



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Family Matters

Improving Health Together

November 2022 Newsletter

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Make Memories by Making Food Together

By Sheila Gains, Family and Consumer Science Instructor, Arapahoe County



Food memories are more than the taste, smell, color, and texture of food. They can be some of the strongest associative memories we have. This is in part because they involve so many of our senses, as well as our emotions. Your food memories are often a combination of the time, place, people, and emotions of what you experienced while preparing and eating food.

Use the experience of making food with children an opportunity to share your food memories with them. Cooking together can also be a great chance to teach children about family food history and culture. While having lots of tasty fun, children will be learning basic cooking skills, such as food safety, math, science and reading. Young cooks will be practicing eye hand coordination, so expect a few spills. When children can put a dish on the table that they helped make, they experience confidence, self-esteem, and pride.

Tips for success when cooking with children:

- Remember to practice good food safety skills like washing hands and surfaces, both before and after handling food. Do not eat or taste raw dough. Both raw flour and raw eggs often have bacteria that can cause a food borne illness.
- Have realistic expectations of what children of different ages can do in the kitchen and practice patience. If it is not fun, stop and do something else. Try again another day or with a different recipe.
- Have all the ingredients and equipment out on the counter. For very young cooks, you might want to pre-measure some of the ingredients, so all they need to do is dump, pour, stir, and bake.
- When making something like cookies with very young cooks, you might want to prepare the dough ahead of time and have children simply slice or shape a dough. Decorating with sprinkles is definitely something they will want to do, so make sure you have a broom and dustpan handy.



Helping families increase physical activity and enjoy healthy foods ...

Let's Talk - While we cook together

Components of creating fun and positive food memories:

Decide together -What will you make? Make this a mutual decision. Having a say in the decision is a powerful motivation for children to participate in an activity.

Buy food together – More conversations, choices and decision-making opportunities abound during this activity.

Cook together – Cooking is a great way for children to practice counting, measuring, dividing, multiplying, reading directions, and observing science. As they watch solids melt, liquids bake into solids, or watch baking soda and buttermilk react to leaven a biscuit, they just witnessed science in its yummiest form.

Talk together – Explain what, how and why you are doing something. Share your memories of cooking with family or friends when you were their age. Listen to their ideas and stories about cooking.

Eat together – Share your thoughts on what you are tasting. Is it sweet, sour, bitter, salty, etc.? Discuss how you could improve the recipe for next time. Ask children what memory they will have of this cooking experience.

Clean up together – Every cook knows that clean-up is part of the experience, so encourage children to share in the responsibility for this task. But who said it had to be difficult or boring? Make it fun!



Recipe for Health

My Mom's Banana Bread

My memory of this food involves purposely not eating ripe bananas on the counter as a child, so they would turn brown. If they turned brown my mom would make this bread for us. Later in life, she taught me how to make it myself. Yum!

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F, oil and flour one loaf pan.

Ingredients

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| 1 ½ cups mashed bananas (4- 5 large) | 1 teaspoon vanilla |
| ¼ cup vegetable oil | 1 cup all bran cereal |
| ½ cup brown sugar | 1 1/2 cups flour |
| 1 large egg | 2 teaspoons baking powder |
| 2 Tablespoons water | 1/2 teaspoon baking soda |

Directions

1. Wash hands and food contact surfaces.
2. Mash bananas in a large mixing bowl. Measure out 1 ½ cups, if short add applesauce to make 1 ½ cups.
3. To the mashed bananas add, vegetable oil, brown sugar, egg, water, and vanilla. Beat until smooth.
4. Add bran cereal to banana mixture. Let mixture set for 3 minutes.
5. In a separate bowl, mix the flour, baking powder and baking soda.
6. Add flour mixture to the banana mixture. Mix until all ingredients are wet.
7. Pour batter into a prepared loaf pan and bake at 350-degree F for 1 hour or until done. Cool out of pan on rack. Try to let cool at least 30 minutes before cutting.

