



KIDS COOK!



A Cooking with WIC Cookbook

Are you looking for ways to spend more time with your family? Do you want to provide nutritious meals for your children so they can grow up healthy and strong? Could you use some inspiration to get back into the kitchen? If you answered 'yes' to these questions, *Kids Cook* is the solution for you!

Kids Cook will bring your family together for meals and meal preparation. Having your kids in the kitchen not only gives you a chance to spend more time with them, but it also gives you the opportunity to teach them some life-long lessons. The kitchen is a great place for kids to learn math, cooking terms, how to follow directions, and how to cook for their family! These are all important skills that children can use throughout their lives.

Kids Cook will also help you prepare healthy meals and get the most out of your WIC foods. In these recipes, you'll see lots of colorful fruits and vegetables, protein-packed beans, and hearty whole grains.

So tie back your hair, put on your apron, and let's get *Cooking with WIC!*

Breakfast—the most important meal of the day!

Everyone needs breakfast! Breakfast is so important because after going all night without a meal or a snack, your brain and muscles need energy to work. Breakfast is a great way to get your body refueled and ready for the day! Not only does breakfast help kids do better in school, it helps them eat healthier and control their weight. Eating breakfast as a family is also a good way to spend time with your kids.

While it is important for you and your kids to have breakfast every day, what you eat is also important. Choose foods that are rich in whole grains, fiber, and protein but low in added sugars. Breakfast should contain a source of milk (for calcium and protein), a form of starch, fruit, and some fat. Tips for a healthy breakfast include:


- Choose reduced-fat, low-fat, or non-fat dairy products: milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, or cheese
- Choose whole fruits instead of juice
- Include whole grains such as oatmeal or WIC-approved cereal
- Avoid foods high in sugars and fats such as donuts, croissants, sweetened beverages, sausage, and bacon



Good breakfast choices include:

- Whole grain toast with a slice of cheese and an apple
- Smoothies prepared with milk or yogurt, fruit, and a topping of whole grain cereal
- Hot cereal topped with cinnamon and fresh fruit, served with a cup of milk
- Bran muffin with yogurt and berries
- Whole wheat tortilla with scrambled eggs, beans, salsa, and a slice of cheese
- Peanut butter on a whole grain bagel with fresh fruit and milk

Breakfast starts with you! Set a good example and let your kids see you taking time to enjoy breakfast every day. Even if you just grab whole wheat toast, a banana, and a glass of milk, you are showing them how important it is to rise and dine!

A photograph of a woman and a young girl. The woman is in the background, smiling and looking down at the girl. The girl is in the foreground, smiling and holding a handful of fresh raspberries. The background is a simple indoor setting, possibly a kitchen or dining area.

Hand washing is so important! Make hand washing a top priority, and be sure to scrub your hands with soap and water before you start cooking and after you handle raw meats or egg shells. To make sure that you wash for at least 20 seconds, sing the Happy Birthday song through twice while you wash!

Hearty Breakfast Casserole

This casserole can be put together the night before, so all you have to do in the morning is bake it! While the casserole is in the oven, you can mix up a quick fruit salad to serve on the side. Have the kids help by tearing the bread into tiny pieces.

- 6 slices bread, torn into small pieces
- 1 pound cooked ham, chopped into small pieces
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 green or red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 8 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups milk
- Black pepper

Remember that it is not up to you to get your child to eat! Your role at mealtimes is to provide a variety of healthy, tasty foods. It is up to your child to choose what and how much to eat.



Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Put bread pieces in a greased 9 x 13 pan or baking dish. Add meat and cheese on top. Mix eggs, milk, onion, bell pepper, and black pepper. Pour over ingredients in pan. May cover and keep in refrigerator overnight. If left overnight remove from refrigerator 15 minutes before baking. Bake for 45 minutes or until set. Cut into squares to serve and enjoy!

Easy, Delicious Baked French Toast

This is the easiest French toast you will ever make! You don't have to individually dip and cook each slice – just have the kids line up the bread in the baking dish, then pour the topping over everything at once and pop it in the oven.

