

12 Foods = 6 Meals Kids Love

Leader's Activity Guide – a complement to
4H-EFNEP 4163 Italian Style
or 4164 Mexican Style – for youth 9-12 years old.



Introduction

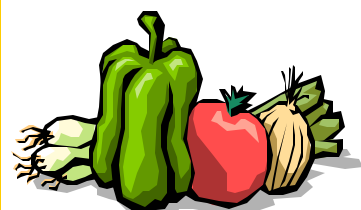
This activity guide is designed for adult leaders to use in conjunction with either the *Italian Style or Mexican Style* versions of the recipe publication - *12 Foods = 6 Meals Kids Love*. It includes six hands-on activities relating to food preparation for 9 to 12 year old youth; each is coordinated with a booklet recipe. The last section of this guide provides tips, research and references in support of teaching cooking skills to youth.

Using this activity guide with youth audiences

The primary audience for these materials is adults working with youth. The focus for adults is on *demonstration and repetition*, which are very effective learning strategies with youth. Insights from health research which supports the importance of early intervention with youth are frequently cited. The activities can be tailored to work in a variety of settings including after-school, day care, inter-session and day camp programs as well as in traditional 4-H projects.

This activity guide contains many age-appropriate activities and tips. Our emphasis for youth is placed on *participation and practice*. Completing all six activities, each including food preparation and tasting, is necessary if one is to hope that the children will repeat the recipes at home. The sixth activity is an intentional celebration of skills gained from the previous five weeks of practice.

Celebration planning will be referenced throughout drawing on the youths' perception of how a celebratory meal should look.



*Eating experiences
influence food
preferences*



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Goals

Using a limited number of inexpensive ingredients, youth prepare and cook simple, tasty meals. Basic food preparation and safety concepts are introduced as they create and cook meals. Since youth are encouraged to reproduce these meals at home, consider these three important factors about participation and adoption of new behaviors:

- ◆ Youth will see the bigger picture: food preparation that includes planning and shopping for several meals makes cooking a fun and easy to do activity.
- ◆ Each youth should be active in preparing the recipe. From a learning perspective, participation is very effective for youth.
- ◆ Allow time for everyone to taste the food product. Tasting, another form of participation, will increase the likelihood of youth preparing the meal at home.
- ◆ Celebrate – a doable team goal! Create a reward by planning for a special celebration in Activity 6.

Objectives

Select appropriate objectives from those listed below. The activities provided in this lesson plan and the recipes in either of the *12 Foods = 6 Meals Kids Love* publications provide the tools to meet all these objectives.

Preparing and tasting a recipe is a great way to get a food preparation message across.

Youth will

- ◆ prepare and eat simple meals during the educational experience.
- ◆ be inspired to prepare and eat simple meals at home.
- ◆ enjoy learning about food preparation.
- ◆ increase food safety knowledge and skills.
- ◆ increase confidence to prepare food.
- ◆ as a group, plan and prepare a celebratory meal.

Messages

Messages are short phrases representing important content and should be easy to recall. For example, “Eating In = Saving money” is a short phrase; it emphasizes that preparing food at home usually saves money which might be used for other fun things.

Plan Ahead – prepare food at home

- ◆ Good food is easy to prepare...if you plan ahead.
- ◆ Good food can taste yummy...if you plan ahead.
- ◆ Food preparation is fun...if you plan ahead.
- ◆ Planning meals leads to independence.

Food safety at home

- ◆ Wash hands well before preparing food.
- ◆ Keep safe in the kitchen.

Preparing Food at Home = Saving Money

- ◆ Eating In = Saving money. Preparing food at home usually saves money which might be spent on other fun things.

Activity 1

Measuring Fun & pick a recipe:

Italian Beans or Mexican Fiesta Rice

This hands-on experience is fun and requires no experience with kitchen measuring. Youth can build on their knowledge if this lesson is done before the first cooking experience. Italian Beans or Mexican Fiesta take little time to prepare and cook so both recipe preparation and the activity are doable in an hour's time.

Set up three measuring stations: one is for dry ingredients, another is for liquids and the third is just for measuring spoons. Demonstrate proper measuring techniques at each station. If working with a large group, break into three smaller groups and have each group start at a different station. Handout #1 accompanies this activity.

