

JANUARY- MARCH 2020

# WV BIRTH TO THREE REGION 3 NEWSLETTER



## TAKE A PEEK!

CAN I HELP YOU COOK  
PLEASE!

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4 WAYS TO LET KIDS  
HELP IN THE KITCHEN

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## CAN I HELP YOU COOK PLEASE!

As cooking engages all of the senses – seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and (most fabulously) tasting – cooking with toddlers provides them with fabulous sensory input that is really important for brain development.

- Choose a time when your toddler is not overly tired – first thing in the morning or after nap time work well.
- Toddlers love to mix and stir so be sure to include mixing and stirring in the cooking experience
- To keep the cooking experience short to suit a short toddler attention span, pre-measure the ingredients before you begin and have them individually separated ready for your toddler to add to the mixing bowl or pot.



## 4 EASY WAYS TO LET KIDS HELP IN THE KITCHEN

Most children want to be involved with everything their parents do. Whether it's visiting the grocery store, taking a bathroom break, or cooking a recipe, they're there to 'help' at all times (which is adorable, but can also be a little frustrating). When your child wants to assist in the kitchen, but you don't want dinner to take twice as long to cook, we have four easy tasks for little hands to tackle. Although any time a kid gets in the kitchen you can expect things to move a little slower, handing out these simple 'jobs' shouldn't entirely derail your cooking time or make a giant mess.

### Squeezing Citrus

A little squeeze of lemon or lime juice can brighten up any dish, and it also happens to be a fairly easy kitchen task. Just halve your lemon or lime ahead of time, then assist your child as they put it in a citrus squeezer and extract the juices

### Taste Testing

Definitely the easiest task on this list, giving your kids a little taste of dishes before serving can help them feel more involved in the cooking process.

### Stir Up Some Fun

Stirring is one of the simplest task when it comes to cooking. Whether it's mixing up a batch of brownies, whisking a few eggs, or stirring chocolate chips into cookie dough, kids will love to be hands-on with a whisk or spatula

### Prep Produce

Even if you don't trust your child to wield a knife yet, you can still assign them the job of preparing some produce. Snapping the woody ends off of asparagus, hulling strawberries, snapping the tips off green beans, or destemming herbs can all easily be done by hand.



# *Real Responsibilities* **FOR KIDS** IN A REAL FOOD KITCHEN



## **AGES 18 MONTHS TO 3 YEARS**

- Put away and sort clean silverware (I take out the sharp knives first)
- Put silverware into the dishwasher
- Rinse some dishes—just not heavy or bulky ones
- AND MORE

## **AGES 7 TO 12**

- Unload and load the dishwasher
- Wash dishes by hand—unless they are particularly difficult to wash items
- Dry and put away dishes
- AND MORE

## **AGES 4 TO 6 YEARS**

- Measuring out grains, beans and flour and the stuff to soak them in.
- Washing off the table, counters and other kitchen surfaces.
- AND MORE

## **AGES 11 AND UP**

- Follow real food recipes to prepare simple meals
- Do pretty much any kitchen chore
- Begin helping with menu planning
- AND MORE



# Texas Toast Pizza

## Materials:

Texas toast, Pizza sauce, Mozzarella cheese, Pepperoni or any toppings

Instructions: Put Texas toast on a baking sheet. Bake at 425 degrees for 2 minutes (each side) Top with sauce, cheese, and meat. Broil them on low until heated through (about 2-3 minutes)



# Crunchy Granola Pretzel Sticks

## Ingredients:

1 package (12 ounces)  
dark chocolate chips  
24 pretzel rods, 1 cup  
granola without raisins

## Directions:

In a microwave, melt chocolate chips in a 2-cup glass measuring cup; stir until smooth. Pour into one side of a large shallow dish. Roll each pretzel halfway into chocolate. Allow excess coating to drip off, then sprinkle pretzels with granola. Place on waxed paper until set. Store in an airtight container.





# No-Bake Peanut Butter Treats

## Ingredients:

1/3 cup chunky peanut butter, 1/4 cup honey,  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract, 1/3 cup nonfat dry  
milk powder, 1/3 cup quick-cooking oats,  
2 tablespoons graham cracker crumbs

## Directions:

In a small bowl, combine the peanut butter,  
honey and vanilla. Stir in the milk powder,  
oats and graham cracker crumbs. Shape into  
1-in. balls. Cover and refrigerate until serving.



# Toddlers Want to Help and We Should Let Them

We more often think of children as sources of extra work than as sources of help. We often think that trying to get our children to help us at home or elsewhere would be more effort than it would be worth. We also tend to think that the only way to get children to help is to pressure them, through punishment or bribery, which, for good reasons, we may be reluctant to do. We ourselves generally think of work as something that people naturally don't want to do, and we pass that view on to our children, who then pass it on to their children.

But researchers have found strong evidence that very young children innately want to help, and if allowed to do so will continue helping, voluntarily, through the rest of childhood and into adulthood. For them, helping is not because they want or expect something from it, they just want to be doing what we are doing, with us!

We parents, tend to make two mistakes regarding our little children's desires to help. First, we brush their offers to help aside, because we are in a rush to get things done and we believe (often correctly) that the toddler's "help" will slow us down or the toddler won't do it right and we'll have to do it over again. Second, if we do actually want help from the child, we offer some sort of deal, some reward, for doing it. In the first case, we present the message to the child that he or she is not capable of helping; and in the second case, we present the message that helping is something a person will do only if they get something in return.

Additional research clearly shows that by beginning to "help" in toddlerhood, children become truly helpful as they grow up. They become a "partner" in the work it takes to be a part of a family.

As that partner, they value being a part of caring for their home and their family. Whether they are picking up toys, straightening the living room, or helping to care for family members and pets, the child is validated in their early role of contributing to the quality life of their family.

So, what are some suggestions on how to help your child become a partner with you in taking responsibility for the family work, you should do the following:

Assume it is the family work, and not just your work, which means not only that you are not the only person responsible to get it done but also that you must relinquish some of the control over how it is done. If you want it done exactly your way, you will either have to do it yourself or hire someone to do it. Assume that your toddler's attempts to help are genuine and that, if you take the time to let the toddler help, with perhaps just a bit of cheerful guidance, he or she will eventually become good at it. Avoid demanding help, or bargaining for it, or rewarding it, or micromanaging it, as all of that undermines the child's intrinsic motivation to help. A smile of pleasure and a pleasant "thank you" is good. That's what your child wants, just as you want that from your child. Your child is helping in part to reinforce his or her bond with you. Realize that your child is growing in very positive ways by helping. The helping is good not just for you, but also for your child. He or she acquires valued skills and feelings of personal empowerment, self-worth, and belonging by contributing to the family welfare. At the same time, when allowed to help, the child's inborn altruism is nourished, not quashed.

Adapted from Psychology

Today [https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/freedom-learn/201809/toddlers-want-help-and-we-should-let-them?](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/freedom-learn/201809/toddlers-want-help-and-we-should-let-them?utm_sq=g6ifrxwmqd&utm_source=FacebookPost&utm_medium=FBPost&utm_campaign=FBPost&fbclid=IwAR31MtVMTIf45MigYGUje24Q_uh3JkKy1Unxk6Tw69GfpgUicptoMrU69jE&utm_content=Articles)

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