- 6 slices whole wheat bread
- 6 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Make sure to cook foods thoroughly. Use a thermometer to make sure meats are fully cooked by measuring the internal temperature:

Ground beef and pork: 160 °F

Eggs and egg dishes: 160 °F

All poultry, ground or whole: 165 °F

Leftovers and casseroles: 165 °F

*Hotdogs and reheated deli meats:
165 °F or steaming hot*



Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease 9 x 13 baking pan. Line the bottom of the pan with the bread slices. In a bowl, mix together the milk, eggs, brown sugar, cinnamon, and vanilla. Slowly pour the mixture over bread slices. Bake for 20 minutes. To serve, separate the French toast slices and place on individual plates or a serving dish and sprinkle with powdered sugar. Baked French toast slices can also be frozen and defrosted for a quick breakfast when you are pressed for time.

Fancy Yogurt Parfaits

These parfaits are quick and simple to make, but feel very fancy! Kids will have fun layering together all of the ingredients. Parfaits are great for breakfast or snacks.

1 cup yogurt – plain or flavored
1/2 cup fruit – fresh or frozen
1/8 cup crunchy cereal

Spoon half of the yogurt in a dish or glass and top with 1/2 of the fruit and 1/2 of the cereal. Repeat layers. Grab a spoon and enjoy this tasty treat!



Lunch & Dinner

It can be hard to prepare a homemade meal when juggling work, taking care of kids, helping with homework, and running to activities. Lunch and dinner will be easy if you follow these 3 simple Ps:

Plan, Prepare, and Pitch In.

Plan! Do you stare at the open refrigerator at 6:00pm and wonder what your family will eat for dinner? Avoid this nightly stress by taking time to sit down and plan your meals for the whole week. Write out a menu for lunch and dinner each day of the week.

Prepare! After you have planned your menu, it is time to prepare. You will need all the ingredients for each recipe on your menu. Make a list of items that you will need for that week. This will prevent multiple trips to the store which will save you time and money! Keep these pantry staples on hand and add them to your shopping list as you use them: dry and canned beans (black, pinto, and kidney), brown rice, pasta, whole grain crackers, peanut butter, canned fish and chicken, canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, broth (chicken, beef, or vegetable), and canola/olive oil.



Have your family *pitch in*! Lunch and dinner meals are the perfect times to get your helpers in the kitchen. If you have older children, have them peel and chop vegetables, measure ingredients, crack eggs, and wash dishes. Younger children can help set the table and clean up after the meal. Let everyone help!

Getting meals on the table is only half the battle. Preparing something healthy that your family will eat can sometimes be a struggle as well. Include these items at lunch and dinner:

- Protein such as lean meats, fish, or eggs
- Starch such as rice, grits, or potatoes
- Vegetable and/or fruit
- Bread, tortilla, or crackers
- Calcium source such as milk or yogurt
- Fat such as butter, margarine, or oils

Lunch and dinner are great times for your family to bond. Even if you are rushed for time, it's important to make a meal together and take a break to sit down as a family for these meals. Family meals create warm memories and help your children learn to be social and have good manners.

The following recipes are not only easy and delicious but they will also provide your family with the foods needed for a healthy body. So, what are you waiting for? Grab a pencil and start your list!





Mini Party Pizzas

- Your kids will love making their own little pizzas! Let them choose their toppings and decorate the pizzas themselves. It will feel like a pizza party in your own kitchen!

Whole wheat or soft corn tortilla

Tomato sauce

Chopped vegetables (green pepper, tomato, olives, mushrooms, broccoli, spinach)

Shredded Mozzarella cheese

Optional: Cooked diced ham, Canadian bacon, or hamburger topping

Spread tomato sauce onto tortilla and add your favorite toppings. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake pizzas on foil-lined cookie sheet at 425 degrees for 10-12 minutes or until cheese is melted. Let pizzas cool before enjoying.

