



**ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!
EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE**

This newsletter is produced by the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington* to enhance communication and coordination among those who educate Washington families about nutrition and food. *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators can be sent to you electronically each month. There is no charge. To subscribe or unsubscribe, contact Christa Albice, WSU Puyallup, 253-445-4541, e-mail albice@wsu.edu.

To access past issues, go to
<http://nutrition.wsu.edu/take5/index.html>.

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This Month's Focus- *Cooking with Kids*



Photo Courtesy of SNAP-Ed Connection Photo Gallery

It can be such a joy to watch: a young child's wonder when she helps to transform a mixture of wet ingredients into delicious baked muffins, an elementary student's pride when saying to his teacher, "I made this myself!"; or a teen's confidence when his family encourages him to fix dinner because he has the skills and enthusiasm to do so.

Nutrition educators, teachers, and child advocates alike are well aware that many kids don't have the cooking

skills of earlier generations. In order to eat healthfully and rely less on fast food or ready-prepared food, some basic kitchen skills and awareness of safety can help. The benefits go beyond good nutrition: cooking involves useful math skills, reading and vocabulary development, and principles of science. In this issue of the *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators*, we'll provide useful resources for working with families and children both in and out of school to enhance their joy of cooking.

Cooking with Kids as a Health Promotion Strategy – Researchers who surveyed a large sample of fifth-grade students found that those who were involved in food preparation at home consumed more fruits and vegetables than those who didn't. They also consumed slightly more of foods from the other food groups, but what stood out was that they ate on average one more serving of fruits and vegetables per day. The study's authors suggest that encouraging children and parents to cook together at home could be a worthwhile way to improve the quality of kids' diets. The Canadian study included 3,398 children ages 10 to 11. (Source: Chu, YL et al, "Involvement in Meal Preparation at Home Is Associated with Better Diet Quality Among Canadian Children." *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 46(4):304-308, 2014.

Age-Appropriate Cooking Skills – As nutrition educators and parents involve children in cooking, it's helpful to have a general idea of the food skills that may be appropriate at various age levels. When children learn these skills, they can begin to help in the home kitchen to prepare and eat nutritious meals and snacks. Of course, skills vary from child to child, but [Nutrition Tools for Schools](http://nutritiontoolsforschools.ca/assets/guides-attachments/Food_skills_Fact_Sheet_Final_Sept._2013.pdf) from the Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health offers a useful guide for ages two to 12+ in the handout "Cooking Matters...Developing Food Skills" at http://nutritiontoolsforschools.ca/assets/guides-attachments/Food_skills_Fact_Sheet_Final_Sept._2013.pdf.

Good News: Kids Are Consuming More Fruits – That headline is the good news. The not-so-good news is that kids are not eating more vegetables. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, between 2003 and 2010 total fruit intake increased in the diets of American children ages two to 18. Even so, only preschoolers met the fruit intake target in Healthy People 2020. Vegetable consumption remained unchanged. (Source: Kim, SA, "Vital Signs: Fruit and Vegetable Intake Among Children – United States, 2003-2010." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. 63(31):671-676, August 8, 2014)

Suggestions from a Local Nutrition Educator – Terry Perry, WSU Food \$ense Coordinator in Spokane County, and her staff offer a list of curricula and educational resources that they use regularly in teaching food preparation to kids and their parents:

- **Food Hero**, an Oregon State University Extension Family and Community Health web site, provides healthy, tasty, budget-conscious recipes. By clicking on "kid-friendly," you'll get a list of dozens of recipes that that appeal to children. *Food Hero* also provides a monthly newsletter that includes a beautiful downloadable handout on a particular food, including low-cost tips and a recipe or two. To sign up for a free subscription, go to <https://foodhero.org/monthly-magazine>.
- **Nourish Interactive** regards parents as nutrition educators and offers terrific resources for them, including nutrition tools based on MyPlate, coloring pages, and other printouts for children at www.nourishinteractive.com/parents. The website also has an extensive section on teaching kids to cook at www.nourishinteractive.com/nutrition-education-printables/category/4-teaching-students-healthy-cooking-classroom-activities-kids-eating-healthy-food-cooking-teacher-resources-printables-worksheets. It has resources for teachers as well as many materials in Spanish.
- **Kids Cook Farm-Fresh Foods** by the California Department of Education is an activity guide for educators to use with children in second through seventh grade. Through direct experiences, it focuses on exploring fresh, seasonal, locally grown produce, while tying in with math, language, and other skills. Available for free download at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/kidscook.asp>.
- **Choose Health: Food, Fun, and Fitness** is a curriculum for educators who have a background in nutrition and experience teaching kids, published just last year by Cornell University Extension. Designed for use with children eight to 12 years old, it targets behaviors that research shows to be most important for preventing childhood obesity and preventing chronic diseases. Food preparation is an important part of every lesson in the curriculum which can be downloaded at https://fnec.cornell.edu/Documents/CHFFF/CHFFF_Intro_032713.pdf.

