

Easy Summer Dinner

Nothing says summer quite like the image of perfectly ripe fruits and vegetables available in backyards and produce stands everywhere. Even still, it can be quite a challenge to get your child on board with the whole "eat your fruit and veggies" thing. So what to do? Get those kids in the kitchen! When kids become chefs and begin to take a major part in producing their own meals, they are much more likely to enjoy the food they helped make and eat it!

Note: These recipes include both "Kids in the Kitchen" and "Parent Prep" instructions for the simplest approach to cooking with young ones.

Corn Flake Crunch Chicken

Kids may love fried chicken, but no one loves deep-frying food, and your hearts will certainly thank you for this this crunchy and satisfying healthy alternative.

What You Need:

- 3 cups corn flakes
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 pound boneless and skinless chicken breast
- Kosher salt

What You Do:

Parent Prep: Place each chicken breast in between two sheets of wax paper and flatten each one out by pounding it with a rolling pin. Then slice the chicken into strips about 1 ½ inches wide by 4 inches long. Melt the butter in a pan on the stove and allow it to cool. Place the corn flakes in the food processor and pulse until they're broken down into course crumbs.

Kids in the Kitchen: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil. Create a work area with the plate of the cut chicken strips, and then put the melted butter in a bowl and the corn flake crumbs in another bowl. Line everything up so that you have an assembly-line work station for coating your chicken. Lightly salt the chicken. Dredge (dip) a piece of chicken entirely into the butter, and then in the next bowl, roll it in the corn flakes until it is completely covered. Place on the baking sheet and repeat this process with each strip until all of the chicken has been coated.

Place the chicken in the oven and bake for about 20 to 25 minutes, having your parents turn the strips halfway into the cooking time so that they can cook evenly on both sides.

Farm Fresh Green Beans

What You Need:

- Green Beans
- Olive Oil
- Salt and Pepper

What You Do:

Parent Prep: Set up a saucepan with water and bring it to a boil. Since hot water is involved, keep an eye on the kitchen at all times to make sure there are no accidents.

Kids in the Kitchen: Wash and sort your green beans, throwing away any old beans. With your fingers (or a butter knife on a chopping board) snap or cut off the ends (just the very tips) of the beans. Add to the water and cook for about eight minutes.

With the help of a parent, drain the beans. Drizzle a little olive oil (not too much or you'll have greasy beans!) over the beans and toss to coat. You can then season to taste with salt and pepper.

Corn on the Cob

What You Need:

- Corn
- Buttermilk
- Butter
- Salt and Pepper

What You Do:

Parent Prep: Since hot liquid is involved, keep an eye on the kitchen at all times.



Kids in the Kitchen: Shuck your corn (remove all the husks and the silk with a paper towel) and wash the corn. Add the corn cobs to a large pot, fill with water to cover the cobs, and then add about 2 cups of buttermilk. Bring the pot to a boil and cook for about seven minutes. With the help of a parent, drain the corn. Then add a little butter pat to each cob and season with salt and pepper and enjoy!

Peach Summer Shortcakes

What You Need:

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¾ cup heavy cream, plus one tablespoon for egg wash
- 1 egg for egg wash
- Granulated sugar for sprinkling
- 2 peaches, cored and cut into thin wedges
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- Circular cookie cutter
- Food processor (you do not have to use a food processor to make the shortcakes but a food processor does work best for this recipe)

What You Do:

Parent Prep: Set up the food processor. Cut the butter into small ½" cubes and refrigerate until needed. Prepare peaches by removing the pits and slicing them into wedges. Be on hand to help. If your child needs a hand in manning the food processor, don't hesitate to help!

Kids in the kitchen: Preheat oven to 375 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a food processor bowl, pulse (or mix) together the flour, the brown sugar, baking powder and salt until combined. Sprinkle the butter cubes on top of flour mixture. Pulse several times until the flour mixture looks like course crumbs and the butter pieces are no bigger than the size of peas. Add ¾ cup cream and pulse until the dough starts to come together.

Sprinkle your work surface lightly with flour. Turn the dough out onto the countertop and form it into a disk. Roll it out with a rolling pin, giving the dough several quarter turns (so it doesn't stick in one place). When it's about 1 inch thick, use your cookie cutter to cut out rounds.

Put the shortcakes onto your baking sheet. Mix the egg with 1 tablespoon of cream and brush the tops with the mixture. Sprinkle a little sugar onto the shortcake tops. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove and allow to cool.

While the shortcakes are cooling, make the whipped cream in the mixer (use a whisk attachment and start with the cream on low to medium speed. Once it starts to thicken add the sugar and whip until stiff).

Once the shortcakes have cooled, split each shortcake in half. On the bottom half of each shortcake, add whipped cream and several peach slices. Then add the top half to each. Top with more cream and a peach slice if you like. Serve immediately and enjoy!