,
(scrub, scrub)

Oh, it's very smart I think,
Sends those germs right down the sink.
Oh, before I eat my meals, I wash my hands.
(scrub, scrub)

Oh, before I eat my meals, I pass the food,
(pass the plate)

Oh, before I eat my meals, I pass the food,
(pass the plate)

'Cause we know it's only fair
For us all to have our share
Oh, before I eat my meals, I pass the food.

Author unknown

Safety tip

Use unbreakable utensils and serving dishes for practicing pouring and serving.

Let's make!

Apple cheddar quesadillas

Food Flair recipes are a unique way to explore new and healthy foods with your toddler or preschooler. Learning to cook helps children take pride in what they make and encourages them to try new foods. These activities help families reconnect food and fun, so enjoy the experience of preparing food together!

Recipe for Apple cheddar quesadillas

What you need:

- 1 or 2 Apples
- 6 10-inch (25 cm) whole wheat tortillas
- 1½ cups Shredded cheddar cheese 375 mL
- 2 tbsp. Non-hydrogenated margarine 30 mL

How to:

1. Grate the cheese.
2. Thinly slice the apples into 24 slices that are about ¼-inch (0.5 cm) thick.
3. Sprinkle two tablespoons of cheese over one half of a tortilla.
4. Place four apple slices on top of the cheese to fill half the tortilla.
5. Then sprinkle two more tablespoons of cheese on top of the apples.
6. Fold the tortilla.
7. Heat one teaspoon of margarine in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
8. Cook the quesadilla until the cheese melts and the tortilla is golden brown on both sides (about two minutes per side).
9. Repeat with the other five tortillas.

You will need the foods listed in the recipe, as well as a large skillet, a cheese grater, some serving plates, and a lifter to move the tortillas onto plates after they are cooked.

This recipe is good for learning about how some foods change when they are heated.

Hints for success

- ❖ Encourage your children to help make the quesadillas. For example:
 - Toddlers can sprinkle the tortillas with cheese and put on some apple slices.
 - Younger preschoolers can help fold the tortillas.
 - Older preschoolers can also help grate the cheese with a child-safe grater.
- ❖ Let your child taste an apple slice with a slice of cheese while you are cooking the tortillas.
- ❖ Watch what happens when you put the tortillas into the hot skillet, and talk about what you see.

More ideas for Apple cheddar quesadillas

Try this way

- ❖ Add natural, unsweetened peanut butter to the apple and cheese quesadilla for a new flavour.
- ❖ Try other quesadilla combinations like chicken and cheese or natural peanut butter and sliced banana.
- ❖ Explain to your child that a quesadilla (kaysah-DEE-yah) is a dish from Mexico. Queso is Spanish for cheese, and Quesadilla means cheesy little thing.
- ❖ Talk about other vegetables and fruit that you could put into quesadillas with cheese, e.g. pear slices, thin slices of green bell pepper or tomatoes, etc.

I love to eat apples
and cheese together.
Do you?

Look what happens
when the cheese
starts to melt!

Ways to say it

Activity link

Use this recipe card with other Food Flair activity cards:

- All About Apples
- Sandwiches

Book link

Ten Apples Up on Top! by Dr. Seuss

Safety tips

- If this is the first time you are introducing peanuts, and especially if there is a family history of allergies, watch your child for signs of allergy - such as vomiting, hives, swelling, itchy lips or throat, or a hard time breathing.
- If your child is having a hard time breathing, call 911 right away. For more information on allergies, call HealthLink BC (811) or visit www.anaphylaxis.org/content/whatis/qa.asp.
- Help children wash their hands before cooking or eating.
- Refrigerate or discard leftovers right away to prevent spoiling.

Ready, set, eat!

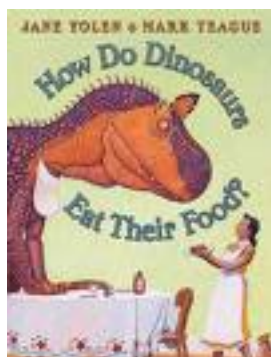
Placemats

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Invite your child to make a placemat for snacks and mealtimes.
- ❖ Talk about how people get ready for meal-times—making a table decoration, putting out placemats, choosing which kinds of dishes will be needed, setting each person's place at the table, etc.
- ❖ Talk about other ways people get ready for meals, e.g. washing hands, saying a blessing, etc.