(Contact: Terry Perry, WSU Food \$ense Coordinator, Spokane County, 509-477-2194, TPerry@spokanecounty.org)

Resources for Food Preparation with Children

- **ChopChop, The Fun Cooking Magazine for Families** is an award-winning, innovative tool for teaching kids about food, cooking, nutrition and health. *ChopChop Magazine* provides a wealth of easy, nutritious, and delicious recipes made with easily available ingredients. Along with photos and suggestions for cooking with kids, *ChopChop* is focused on encouraging kids to cook real food with their families. Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and named "Publication of the Year" in 2013 by the James Beard Foundation (for culinary excellence), this non-profit organization aims to address the childhood obesity and hunger epidemics. For more information about *ChopChop*, visit <http://www.chopchopmag.org/magazine>, contact them directly at 617-924-3993, or write to info@chopchopmag.org.
- **Get Cookin', Kids!** A recipe book that includes 20 recipes for parents or nutrition educators to prepare with kids of various ages. Developed by NutritionAction.com, a division of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, the recipes were tested with kids for likability. Recipes include nutritional analysis. Cost is \$10.00 for a downloadable copy, available at www.nutritionaction.com/shop/healthy-recipes-get-cookin-kids.
- **Grandparents** can be powerful influencers on kids' food habits, and cooking together is a terrific way to have fun and to pass on traditional family recipes and meals. Interestingly, the American Grandparents Association offers ideas and recipes for the grandparent-grandchild duo at <http://www.grandparents.com/food-and-leisure/cooking-with-kids>.

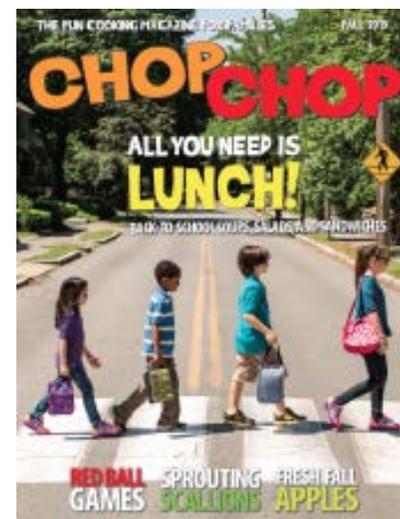


Photo Courtesy of ChopChopKids

OUR MISSION: *The Nutrition Education Network* coordinates nutrition education efforts to communicate consistent, positive and relevant messages to increase awareness of healthful and enjoyable eating among low-income families. *Energize* is one way that *the Network* shares information and resources to accomplish this mission.

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WASHINGTON GROWN

Fresh This Month – August in Washington State means an abundance of local produce, and for many home gardeners, abundantly HUGE zucchini! At farmers' markets, produce from both sides of the Cascades includes fruits and vegetables from A to Z. A class activity could easily involve having participants list as many local products as they can that fall under each letter of the alphabet. It's OK to use other languages for tricky letters such as X and Q. Varieties of certain foods could be used, too, such as Snow peas, Honeycrisp apples, and Tuscan kale.

DID YOU KNOW?

Whatever Happened to Home Ec? Did you know that 38,287 students in Washington State are enrolled in some type of foods class in public schools? Through these classes, students learn not only cooking skills but also nutrition and wellness. They are offered through Family and Consumer Sciences, and even though the name change from Home Economics took place two decades ago, some people still call it Home Ec. After an introductory foods class, many high school students go on to take classes in food science or in culinary arts which may lead to future employment in food service. According to Mary Nagel at the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, students want classes in food preparation, nutrition, and other life skills, and administrators do too, but there aren't enough educators to meet the need. (Contact: Mary Nagel, Family and Consumer Sciences Program Supervisor, OSPI, 360-725-6242, mary.nagel@k12.wa.us.)



Photo Courtesy of SNAP-Ed Connection photo gallery



EAT TOGETHER EAT BETTER – Family Meals Focus

Because our readers have told us that Family Meals is a hot topic, in the May 2011 issue we began a small section on recent news relating to this topic and our long-standing signature program, Eat Together, Eat Better.

In this issue of the *Energize Newsletter* as we focus on cooking with kids, it's a good time to look again at the *Eat Together, Eat Better* program. "Cook Together" is one of its key themes (along with Talk Together and Celebrate Together). Washington State University developed and tested a set of activities on this theme, which are appropriate for nutrition educators to use with three audiences: adult, family, and youth. The activities include a leader's guide and can be found at <http://nutrition.wsu.edu/eteb/Lessons.html>.

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