

GROW WITH ME!

...in the kitchen



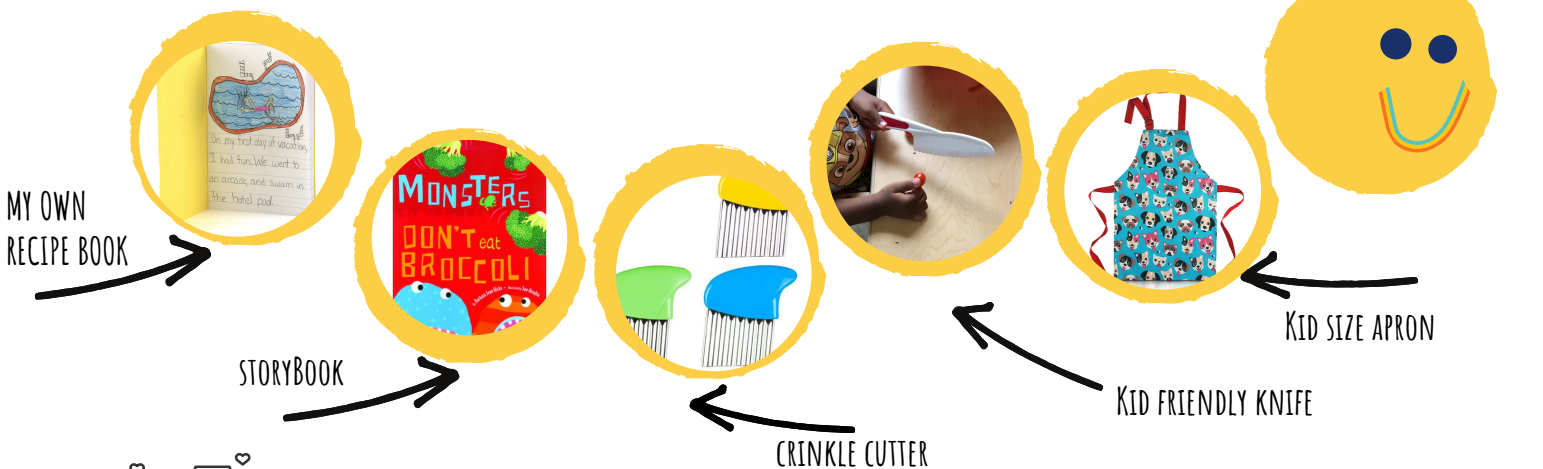
PULL UP A STOOL AND LET'S GET COOKING!

How many times a day does your child say "I can do it myself!?" There's no better place than the kitchen to let children take the lead and show you their skills...and they might just learn a few along the way.

Yes, simply getting food onto the table each night can be a challenge and getting healthy food that children will eat can seem impossible some days. However, to support you on the journey towards raising healthy children, we'd like to offer up this advice: start where you are and take it one bite at a time. Don't begin with the expectation that you have to cook a four course perfectly-balanced meal that the whole family will eat. Instead, crank up the tunes in the kitchen and have a little fun! This guide will offer some simple suggestions and recipes to get your little chef busy growing healthy habits that will last a lifetime!



MAKE IT FUN WITH KID-FRIENDLY KITCHEN TOOLS



Inspire others with your cooking activities and observations! Tag us @keepgrowingdetroit on Instagram and Facebook #keepgrowingdetroitkids

These updates and activities are designed to help caregivers integrate garden-based learning into early childhood learning environments at school, at home, and in the community influencing food preferences of children birth to 5 and encouraging lifelong healthy habits! For more information: Keep Growing Detroit (KGD) 313-656-4769, www.keepgrowingdetroit.org or email Info@keepgrowingdetroit.org. Follow us on Instagram or Like us on Facebook





HEALTHY (AND FUN!) DRINKS

Keeping children hydrated and drinking enough water without all the sugar in prepared drinks can be a trick. Try making a these simple teas with fun and festive dried flowers.

"FLOWER" TEA

- 1 Tablespoon dried chamomile flowers
- 1 Cup water

"PINK" TEA

- 2 Tablespoons Dried hibiscus leaves
- 4 Cups water
- 1 Tablespoin honey or squeeze of lemon (optional)

Boil water and pour over leaves or flowers for chosen recipe above. Let the tea steep for 10-20 minutes. Strain leaves and add sweetener or lemon, if desired. Do not use honey for children under 1 year old. Serve hot or cold.



FREEZING TIME WITH A BIG POT OF SOUP!



Wish you could stop time so you could just have a little bit more of it? Cooking up a big batch of soup with your child could be just the answer. There are lots of recipes out there for soup, but it's also a dish that you and your child can be creative with. Let your child help choose the ingredients and help you peel and chop. Many fresh and healthy vegetables can be chopped, thrown in a big pot with broth of your choice, turning it into a delicious meal and if desired, portioned to freeze for easy meals later. Below are a few starter recipes.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

- 1 butternut squash
- 1 tablespoon butter or oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 stalk of celery, chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled and chopped
- 4-6 cups chicken or vegetable stock

Cut the butternut squash in half, roast in the oven at 400 degrees for 30 min or until fork easily goes through skin. Meanwhile, saute an onion, celery and a carrot in a stockpot with oil or butter. When the butternut is roasted and cool enough for your to handle, scoop out the butternut and add enough vegetable or chicken stock to cover it and cook for another few minutes. Blend if you like or leave it chunky! Enjoy and then freeze some for later.