A good read-together book



How Do Dinosaurs Eat Their Food? by Jane Yolen

You will need some large pieces of paper, some coloured markers or crayons, a magazine or flyer with pictures of food in it and some scissors and glue.

This activity will help your child develop a positive attitude towards eating at the table and participating in family meals.

Hints for success

- ❖ Encourage your child to decorate his or her own placemat.
- ❖ Use pictures of healthy foods from grocery flyers or magazines to make colourful placemats.

What colours would you like to use for your placemat?

That placemat will look good on our table!

Ways to say it

More ideas for Placemats

Try this way

- ❖ Make a placemat with your child showing outlines of a plate, a cup and some cutlery. Help your child set the table using the outlines on the placemat as a reminder.
- ❖ Help your child say the name of each item as you match it with the outline on the placemat.

Let's make—a placemat

What you need

- Heavy paper rectangles or ready-made paper placemats
- Crayons, markers or colored pencils
- Colourful pictures, e.g. of your child, some healthy foods, or the season
- Glue and scissors

How to

- Give your child a paper placemat and some art materials.
- Encourage your child to decorate the placemat using imagination and creativity.
- Add your child's name.
- Protect the placemat with clear adhesive plastic.



Language activities

If you have a toddler, play "I can find the...". Put some foods on a plate. Describe one of the foods by its colour, shape or taste. Ask your child to find it. Then ask your toddler to say what it is. If your child does not know the word, say "Yes, that is a red fruit and it is an apple."

If you have a preschooler, play "I eat my... with a" Using a knife, fork, spoon, and chopsticks, ask your preschooler to fill in the words as you say, "I eat my cereal with a _____". Try other foods, like meat, peas, lettuce, rice, sandwich, milk, etc.

Book link

Eat Your Dinner, Please: A Pop-Up Book
by Allia Zobel-Nolan

Safety tip

Make a habit of washing hands before each meal. Sing a song for at least 20 seconds while you are washing.

Let's make! Sunomono salad

Food Flair recipes are a unique way to explore new and healthy foods with your toddler or preschooler. Learning to cook helps children take pride in what they make and encourages them to try new foods. These activities help families reconnect food and fun, so enjoy the experience of preparing food together!

Recipe for Sunomono salad

What you need:

1	Cucumber	1
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Vinegar	125 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	Honey* or sugar	60 mL
1 tbsp.	Soy sauce	15 mL
1 cup	Cooked rice noodles	250 mL

* Do not serve honey to children under 12 months.

How to:

1. Wash a cucumber and slice it as thin as possible. Do not peel.
2. In a small bowl, mix vinegar, honey or sugar and soy sauce.
3. Add cucumber slices.
4. Let mixture sit for 10 minutes to mix the flavours. Stir frequently.
5. Put some cooked rice noodles into small serving bowls.
6. Add some cucumber mixture to each bowl.

You will need the foods listed in the recipe, a bowl for mixing, a spoon for stirring and some small bowls for serving.



Hints for success

- ❖ Toddlers can put the cucumber slices into the vinegar mixture.
- ❖ Younger preschoolers can mix the vinegar mixture.
- ❖ Older preschoolers can also help measure the vinegar, sugar and soy sauce and stir the cucumbers.
- ❖ Encourage children to taste some raw cucumber as you are making the salad.

Did you know that many pickles are made from cucumbers?

What are some other ways to eat cucumbers?

Ways to say it

More ideas for Sunomono salad

Try this way

- ❖ Explain that sunomono salad is a favourite recipe in Japan. Talk about other Japanese foods that your child might enjoy, such as sushi or miso soup.
- ❖ To eat in a traditional Japanese manner, remove your shoes and sit on flat pillows or mats at a low table.
- ❖ Try using chopsticks!



Activity links

Read the book **My Mom Loves Me More Than Sushi** by Filomena Gomes with your child.

