



Sensing the Kitchen



Hear

Use one of the storybooks in this section to introduce the five senses during your group or circle time. Be sure children understand what each of their senses does and how important each of them are in helping us learn about the world around us. Make a recording of many sounds you would hear in a kitchen such as running water, a can opening, mixing with an electric mixer, a timer ticking, chopping with a knife, a toaster popping, popcorn popping, something frying in a pan, or the sound of crunching food. Play the tape, stopping after each sound so children can talk about what they hear.



Smell

Get several black film canisters. Punch holes in the lids of the canisters using a hammer and nail. Place a scented food or spice into each container. Some suggestions would be coffee, cocoa mix, pepper, peanut butter, onion, orange extract, cinnamon, and ginger. Children will have great fun guessing what is inside.



See and Touch.

Gather pictures of various kitchen appliances and tools such as a mixer, a toaster, a microwave, a blender, and a stove. Also gather several kitchen utensils for children to handle such as a wooden spoon, a slotted spoon, a spatula, a wire whisk, a ladle, measuring cups, and a rolling pin. Talk about what each object is and how it is used in the kitchen. Allow children to share their experiences with using some of the kitchen items in dramatic play. Talk about kitchen rules such as always asking an adult for help in the kitchen and always washing hands before handling food.



Taste and Smell.

Raisins are a healthy decoration to put on gingerbread cookies. Do your children know that raisins are dried grapes? Drying fruits preserves them. Ask for help from families for this tasting experience. Ask families to donate fruits and dried fruits such as grapes and raisins, apples and dried apple rings, pineapple and dried pineapple rings, etc. You only need a small amount of each item for a tasting activity. Allow children to taste each fresh fruit followed by its dried version, properly chopped. Do they taste similar? Are some more sour or more sweet? Which do they like? Have each child hold his nose and close his eyes before tasting a fruit. Can he guess what it is? A fun variation is to use gourmet flavored jelly beans (chopped) to try tasting while holding your nose. Smell is very important for tasting flavors.