Station #1– Dry Measuring

- 1) Ideas for ingredients to measure are: flour, cornmeal or sugar. All are low cost and can be reused. Place the ingredient in a large bowl or rectangular cake pan.
- 2) Measuring cups for dry ingredients are either metal or plastic with different sizes for different amounts.
- 3) Choose the appropriate measuring cup and then spoon the ingredients into the cup.
- 4) Use the flat edge of a table knife and scrape across the top of the cup's edge to level the ingredient.



Station #2 – Liquid Measuring

- 1 Use a bucket or dish pan of water and a tray with a lip to reduce messes. Use a clear liquid measuring cup with indicator lines. Put the measuring cup on a flat surface.
- 2 Have each participant use a ladle or a cup with a handle to pour the water into the measuring cup.
- 3 Check the water amount by bending down so your eyes are even with the measure marks on the cup. Add more if necessary.



Station #3 – Measuring Spoons

- 1 Measuring spoons come in either metal or plastic. Liquid or dry ingredients can be used.
- 2 For dry ingredients, scoop the ingredient with the spoon and level off with the flat edge of a knife. (Corn meal is easy and inexpensive for practicing.)
- 3 For liquid ingredients, hold the spoon over an empty bowl to collect spills.



You Need....

- ◆ Handout #1
- ◆ Set of dry measuring cups
- ◆ Liquid measuring cup
- ◆ Set of measuring spoons
- ◆ 2 table knives
- ◆ Bucket for water
- ◆ Ladle
- ◆ Tray with lip
- ◆ 2 large bowls
- ◆ Flour, cornmeal or sugar
- ◆ Water
- ◆ Recipe fixings (see "12 Foods = 6 Meals...")
- ◆ Cups, forks, napkins for tasting

Using all these measuring utensils move quickly to ...

Wash hand and prepare Italian Beans or Mexican Fiesta Rice.

Everyone helps clean up while the food cooks.

Activities

Activity 2

Kitchen Safety & pick a recipe:

Top It Off Casserole or Enchilada Casserole

Demonstrating or modeling kitchen safety throughout these six activities is the most important teaching strategy. The following are tips to discuss with youth so they learn to prevent kitchen accidents. Whenever you have the chance, demonstrate, "This is how I do this."

Begin each activity segment by asking the youth for their ideas based on the lead questions provided below.

Kitchen Safety Tips

Working in the kitchen

- ◆ Most kitchens floors have smooth surfaces. Why do you suppose that is true?

Answer: Although smooth surfaces are slippery, they are easier to clean.

Wipe up spills immediately to prevent slipping.

- ◆ What are some dangers while cooking on stove and range burners? (By the way, this also applies to camp stoves.)

Answer: 1. Pot handles should be turned to the center of the stovetop to prevent bumps and spills.

2. Burner size is important – large pot on large burner, small pot on small burner keeps handles from getting so hot AND prevents food from sticking to the sides of the pan.

- ◆ Dry hands in the kitchen are important and difficult considering how often we have to wash them. Why is it important to pay attention to when our hands are wet?

Answer: 1. Plugging in appliances can be shocking! Electricity and water are a dangerous combination.

Never touch a plug with wet hands.

2. Tools are more likely to slip from wet hands. Dropping a knife or a hot pot or the like can cause harm.

- ◆ Besides knives, what other kitchen equipment is dangerous?

Answer: A can opener, grater, vegetable peeler, etc., (even toothpicks and plastic knives if mishandled).

Demonstrate a safe approach to opening and discarding cans.

Open can on a towel to prevent slippage. Discard the lid inside the empty can.

(picture of can here)

You Need....

- ◆ Handout #2
- ◆ Soap & paper towels
- ◆ Knife & cutting board
- ◆ Dish towel
- ◆ Can & opener
- ◆ Pot & potholder
- ◆ Recipe fixings (see "12 Foods = 6 Meals...")
- ◆ Plates, forks and napkins for tasting

More on next page ->

Activity 2

... continued **Kitchen Safety & pick a recipe:**

Top It Off Casserole or Enchilada Casserole

More ... Kitchen Safety Tips



Demonstrate the safe use of knives.

(Ask the youth to identify safe practices. Make sure the following issues are discussed.)

- Handle knives only when cutting food and only at the work place.
 - Cut towards the table or desk and away from your hands.
- Use a cutting board. Plastic boards are easier to keep clean than wooden boards.
- Wash knives one by one; do not drop them into the soapy dishwasher.

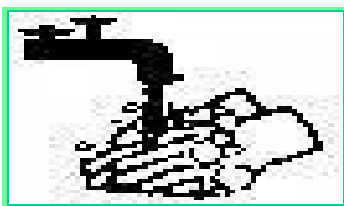
In general, emphasize safety. Before allowing participants to begin working on food projects, demonstrate the proper use of knives and other equipment.

