

It's Taste Test Time!

Introducing new and healthy food is one responsibility of caring for children. One fun way to try new foods is through taste testing.

Taste testing can be a fun experience while engaging children, asking questions, and exploring new flavors. When children help in the production side of taste testing through hands-on cooking, they increase social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. Utilize the tips in this resource to immerse children in the cooking and tasting process. Most importantly, have fun with children as they learn and experience cooking and tasting!



Tips for Doing a Taste Test

- Involve children in choosing the item to taste test
- Describe what the children will be doing during the taste test
- Engage children in hands-on cooking activities to prepare the item while utilizing proper food safety methods
- Pose questions to encourage children to talk about what they are doing
- Make observations during the preparation and taste test
- Taste the food item together to model positive behavior
- Ask probing questions to encourage children to think logically and problem solve
- Discuss the children's thoughts afterwards through positive and encouraging messaging

Cooking Tips for Trying New Foods



- Offer new foods at the same time as you offer familiar foods
- Add a variety of textures by varying preparation methods to include raw, baked, roasted, steamed, and sautéed
- Cut up fruits and vegetables in different ways to increase shapes such as slices, matchsticks, crinkle cut, and spirals (*Prepare and cut foods in a way to eliminate choking hazards for small children)
- Connect children with hands-on cooking activities to increase their connection to food and food origins

Engaging Kids in Hands-On Cooking Activities

- Utilize proper food safety methods
- Promote healthy food choices
- Feature seasonal, local items from edible gardens or local farmers
- Choose developmentally appropriate tasks for children to engage in such as washing produce, squeezing citrus, tearing leafy greens and herbs, and combining, measuring and mixing ingredients