Note: You can substitute tomatoes instead of butternut squash for a yummy tomato soup!

VEGETABLE SOUP

- 2 cups of vegetables chopped in cubes (potatoes, carrots, butternut squash, sweet potatoes, celery and/or beans)
- 1 tablespoon butter or oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4-6 cups chicken or vegetable stock

In a stockpot, saute onion until golden brown. Add cut vegetable and stock and bring to a boil. Once it comes to a boil, turn the heat down and simmer for 20-30 min until vegetables are tender. Add salt, if desired.

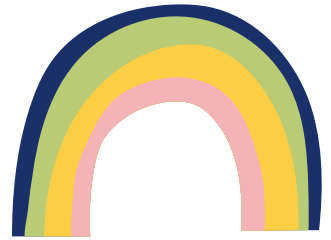
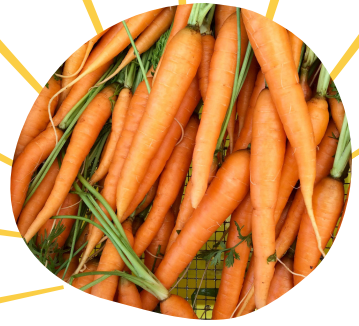
Delicious Additions (optional):

- 1 can of beans (cannellini or navy beans work great). Add after vegetables are tender.
- 2 cups noodles (cooked separately)
- Crusty bread, toasted and ready to dip!



TRY IT 3 WAYS AND THREE TIMES!

For children, each day is a sensory experience! Color, texture, sound and especially taste are the center of their world. Children's taste buds are active and change every few weeks, so as you introduce new foods, we suggest you try preparing them in different ways and also introduce them a few times before you give up. It's also important to let children become familiar with new things on their own time and cooking, even if they don't choose to try the food at first, provides a great opportunity for children to gain familiarity and eventually be willing to try new fruits and vegetables.



RAW

Texture matters! Try introducing raw carrots in different ways. Let kids help with the chopping. Try them cut into thin strips, chopped with a crinkle cutter or peeled and left whole. Try making a dipping sauce to encourage kids to try them.

STEAMED

Cut carrots into 1/2 inch chunks. In a frying pan on medium heat, melt some butter or oil. Add carrots to the pan and leave alone until the bottoms are golden brown (about 5 minutes). Flip them over with a spatula and then add a 1/2 cup of water or broth to steam the carrots until fork tender.

BOILED AND MASHED

Cut carrots into 1/2 inch chunks. Cover with water at least an inch over carrots and bring to a boil. After about 5 minutes, the carrots will be soft. Let them cool for a few minutes and then mash them with a fork and serve with butter and a little salt.



MIX IT! SHAKE IT! DIP IT!

Homemade dressings or dipping sauces can be a great addition to the table. They are also fun for kids to make. Here's a few of our favorite recipes.

YOGURT DIPPING SAUCE

- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons lemon
- Fresh or dried herbs (dill works great!)

Mix all ingredients together in a small bowl and add salt to taste.

SALAD DRESSING

- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon tamari or soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup

Mix all ingredients together in a small bowl. Alternatively, put them in a ball jar with a lid and let your child shake it up!



EVERYTHING I EVER NEEDED TO LEARN... I LEARNED IN THE KITCHEN!

In early childhood, everything children do is an opportunity for them to master another developmental step. Below are some great reference materials to promote development and learning with your preschool child.

source: Farm to Preschool Toolkit, <https://growing-minds.org>

MATHEMATICS

- Number concepts
- One-to-one correspondence
- Simple addition
- Patterning (layered salads, kabobs)
- Measurement
- Data collection, organization, and representation (voting on who wants a particular recipe or ingredient)
- Simple fractions (half, whole, quarter)

ARTS

- Drawing/painting fresh seasonal products
- Pictorial recipes
- Edible art

SCIENCE

- Life science (growing food in the garden)
- Physical science investigation (changing forms – liquids, solids, gases)
- Making predictions and observations

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Share family recipes
- Discover the important role of farmers in communities

LITERACY

- Vocabulary and language development
- Children's literature
- Recipe cards

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Hands-on cooking activities help children develop pride and confidence in their skills and abilities. The act of following a recipe can encourage self-direction and independence, while also teaching children to follow directions and use thinking skills to problem solve.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Chopping, squeezing, spreading, and mixing are all cooking skills that help develop a child's small muscle control and eye-hand coordination. It's impossible to separate hands-on cooking activities from physical development for young children.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Cooking inspires children's curiosity, thinking, and problem solving, offering new opportunities to make predictions and observations. Additionally, cooking offers authentic opportunities for students to understand and apply their knowledge of measuring, one-to-one correspondence, numbers, and counting. As they follow a recipe, children organize ingredients, follow a sequence, and carry out multiple directions.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

With its own vocabulary, cooking is a great opportunity for language development. Take advantage of opportunities for children to match pictures to words and articulate questions inspired by their new experiences.