Demonstrate oven safety

- Before removing hot items, prepare a **safe, dry place** to put them. A hot glass oven dish on a wet counter will crack. A hot cookie sheet on a wet counter will warp. Plastic melts. Hot anything on skin hurts and causes injury!
- Using two **thick and dry potholders**, demonstrate how to remove hot foods from the oven. Emphasize that adults will remove hot items from oven, stove top or microwave.
- A hot, covered dish or pan from the oven is dangerous. Using a thick, dry hot pad, demonstrate **keeping one's face away from the column of hot steam** that often rushes up from the pan while opening the lid.

Demonstrate safe food handling

- ♦ **Hand washing:** Proper hand washing is vital! Demonstrate proper hand washing. **Thoroughly scrub all surfaces of hands and nails with soap**, (using a nail brush when necessary), rinse with warm water and dry with clean paper towels. Reminder: re-wash hands after using the restroom, touching face or hair, and handling raw meat, fish, poultry and eggs. (See Handout #2).

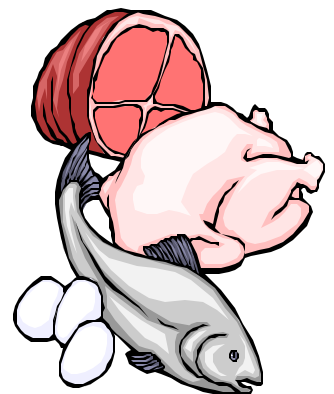


Why do we wash our hands after we go to the bathroom?

A: Body wastes contain bacteria that can cause sickness.

Why are raw meat, poultry or eggs a concern?

A: These foods may contain bacteria such as salmonella and E.coli. **Wash hands, utensils and surfaces after handling.** Do not use unwashed containers (e.g., bowls, plates, platters) to serve cooked food. Be sure to cook these foods thoroughly.



Activities

Activity 3 *Name It! & pick a recipe:*

Hamburger Skillet or Anytime Burritos

Use Handout #3 to introduce new vocabulary and food preparation utensils. Distribute the handout and then ask everyone to offer different names for the objects on their handout, e.g., a pot may be called a kettle. In Spanish, a pot might be an *olla* or *cazuela*, or *caserola*. (and a colander is a *colandor*, *rayador* is a grator, etc.) This is a good review of tools and fun to discover the many names for the many tools we use.

- Lay out some kitchen tools on a table ahead of time. Select an item from the handout and match it with one on the table, e.g., grater, skillet, etc.
- Around the table, ask them to say something about safety issues relating to the utensil.

You Need....

- ◆ Handout #3
- ◆ Kitchen tools
- ◆ Recipe fixings (see “12 Foods = 6 Meals...”)
- ◆ Plates, forks & napkins for tasting

Wash hands and prepare *Hamburger Skillet or Anytime Burritos*.

🎉 **Celebration Planning:** Before this lesson is over, ask the students to think about what makes a celebration. Ask them to bring their idea to the next session.



Activity 4 *Pizza Comparison & pick a recipe:*

Yum Yum Pizza or Tamale Pie

Wash hands and prepare *recipe first*. While it is baking, do this activity.

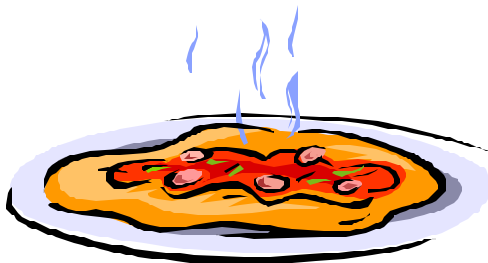
Homemade vs. Takeout

By Phallin Eang Khim, UC Davis Student

This activity focuses on saving money by preparing food at home instead of purchasing fast food from restaurants. It contains two handouts. Handout # 4 Pizza Comparison is appropriate for all audiences. Handout #5 Mazing Pizza is appropriate for younger children. Introduce the topic by asking participants the following questions:

You Need....

- ◆ Handouts #4 & 5
- ◆ Chalk
- ◆ Chalk board
- ◆ Pencils
- ◆ Pizza Menu
- ◆ Recipe fixings (see “12 Foods = 6 Meals...”)
- ◆ Plates, forks & napkins for tasting



- ◆ With a show of hands, ask whose families eat pizza out or has it delivered more than once a month? Ask a volunteer to record it.
- ◆ Ask the youth to estimate how much money is spent on a large pizza?
- ◆ Now ask them to estimate how much it might cost to make a large pizza at home. Record the responses.