Snazzy Chicken Stir-Fry Skillet

Juicy chicken and broccoli stir-fried together in a yummy sauce, with healthy, hearty brown rice. This meal makes cleaning up super easy because everything is cooked in one pan! Get the kids to pitch in by helping you gather ingredients and measure the rice.

- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts or tenders, cut into chunks
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1/3 cup teriyaki sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 cups instant brown rice, uncooked
- 2 cups frozen broccoli
- Black pepper to taste

To make your meals more enjoyable, include your children in mealtime conversations but don't make them the center of attention. Let them eat and see you enjoy your food, too, and they will notice the good example that you set.

In a large pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken; cook and stir 5-7 minutes or until cooked through. Add water, teriyaki sauce, and garlic powder. Bring to a boil. Stir in rice and broccoli. Cover and cook on low heat for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes. Fluff rice with a fork.



Lovely Lentils

Lentils are so versatile! They can be eaten on their own, over rice, in a tortilla, so many ways!

Unlike dry beans, lentils do not have to soak before you cook them. Kids can help cook by washing the celery and rinsing the lentils in a colander.

- 1 pound lentils, dry
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 5 cups boiling water
- 1 can (16 ounce) tomatoes or tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Corn or whole wheat tortillas or rice (optional)

Have you heard of chayote squash, jackfruit, radicchio, tomatillo, or kohlrabi? Try something new! You might find a favorite fruit or vegetable.

Lentils can be made in a slow cooker or on the stovetop. Slow cooker: Rinse lentils and pick out stones. Place the lentils in the bottom of slow cooker. Add the boiling water, tomatoes or tomato sauce, chili powder, onions, celery, and garlic powder. Stir. Cook all day on low heat or 4 ½ to 5 hours on high.

Stovetop: Rinse lentils and pick out stones. Add salt and lentils to boiling water. Cover and simmer 30 minutes. Do not drain. Add tomatoes or tomato sauce, chili powder, onions, celery, and garlic powder. Cover and simmer 30 minutes.



Magical Minestrone Soup

Just add salad, bread, and a glass of milk to make this soup into a hearty meal! Try it with any kind of bean that you like. The kids can help by washing the cabbage and carrots.

- 6 cups tomato or vegetable juice
- 3 bouillon cubes
- 4 cups washed, chopped cabbage
- 2 cups washed, peeled, diced carrots
- 2 cups cooked beans (rinse the beans if using canned beans)
- 1 can (19 ounces) chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Mozzarella cheese, grated (optional)

Combine tomato or vegetable juice and bouillon cubes in a large pot and heat on stove top until boiling. Turn heat to low. Add chopped cabbage and diced carrots. Cover and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Stir in beans, tomatoes, and garlic powder. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cover and cook 5 minutes longer. Serve in bowls with grated mozzarella cheese on top.

Lunch and dinner meals are good opportunities for your child to try new foods. Be sure to also include foods that you know your child likes along with the new foods that you want to introduce. This way he will have some choices at the table that he is comfortable eating, in case he is not ready to try the new items.



Fiesta Tasty Taco Salad

This salad gives you lots of options. If someone in your family prefers their green salad on the side, just roll up the bean and vegetable mix into a tortilla! Have the kids help by washing the pepper and tomato and getting the bowls ready with salad and chips.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 1 (14 ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained; or a fresh tomato, chopped
- 2 (14 ounce) cans kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- 2 cups corn chips
- Salad greens

Heat olive oil in skillet and add onions. Cook and stir for 4 to 5 minutes, until softened. Add green pepper and cook 2 more minutes. Add seasonings, tomatoes, and beans. Stir well. Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Top with shredded cheese and remove from heat. Cover pan and let stand until cheese melts. Place salad greens in bowl or on plate, add crumbled corn chips, and top with bean and vegetable mixture.



Snacks

Snacks are important and should be eaten! Young children need lots of energy but have very little room in their tummies for food. Snacks are a good way for them to get the energy they need throughout the day. Your job is to decide on snack times and choose which foods to serve for snacks.

