



# Summertime chefs: Easy recipes for kids to try



Summer break is in full swing and for many working parents, it may be the first time their older kids are staying home by themselves. This is a great opportunity for kids to learn independence and to take care of themselves — including in the kitchen.

“It is important to involve kids in the kitchen because it allows them to take ownership in meal preparation,” said Kate Micucci, registered dietitian at the Center for Healthy Weight and Nutrition at Nationwide Children’s Hospital. “Cooking with healthy ingredients, such as fruits and vegetables, teaches them that healthy foods can add a lot of flavor to everyday snacks and meals.”

Here are some simple, healthy and kid-friendly recipes that kids can make on their own and don’t involve the use of any dangerous cooking tools.

## Perfect Pineapple Pops

### Ingredients:

- 2 c. plain yogurt
- 1/2 c. canned crushed pineapple (packed in 100 percent fruit juice)
- 1 can frozen 100 percent pineapple or orange-pineapple juice concentrate, thawed

### Utensils:

- medium-sized bowl
- mixing spoon
- small paper cups
- plastic wrap
- wooden Popsicle sticks
- measuring cups

### Directions:

1. Drain the can of crushed pineapple so all the juice runs out.
2. Put all the ingredients in a medium-sized bowl and mix them together.
3. Spoon the mixture into the paper cups. Fill them almost to the top.

4. Stretch a small piece of plastic wrap across the top of each cup.

5. Using the Popsicle stick, poke a hole in the plastic wrap. Stand the stick straight up in the center of the cup.

6. Put the cups in the freezer until the mixture is frozen solid.

7. Remove the plastic wrap and peel away the paper cup. You’ll have pineapple pops to eat and share!

## Pizza Pockets

To make this recipe easier and safer for kids, open the jar or can of pizza sauce in advance, then cover with plastic wrap. Also, cut the pitas in advance and make sure all of the packages are already opened so your kids won’t need to use a sharp knife.

### Ingredients:

- 1 6 1/2” whole-wheat pita (cut in half to make 2 pockets)
- 1/4 c. of pizza sauce

- 1/2 c. shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 2 oz. turkey pepperoni or 2 slices of Canadian bacon

### Utensils:

- 1 tbsp. measuring spoon
- 1/4 c. measuring cup
- spoon for scooping and spreading sauce
- 1 microwave-safe plate

### Directions:

1. Place each pita half (2 pockets) on a microwave-safe plate.
2. Spoon 2 tbsp. pizza sauce into each half and spread around with spoon.
3. Add slices of pepperoni or Canadian bacon.
4. Measure 1/4 cup of cheese and sprinkle into 1 pocket. Repeat for other pocket.
5. Lay pocket flat on plate and place in microwave for about 30 seconds. Check to see if cheese is melted. If not, try another 15 seconds and recheck. You don’t want it to

be too hot or it may burn your tongue.

6. Remove and enjoy!

## Simple Trail Mix

### Ingredients:

- 1 c. unsweetened cereal of your choice
- 2 tbsp. (or one miniature box) raisins
- 2 tbsp. dry roasted unsalted peanuts or other favorite nut

### Utensils:

- 1 tbsp. measuring spoon
- 1-cup measuring cup
- 1 sandwich-size plastic baggie

### Directions:

1. Pour cereal into plastic baggie.
2. Add raisins and peanuts, other nuts, or seeds.
3. Zip the bag closed and shake, shake, shake until well mixed.
4. Munch and enjoy!

Nutritional experts from **Nationwide Children’s Hospital** provided the information for this column.