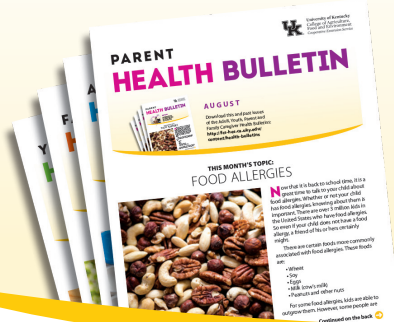




University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

PARENT

HEALTH BULLETIN



MARCH 2022

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

USE NUTRITION MONTH TO TEACH KIDS TOLERANCE



National Nutrition Month® is an annual campaign created by The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that happens in March. This year's theme is to celebrate a world of flavors, embracing global cultures, cuisines, and inclusivity. By teaching kids early on about different foods, eating habits, and mealtime traditions, we can help them understand, appreciate, and embrace people from different backgrounds.

As kids grow up, they become more curious and willing to explore. Food is a wonderful place to start. Cooking with your child is a great way to bond with them, expand their food palate, and educate them about different traditions around the world. When it comes to introducing new foods, children are more likely to try it if they see how to cook it and help in the process. In all

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Cooking with your child is a great way to educate them about different traditions around the world.



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cultures, the whole family, including grandparents, influences children's eating habits. So take a family approach and get everyone involved in creating health eating habits in your household.

If the entire family is on board with the process, it is more fun to experiment with new foods. Together you can learn about new cultures, find new recipes from different countries, and create your own themed nights. You might even start a "World Food Day," to cook foods from a different destination on a certain day each week or month. You can even use different eating tools which makes mealtime fun, such as chopsticks for trying Japanese food.

Food culture is often based on religion, geography, lifestyle, and family beliefs. By explaining the cultural significance of certain foods in specific parts of the world, you can make the dinner an educational moment to learn about different customs. Encourage your child not to criticize people based on the things they eat. Instead, respect how families of certain heritages and cultures have different principles.

Exploring food from a variety of cultures and traditions can do a lot for your family:

- Increase quality time together
- Teach tangible cooking skills through hands-on meal preparation

- Provide a global education to learn about a new country and culture through food
- Expand your child's palate and increase culinary curiosity
- Discover the health benefits of new ingredients and different food combinations

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025* recommend that people aged 2 years or older follow a healthy eating pattern that includes a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, and a variety of protein foods. Inspire your young eater to have an open mind and always take what they are offered, even if they only take a small polite bite. We can create healthy habits for our families while celebrating new foods from other countries, while still honoring our own heritage.

RESOURCES:

- <https://eatsmartmovemoreva.org/kids-in-the-kitchen>
- <https://www.eatrightpro.org/media/press-releases/national-nutrition-month-celebrate-a-world-of-flavors-during-national-nutrition-month-2022>
- <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/FCS3/FCS3631/FCS3631.pdf>
- https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/DGA_2020-2025_ExecutiveSummary_English.pdf

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HEALTH BULLETIN

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