Handout # 4: *Pizza Comparison*

Ask the group to make a list about making pizza at home vs. going out for pizza.

What's good about making our own pizza? What's good about going out for pizza?

Here are examples of the advantages (or disadvantages).

Avoid the hassle of waiting.

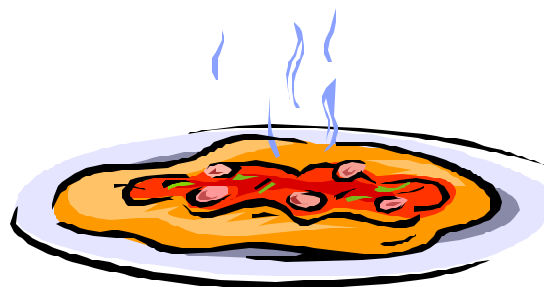
Enjoy it fresh from the oven; but there's clean up.

It's fun making your own pizza.

It's fun eating at home with friends.

It's more fun eating in a restaurant.

Costs less; and no tip. Money available for _____.



Use the handout to compare the cost of making a large five topping pizza at home with ordering a similar pizza from a well known pizza chain. Notice that with the same number of toppings, a pizza made at home is one third the cost of a pizza from the chain. Three large pizzas can be made for the cost of one "chain" pizza. Acknowledge those who guessed the correct answer or came close to the cost of making a home-made pizza.

Handout #5: *Mazing Pizza*

Handout #5 is designed for younger children. The handout consists of a simple maze and will need to be reproduced for each child from the master provided in the appendix. The children create their own pizza by choosing and then circling the ingredients. After finishing the maze, they can add up how much the pizza would cost if made at home. This price can be compared to the price of a take-out pizza (a well known chain ~ \$17.00). Ask for volunteers to share the type of pizza they made and its cost on the board. Ask them how much they think their large pizza would cost at the chain. Then calculate the difference.

This is how we arrived at the price for the pizza:

Ingredients	Cost	Cost for 1 Pizza
Spaghetti sauce	1.99/32oz	\$ 0.88
Mozzarella cheese	3.79/lb	\$ 0.95
Meat	1.99/lb	\$ 0.63
Olives	.99/3.8oz	\$ 0.39
Bread dough	1.50	\$ 0.75
Green Peppers	1.59/ lb	\$ 0.31
Mushrooms	1.49/3.8oz	\$ 0.35
Broccoli	.79/ bunch	\$ 0.40
Onions	.39/lb	\$ 0.10
Total		\$ 4.76

Ideas for leftover ingredients

- ◆ Make two or three pizzas at once. Wrap the additional pizzas tightly with freezer wrap and store in the freezer.
- ◆ Wrap and store ingredients in the refrigerator. Prepare another pizza in a few days.
- ◆ Make a different recipe from *12 Foods = 6 Meals Kids Love*

Celebration Planning:

- ☛ While tasting the pie, brainstorm with the youth their ideas about what makes a meal a celebration.
- ☛ Write these on a large piece of paper.
- ☛ Post this list during the following two activities allowing the youth to add to it as they think of things.



Activities

Activity 5

Set the Table Like a Pro & pick a recipe ...

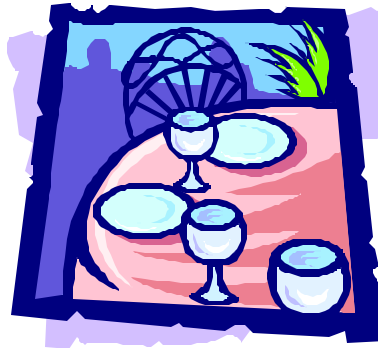
Quick Minestrone Soup or Quesadilla Delight

There are many ways to set a table. Handout #6 presents the *conventional* place setting used in many restaurants. This is familiar to most adults but not necessarily children. This activity can be used at the end of this lesson as practice for the celebration meal in Activity 6. These are guide lines. Remember **fun is key**, not precision.

You Need...

