



# appen energizer

## GLOBAL WELLNESS NEWSLETTER WINTER EDITION

### Cooking with Kids

When it comes to raising an adventurous eater, it is not just about coaxing kids to eat their veggies. Bringing up a child who can enjoy a cantaloupe as much as a cupcake takes patience and persistence, but it does not have to feel like a chore.

Kids may need to have frequent joyful experiences involving food to overcome the anxiety they may have around tasting the unfamiliar. Over time, cooking with your children can help build that confidence—and provide rich sensory experiences.

Engage other senses. For a hesitant eater, tasting an unfamiliar food can sometimes be intimidating. You can help your child explore foods when cooking using other senses besides taste. This helps to build positive associations with food. Kneading dough, rinsing vegetables, and tearing lettuce all involve touching food and being comfortable with texture.

Use cooking to raise smart kids. There are so many lessons that can be taught while cooking. Math concepts like counting, measurement, and fractions naturally unfold when navigating a recipe with kids. Explaining how food changes with temperature or how certain foods can help our body be healthy provide great lessons in science. While cooking with your child, practice new vocabulary as you describe how food looks, feels, and tastes. Following a recipe from start to finish helps build the skills for planning and completing projects.

Make cooking part of the family culture. The family meal can start in the kitchen as you cook together. Family meal preparation is an opportunity to celebrate your cultural heritage by passing down recipes. Help your kids find new, seasonal recipes to add to your repertoire and family cookbook. Cooking together and prioritizing health over the convenience of processed food are great ways to lead by example and help your children buy into a culture of wellness. Building daily and seasonal traditions around cooking together helps strengthen your family's commitment to a healthy lifestyle.



### Baked Honey Mustard Chicken Fingers

- 2 cups crispy brown rice cereal
- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley or oregano
- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons honey
- Salt and pepper
- Olive oil

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Cut the chicken breasts lengthwise into ¼-inch strips. Sprinkle the chicken strips with salt, pepper, and the dried parsley or oregano. Mix the mustard and honey together in a bowl, and pour the mixture into a large resealable plastic bag. Place the chicken strips in the bag and seal. Gently shake the bag to lightly coat the chicken strips on both sides with the mustard/honey mixture.

Place the cereal into another large resealable plastic bag. Gently crush the cereal into smaller bits (but not into a flour-like consistency). Transfer 4 to 5 chicken strips at a time from the mustard/honey mixture into the bag with the cereal. Coat the chicken with cereal and then place the chicken pieces approximately 2 inches apart on a baking sheet that has been sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Drizzle 2 tablespoons of olive oil over the chicken and bake for approximately 20 to 25 minutes (depending on the thickness of the chicken pieces).



## Breaking that Habit

A habit is a practice you repeat so regularly that it can be hard to change. This could be biting your nails when you're worried, picking up a bottle of wine whenever you pass the liquor store or cracking open a bag of chips while watching TV at the end of the day.

When your brain recognizes a pattern, such as a connection between action and satisfaction, it files that information away neatly in an area of the brain called the basal ganglia. This is also where we develop emotions and memories, but it's not where conscious decisions are made — that's the prefrontal cortex. This may be what makes habits so hard to break. They come from a brain region that's out of your conscious control, so you're barely aware you're doing them, if at all. Here are some science-backed techniques that can help make your habit-hacking more likely to succeed:

- Say your goal out loud
- Swap a new habit for an old one
- Aim small
- Add on to an existing routine
- Banish the all-or-nothing mentality
- Create a plan that plays to your strengths
- Change your language and reframe things as a positive
- Visualize success
- Set up the right cues in your environment
- Give yourself a break, be patient

### Five part framework for creating positive habits

Use this five-part framework to set goals that you can actually stick to:

- Discover. Make sure you understand why your goal matters to you.
- Diagnose. Identifying friction points or roadblocks and removing them is important. Create boundaries that will help keep you on track.
- Prescribe. Figure out your ideal game plan and personalize it to your interests and skills. Want to move more but hate to run? Dance or swim instead.
- Practice. As they say, done is better than perfect. Don't get stuck in an "all-or-nothing" mindset for creating new habits. You're not a failure if you aren't exercising for an hour each day. Instead, take baby steps. Be flexible and forgiving with yourself. It's not about being perfect — it's about doing it.
- Pause. Reflecting on your efforts and results builds new links in the brain.

## Five Resiliency Tips

When stressed, our bodies go through many changes to enable us to become capable of dealing with the situation. We may become more alert, faster and stronger, enabling us to be able to deal with problems. It is common for our heart rate and blood pressure to increase, and adrenaline and cortisol, the stress hormones, to pump through the body.

Stress can also cause the prefrontal cortex, which controls the brain, to temporarily shut down. This area of the brain is needed to problem solve, control our impulses and regulate emotion. Resilience is therefore related to how well the prefrontal cortex is activated. Under stress our ability to recover from, adapt to, or find a solution to stress or challenges may be diminished. We have different ways of reacting, responding and recovering from stressful events; by becoming emotional, angry, resentful, withdrawing from the situation or simply motivating us to do better. Even the most resilient people have down days. Here are some tips to help build your resilience:

1. Improve confidence – Build positive beliefs in your abilities. You can do anything you set your mind to as long as you remain positive and optimistic. Believing you can achieve something is the first step to achieving it.
2. Develop stronger social networks – having positive, caring and supportive people around you, who truly want the best for you, will not make your troubles disappear, however ‘a problem shared is a problem halved’. They will be able to offer support, give you positive feedback and help to think of possible solutions to your problems.
3. Embrace change – be flexible and learn to adapt. This will enable you to be better equipped with the tools you need to deal with issues that may arise.
4. Develop your skills – both general and problem-solving skills. This should be a constant process; you will always be improving and developing skills through different experiences and opportunities in life. As time goes by, as long as you adopt to the new skills and adapt to them, you will carry on improving, thus becoming more resilient to changes.
5. Be kind to yourself – It can become easy to neglect and ignore your needs when stressed, but this will decrease your ability to be resilient when needed. Not eating, losing your appetite, not exercising or sleeping properly are common reactions to stress. Focus on yourself. Make time for things you love, such as hobbies. By continuing to take care of yourself, when in crisis, will improve your overall health and resilience.

## Benefits of Art

Improved Mental Health  
Freedom  
Self-expression  
Self-awareness  
Improved problem-solving skills  
Engage with a community  
Improved self-esteem

Have you ever wondered why we decorate our homes with art and what value art provides to our lives?

You may have spent hours looking for the perfect wall art to put up in your new house, but have you wondered, what is the benefits of choosing the RIGHT artworks that will be displayed in your home every day? Every artwork depicts a story, and when you decorate your home, you have limitless reasons to actually choose artworks that will truly be there to inspire you each and every day.

Art is more than just a pretty picture. It is your own story, emotion, and expression. It represents your inner being and your thoughts. You do not need to have a Picasso or Van Gogh in your home to experience the benefits of art. There are no rules, boundaries, restrictions, or hindrances when finding your perfect artwork. As long as it speaks to you, get your feelings going and your mind growing, you are all set. That is truly meaningful art.