Treat snacks as mini meals. Snack foods should be just as nutritious as meal foods. Snacks should not be used as rewards or punishments. Serve snacks at the table and sit down with your child to keep them company.

Be consistent with snacks - timing is important. Children should eat every 2 to 3 hours, so offer your child a snack midway between meals. Don't wait to serve them just when your child asks for one. Serve the snack early enough so they will be hungry at meal time.

It is your child's job to determine how much she eats. Let your children eat as much as they are hungry for at snack time. Snacks do not have to be fancy but they should be more than just carrot sticks or an apple. Try to include at least two food groups. Examples of quick and healthy snacks include:

- Breakfast cereal with milk
- Popcorn and milk
- Vegetables and dip
- Fruit and cottage cheese
- Yogurt and graham crackers
- Half of a peanut butter sandwich
- Cheese and crackers

Your child might need to be offered a new food several times before she decides to try it. Don't worry - this is normal and expected! Children are naturally curious and will eventually try the new food.

Fantastic Fruit Smoothie

One easy way to eat more fruit is to drink it! This smoothie has the added bonus of fiber from the fruit and calcium from the yogurt. Kids will like adding all of the ingredients to the blender.

1 banana

1/2 cup orange juice

1/2 cup nonfat yogurt (plain or vanilla flavored)

1/4 cup frozen berries

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Cover with lid and blend until smooth. Pour into a pretty glass and serve with a fun straw. This is delicious with mixed berries, strawberries, or even frozen peaches!



Spiced Apple Muffins

These tasty muffins call for applesauce in place of butter or oil. Instead of buying applesauce, try making your own! Check out the rustic homemade applesauce recipe in this book. Kids can help with measuring and adding ingredients to the bowl.

- 1 1/2 cups bran cereal
- 1 1/2 cups applesauce
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup of butter or margarine, melted
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup raisins – optional

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a large bowl, stir together the cereal, applesauce, egg, butter, and brown sugar and let sit for 5 minutes so that the cereal softens. In another bowl, mix together flour, baking powder, and cinnamon. Stir this into the cereal mixture just until blended. Stir in raisins if using. Evenly divide batter into greased or paper-lined muffin cups. Bake for 15-18 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Remove from baking pan and allow to cool.



Candied Carrot Raisin Salad

This is our favorite carrot raisin salad of all time! It's sweet enough to eat as a snack or even dessert. Try it once and you'll see what we mean! Have the kids stir it up for you.

1/2 cup plain non-fat yogurt

1 tablespoon sugar

3 tablespoons whipped salad dressing or reduced-fat mayonnaise

1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

3 dashes cinnamon

2 dashes nutmeg

1/2 cup raisins

1 can (8oz) pineapple tidbits, drained, or 1 cup diced fresh

3 cups shredded carrots

Mix first 6 ingredients in bowl to make dressing. Add last 3 ingredients and stir well to mix. Cover and keep this delicious salad in the refrigerator until you are ready to eat.



Rustic Homemade Applesauce

When you make your own applesauce, you get to control all of the ingredients, so you can avoid any additives or preservatives that you do not want in your foods. Your kids can pitch in by helping you mash the apples.

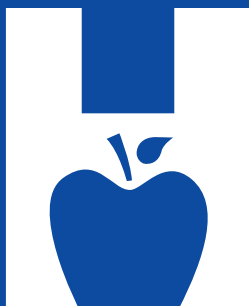
4 large apples

Cinnamon

Sugar – optional

Core and chop apples (peeling is optional). Place in a large pot. Add water to cover the apples and bring to a boil, then cover and simmer until apples are soft. Drain apples and mash with a fork or potato masher. For smoother applesauce, blend in a blender. Sprinkle in cinnamon and/or sugar to taste. If sweet apples are used, sugar may not be needed. For even more flavor, steam and mash blueberries or strawberries and stir into the applesauce.





Oklahoma State Department of Health

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