- ◆ Handout #6
- ◆ Dinner plate
- ◆ Silverware
- ◆ Napkin/paper towel
- ◆ Drinking glasses
- ◆ Recipe fixings (see "12 Foods = 6 Meals...")
- ◆ Bowls, spoons & napkins for tasting

- ◆ The dinner plate is put in the middle of the placemat or put the plate's edge one to two inches from the table's edge.
- ◆ The napkin (paper or cloth, folded lengthwise) is placed to the left of the plate.
- ◆ The dinner fork is placed on top of the napkin. If a salad fork is included, it is



- ◆ The knife goes to the right of the plate, cutting-edge facing the plate.
- ◆ The teaspoon goes to the right of the knife. Should a soup spoon be needed, it is put between these two.
- ◆ The drinking glass usually goes

Wash hands and prepare *Quick Minestrone Soup or Quesadilla Delight*

👥 **Celebration Planning:** Looking ahead to Lesson Six, here's an opportunity to make the celebration as festive as there is time and energy to do. Using the brainstormed list made at the last meeting, ask the youth what they want to do to make their next activity a celebration. We strongly encourage that the criteria for adopting an idea is that there be a volunteer willing to carry it out.

Activity 6

👥 ***Make the Celebration Happen with***

Meatball Soup or Quick Chicken

Time to have a party and celebrate accomplishments! Now the youth can show their stuff. Team planning has been happening right along. Now we see what many hands can do – an event where everyone participates in providing good food for everyone, enabling everyone to have a good time and not spend too much money. Help the youth to plan what they need to celebrate their own wonderful accomplishments!

Wash hands and prepare Meatball Soup or Quick Chicken.

👥 ***Celebrate!!!!***

Party Needs....

- ◆ Place settings
- ◆ Recipe fixings
- ◆ Selected brainstormed ideas
 - 👥 Table cloth?
 - 👥 Center piece?
 - 👥 Special bread?
 - 👥 Decorations?
 - 👥 Other Foods?
 - 👥 Dessert?
 - 👥 ??????????????

Tips for youth – optional

The following tips can be used with the food preparation experience.

Choose the tips that best fit your audience.

◆ Lowering the fat

- Five of the six recipes in the *12 Foods = 6 Meals Kids Love* publication # 4163 (Italian Style) begin with raw ground beef. Demonstrate how to brown the meat and drain the fat slowly (and safely) into an empty can.
- For greater fat reduction, pat the meat with a paper towel after draining.

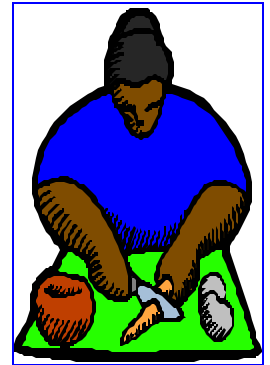
◆ Cooking Rice

- Bring 2 – 2 1/2 cups water to a boil.
- Add 1 cup of rice, cover and cook over slow heat for 25-30 minutes.
- Uncover the pot for last 5 minutes of cooking.
- One cup of uncooked rice makes about 2 cups of cooked rice.

◆ Cooking Pasta

- Pasta should be added gradually to a large quantity of boiling water.
- Cooking time depends on the kind of pasta—2-15 minutes.
- Cooking time can be judged by tasting.

Most people prefer pasta *al dente*— the Italian word for firm to the bite.



Cooking can be fun
and easy.

◆ More About the Oven

- What happens to a dish such as Yum Yum Pizza if you put it in a cold oven and then turn the temperature to 400 F? It may burn.
- For most recipes, preheat the oven. This means turning on the oven to the desired temperature about 20 minutes before the food goes in the oven.
- Place oven rack in the middle of the oven.
- Baking times vary with the thickness of the crust.

◆ More Food Safety

- Discuss the motto, “ Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot”.
How does this motto relate to the prevent food poisoning.?
- Discuss proper *thawing techniques*. Thawing meats in the refrigerator or in the microwave using “Defrost” are safe methods. Thawing food on the counter can promote bacterial growth and is unsafe.
- Any perishable foods left out of the refrigerator for more than two hours should be discarded.
- After dinner, place warm leftovers in shallow containers, then cover and refrigerate. Leftovers should be eaten within 3 to 4 days after cooking and should be thoroughly reheated until steamy and hot throughout (165°F).

Cooking Tips

The following tips can be used to add to the food preparation experience. Choose the tips that best fit the audience.

◆ Bread dough ideas for Yum Yum Pizza and Top It Off Casserole

- Thaw bread dough 1-2 hrs at room temperature or in refrigerator overnight (8-10 hrs). Explain that this is an exception to the “*no thawing on the counter rule.*”
- Brush top with oil to keep dough surface moist.
- Roll dough into a circle (Yum Yum pizza) or a rectangle (Top It Off Casserole). This is not a simple task, so be persistent. The dough tends to shrink back. Kids love this activity.