Use this recipe card with other Food Flair activity cards:

- Eating around the world—Chopsticks
- Eating around the world—Tasting passports

Safety tips

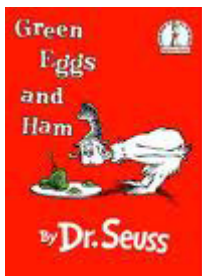
- Help children wash their hands before cooking or eating.
- Always supervise your child around sharp kitchen utensils and hot surfaces.
- Refrigerate or discard leftovers right away to prevent spoilage.

Five senses Tasting party

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Invite your child to a tasting party.
- ❖ Offer several different foods to explore.
- ❖ Explore a new food one step at a time!
 - look at it
 - touch it
 - talk about it
 - lick it to taste it
 - put it in your mouth
 - chew it
 - swallow
- ❖ As you try each new food, talk about its colour and shape, how the food feels, how the food sounds and how it tastes.

A good read-together book



Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss

You will need small amounts of a few new foods that your child might enjoy.

This activity is good for exploring tastes and textures and learning new words about food.



Hints for success

- ❖ Include some foods that are familiar to your child. Try only one or two new foods at each tasting party.
- ❖ Allow your child to choose which foods to try from the foods you offer. If a child doesn't want to try a food, avoid making comments. Never force a child to eat.
- ❖ Show your child how to try a new food by taking small bites and slowly enjoying the feel and taste in your mouth.
- ❖ Teach your child a polite way to spit out a food he doesn't want to swallow!

What does this food
smell like to you?

How does that feel
in your mouth?

Ways to say it

More ideas for Tasting party

Try this way

- ❖ Try foods in different forms, e.g. fresh and frozen bananas, grapes and raisins, cherry tomatoes and sun-dried tomatoes. Pick a theme for your tasting party – things that grow underground (like potatoes, carrots, turnips and beets), foods that cool you off on a hot day (like watermelon, cantaloupe or honeydew melon), or foods with similar names (like spaghetti and spaghetti squash).
- ❖ Try yogurt or salad dressing as dips for new foods.
- ❖ Invite some friends to come to the tasting party. Talk about which food each person likes best.



Early literacy

Make a chart showing the crunch range for different vegetables or fruit from most quiet to loudest.

Safety tips

- To prevent choking, cut foods into $\frac{1}{4}$ inch pieces for children under 12 months, and into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) pieces for children 1 to 4 years old.
- If your family has a history of allergies, introduce one new food at a time to your child. Watch your child for signs of allergy such as vomiting, hives, swelling, itchy lips or throat or a hard time breathing.
- If your child is having a hard time breathing, call 911 right away. For more information on allergies, call HealthLink BC (811) or visit www.anaphylaxis.org/content/whatis/qa.asp.

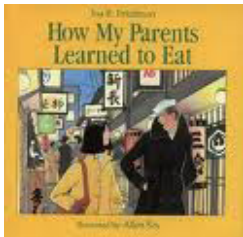
Eating around the world

Tasting passports

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Talk with your child about how different countries have different foods.
- ❖ Try exploring foods from different countries. For instance:
 - exotic fruits like mango, tangelo, avocado, Asian pear and eggplant
 - breads such as French bread, pita, tortillas, chapattis, naan and Portuguese buns
 - cooked grains such as rice (Asia), couscous (North Africa) or bulgur (Middle East).
- ❖ Make a "tasting passport" and use it to keep track of different countries you "visit" as you try their foods.

A good read-together book



How My Parents Learned to Eat
by Ina R. Friedman

You will need small amounts of foods from other cultures that your child has not tried before. You will also need materials to make passports such as paper, a stapler or ribbon, old stamps, old magazines, scissors, glue and crayons or markers.

This activity is good for learning about different cultures, new foods and different ways to eat.



Hints for success

- ❖ Try only one or two new foods at a time.
- ❖ Allow your child to choose which foods to try from the foods you offer. If your child doesn't want to try a food, avoid making comments.
- ❖ Never force a child to eat.
- ❖ Talk about the polite way to spit out food if your child tries something and doesn't like it (e.g. spit it quietly into a napkin).

