

WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN'S FAMILY COOKBOOK

Cooking and enjoying meals with your child is an excellent opportunity to learn and spend time together. Preparing food and dining together at home play a key role in helping children build healthy eating habits that can last a lifetime. Balancing fun and quality time in the kitchen will help them better understand themselves and develop a healthy relationship with food. The more they learn about food, the more likely they are to try new dishes and maintain a healthy diet.

This cookbook provides easy and affordable recipes for you to make with your child. There are many natural learning opportunities for your child in helping to prepare meals. Start small and build their skills and confidence. Think of all the reading, writing, mathematics, science, communication and relationship skills that your child is developing through spending quality time together in hands-on learning around healthy eating. Notice how much they are learning, praise their efforts and celebrate how skilled they are becoming.

Cooking together builds family bonds and a sense of belonging which are core values of Welcome to Kindergarten.

Follow your child's lead as you play and discover together.

- As you present healthy food choices, it is important to take your child's lead and trust their appetite to gauge how much they need to eat.
- As you plan and prepare food together, create an environment where you are able to encourage your child to accept new foods at their own pace and to feed themselves.

Talk and read with your child in their first language

- Explore and be creative about introducing, planning and preparing new foods from your culture and from others.
- Try to offer a variety of food choices as you familiarize your child with foods from other cultures.

Help your child to share and take turns

- Learning social-emotional skills such as sharing, taking turns and making good decisions are integral to your child's growth.
- Eating with your family is a wonderful opportunity to practice these skills by serving others, demonstrating good table manners, and making smart food choices.

Encourage your child to make choices and decisions

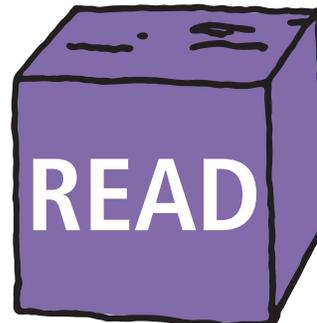
- Making choices and decisions can be key factors in building a child's confidence and ability to judge, predict, plan, and become more independent.
- Having fun in the kitchen with your child provides a great opportunity for them to grow emotionally and to learn about healthy nutritional options we have in Canada.

Celebrate your child's learning!

- There are many natural learning opportunities for your child in helping to plan and prepare meals.
- Introduce your child to foods around them in a fun way through nursery rhymes, tongue twisters, poems, stories and books. Check out the attached booklist or sing a song from the Welcome to Kindergarten album (thelearningpartnership.ca/wtk)

You are your child's first and best teacher

- The experiences you provide your child in preparing food and dining together helps your child build healthy eating habits that last a lifetime.
- No one can influence your child's healthy eating habits better than you.



EVERY DAY!