

See inside to find out youth workers tips and ideas ...

Have fun!

Make sure everyone is on board (staff as well as young people).

Ask young people what they want and get them involved in planning it.

Key ingredients

literacy; business skills; developing self-esteem and confidence; social skills; developing practical skills; health and safety dwareness; learning about new foods and fastes; learning to cook for friends and family; building trust between staff and young people; and budgeting skills; developing skills; food shopping skills; food hygiene awareness; motor skills; and budgeting skills; emproving mental wellbeing; team building skills; empleyells; skills; food hygiene awareness; motor skills; li skills; food hygiene awareness; motor skills; and building skills; empleyeness; motor skills; of skills; empleyeness; motor skills; empleyeness; motor skills; education skills; motor skills; empleyeness; motor skills; empleyeness; motor skills; empleyeness; motor skills; empleyeness; food hygiene and the REHIS of Edinburgh Awards; food hygiene and the REHIS elementary food and Health qualifications; and having fun...

Aside from the health benefits gained from eating a healthier diet, healthy eating games, cookery, gardening, or running a healthier tuck shop can benefit both young people and organisations in other ways. They can help with...

Why develop healthy eating activities?

Where to go next

Make sure you provide accurate information about a healthy balanced diet. The 'eatwell plate' is available in the National Archives section of www.eatwell.gov.uk (the eatwell website is in the process of being moved).

We have some useful publications on developing cookery skills or healthy eating for young people on our website:

- Beyond Smoothies: developing cooking and healthy eating activities for young people
- TV dinners: adapting popular TV formats to promote healthy eating and cookery skills
- A taste of independence: using food to develop skills for life
- The 'North Glasgow Youth Food Guidelines and Healthy Eating Toolkit'

Thanks to everyone who gave their ideas at the Beyond Smoothies event.



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How to get beyond smoothies

Top tips and ideas for healthy eating activities with young people

These ideas were gathered from a Community Food and Health (Scotland) youth, food and health networking event that focused on work with a range of young people, including those experiencing homelessness, young parents, young carers, as well as youth clubs open to all.



Before you start, make sure you:

- have adequate facilities and equipment, particularly for practical activities such as cookery or gardening. Some groups use portable gas stoves for cookery if they lack kitchen space.
- carry out **risk assessments** and address any **health and safety** concerns.
- **consider all your food activities**, such as providing or selling less healthy snacks. Is this something you are able to change?
- seek support from others. The local NHS Health improvement team, community health project, or community food workers, if available, might be able to help with advice and resources, staff training (eg. nutrition and food hygiene), or other support.

• have considered **outside influences**, such as conflicting messages about healthy eating within the media, what food is available locally, and the influence of friends and family.

These can be used as topics for discussions or as activities such as using healthier recipes from TV chefs, or finding out what the healthiest options are at local take-aways.

Here are some tips for successful hands-on cookery sessions:

- focus on meals that young people might like, eg. pizza (add lots of veg), homemade burgers (use lean mince), or potato wedges
- use food that is locally available and affordable
- consider having a shared meal after cookery

 although some youth workers were
 concerned that young people might not feel
 confident about eating 'properly' at a table
 with others
- use ideas or formats from TV shows that are popular or fun such as 'Ready steady cook!' or 'Come Dine with Me'
- link healthy cookery to other activities such as big sporting events
 - work in pairs or teams young people might try new foods if their friend has made it
 - ask young people if they want to go shopping for ingredients (good for learning about food marketing, labelling and budgeting)

Make it interesting

Young people might not be keen on learning about the long-term benefits of eating a healthy balanced diet, so focus on shorter-term benefits and find out what they want to learn. Some groups deliver healthy taster or cookery sessions but don't discuss healthy eating until young people are ready. Games and quizzes are a fun way to get messages across and find out



Encourage young people to try new foods

Here are some tips:

- run mini taster sessions
- offer meals or tasters when young people are more likely to be hungry
- consider using incentives or rewards
- play games, such as blindfold tasting (an individual or a team guess what the food is after it has been described) – do this only if you work with a group that trusts you and each other
- explore texture and smell, with no pressure to taste food
- run weekly challenges to try something new or unusual
- use a taste questionnaire describe taste, texture and smell

But don't make a fuss if they won't try new foods, wait until they're ready.