This is a tortilla from Mexico. Would you like to try some?

This fruit is called a mango. I think it tastes sweet and also a little sour

Ways to say it

More ideas for Tasting passports

Try this way

- ❖ Try a bit of plain cooked grain, then taste it when it is used in a recipe, e.g. in rice pudding.
- ❖ Make recipe cards together of foods or dishes that your child really likes. Decorate the cards with pictures of the ingredients and the flag or shape of the country where it is popular.

Let's make—a passport

What you need

- Small blank books (you can make books by stapling paper sheets together or punching holes in paper and tying the sheets together with ribbon)
- Old magazines
- Old postage stamps
- Glue
- Your child's picture or a drawing; crayons or markers; stickers (optional)

How to

- Give your child a blank passport. Decorate the cover using the materials.
- For each country you "visit," decorate a new page with drawings, pictures, stamps or stickers.

Physical activities

Explore some music and dances from around the world. Dress up and move around! Try the Salsa and the Conga (South America) or a stomp dance (Africa) to get started.

Book link

Let's Eat: What Children Eat Around the World
by Beatrice Hollyer



Safety tips

- If your family has a history of allergies, introduce one new food at a time to your child. Watch your child for signs of allergy such as vomiting, hives, swelling, itchy lips or throat or a hard time breathing.
- If your child is having a hard time breathing, call 911 right away. For more information on allergies, call HealthLink BC (811) or visit www.anaphylaxis.org/content/whatis/qa.asp.

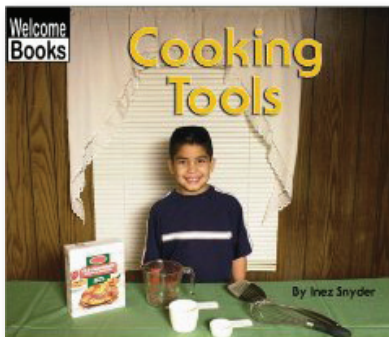
What is this for?

Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Let your child explore the drawers where you keep cooking, serving and eating tools.
- ❖ Talk about how you use different tools for cooking, serving and eating, e.g. spoons, forks, chopsticks, ladles, etc.
- ❖ Mix up some cutlery on a clean, flat surface and encourage your child to sort it into groups, e.g. large spoons, small spoons, knives, forks, etc. Talk about how the groups are different, and which foods you could eat with each group.
- ❖ Show your child how to set the table for a meal. Choose tools that go with the food you will be eating.



A good read-together book



Cooking Tools by Inez Snyder

You will need kitchen tools used for cooking, serving and eating.

This activity helps children learn about how to cook and eat different foods, and how to set the table.

Hints for success

- ❖ Encourage your child to ask questions about what different cooking tools might be used for.
- ❖ Think of healthy foods that you could eat with each kind of cutlery.

Which one could we use to serve the spaghetti?

What do you think we need on the table for lunch today?

Ways to say it

More ideas for What is this for?

Try this way

- ❖ Ask your child to fill in the word "knife," "fork," "spoon" or "chopsticks" as you say, "I eat my _____ with a _____," e.g. "I eat my cereal with a _____." If your child is being playful (e.g. "I eat my cereal with a fork"), try to eat the food that way and see how it works!
- ❖ Invite children to create a make-believe restaurant. Decide who will set the table, take orders and serve the food. Take turns. Switch for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Encourage children to order healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables and milk with each meal.

Drawing

Help children make place mats with outlines of cutlery, a plate and a cup. Decorate the place mats. Invite children to help set the table using the outlines as a reminder.

Book link

Eat Your Dinner, Please: A Pop-Up Book
by Allia Zobel-Nolan



Oh, Before I Eat My Meals

(Sung to the tune of
If You're Happy and You Know It)

Oh, before I eat my meals, I set my place,
(set, set)
Oh, before I eat my meals, I set my place,
(set, set)
I set everything I need,
I feel very proud, indeed.
Oh, before I eat my meals, I set my place.
(set, set)

Author unknown

Safety tip

Put sharp knives and other dangerous kitchen tools out of reach.