◆ What are the most recommended cooking oils?

Oils such as canola, olive, sunflower or safflower are better for your heart than other oils and solid cooking fats such as lard, margarine and butter. Among the recommended oils, choose the one with the lowest price and best flavor. If money permits, buy an oil in spray form such as PAM. Or better yet, fill a small spray bottle with cooking oil. A quick spray on a pan keeps food from sticking without adding excessive oil (fat) to the food.

◆ Substitution ideas

Part of the fun of cooking is trying new combinations of ingredients and flavors. Encourage youth to feel free to substitute ingredients. The concept of *substitutions* is important for busy people who want the kitchen to be an easy place to cook. Sometimes food on hand can be substituted for a recipe ingredient; use it instead of buying another.

Try

- Tomato sauce for enchilada and spaghetti sauces (most recipes)
- Jack cheese for mozzarella and cheddar (most recipes)
- Water for beef broth (all recipes in the publications)
- V8 juice for spaghetti sauce (Yum Yum Pizza) – Yes, this is good!
- Mixed frozen vegetables for potatoes (Hamburger Heaven)
- Black beans or black eyed peas for red, kidney or white beans (most recipes)

◆ Spices

Spices and condiments can decrease the need for added salt. These range from herbs like basil, cilantro and oregano to condiments like barbecue sauce and mustard. Use depends on preference and availability. Recipes in the publications cater to a young child’s palate; minimal spices are used.

For people who prefer spicier foods consider,

- Increasing the spices, not the salt.
- Adding new spices (Hamburger Skillet, Quick Minestrone Soup).
- Serving salsa or mustard (Mexican Fiesta Rice, Quick Chicken).
- Using hot instead of the mild enchilada sauce (Enchilada Casserole).



Spice adds flavor without extra calories, fat or sodium (salt).

Why teach cooking skills to children?

Facts about children's diets today ...

(Male & female, all ages)

- ◆ High in total fat: 34% (recommended: 30%).
- ◆ High in saturated fat: 13% (10%).
- ◆ High in sodium: 2,948 mg/per day (2400 mg).
- ◆ High in calories and low in nutrient density.
- ◆ Low in fiber.

Facts about today's families with children ...

(In general, they)

- ◆ Share fewer meals together at home.
- ◆ Purchase twenty-seven percent of all meals and snacks at eating establishments, up two-thirds from 20 years ago.
- ◆ Leave the children unsupervised after school – that's between 5-15 million children.⁹

So, we should teach cooking skills to children because:

They will gain the skills they need to prepare food. Risk factors are already evident in some young bodies, e.g., elevated cholesterol, obesity, diabetes.⁵ We need to focus on reducing risky dietary behaviors early in life, and learning how to cook can be fun. The **ideal time to begin nutrition education is while children are young.**

- ◆ During the elementary years, many children are at the **concrete stage of cognitive development**; cooking and tasting are concrete, **tangible and fun learning experiences**.¹²
 - ◆ Food habits track throughout childhood and adolescence.⁶ Behaviors are learned, reinforced by repeat exposure and solidified during childhood.⁷
 - ◆ The cooking experience is gratifying for children—they eat a dish they prepared and they receive praise from peers and family.
 - ◆ After-school nutrition education programs increase skills so children may **improve their own nutrition.**
- ◆ **Early eating experiences influence children's long term food preferences.** Research suggests that preferences for high fat and high sodium foods are learned.^{1,2,3} We know there are long term health consequences.
 - ◆ Fewer adults and families make eating together or preparing food at home a priority. Some researchers believe children and teens can play an important role in helping families eat healthier meals together.⁸
 - ◆ Teaching cooking skills to children may give them the incentive to try new foods and to prepare foods at home for themselves and their families.
 - ◆ A sense of independence and self-reliance can be another positive outcome for youth.
 - ◆ Cooking skills may decrease number of dinners eaten out. Food away from home often has a higher ratio of fat to calories and lower fiber and calcium than food prepared at home.¹⁰



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For Information about 12 Foods, contact ...



Mical Shilts
mkshilts@ucdavis.edu
530-754-8051

OR

Joan Randall
jmrاندall@ucdavis.edu
530-752-4351

OR

Department of Nutrition, EFNEP
One Shields Drive
University of California
Davis, CA 95616

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