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THE KINGSTON WHIG-STANDARD

Kingston Whig-Standard (ON)

Local news, Saturday, August 4, 2007, p. 5

## Fruit for thought Expert suggests hands-on food for kids

Joanne Richard

*Let kids play with their food. It's actually good for them and can help beat the summer boredom that's probably set in by now. Getting kids in the kitchen is a great way to introduce them to the fun and excitement of cooking - and ultimately helping out at meal time when the mad rush of September comes along.*

*Consider starting out with hands-on edible craft projects. "Cooking with kids is a super way to not only spend time together but create great memories," says Natalie Bean-Sole, nutrition consultant in Toronto. "It also teaches them valuable life skills that will keep them healthy for a lifetime."*

And best of all, not only does it teach them about nutrition, it may even get

that fussy eater to try new foods, says Bean-Sole, owner of Nutrition Forever.

The mother of a 21-month-old, Bean-Sole suggests playing with nature's colourful bounty at this time of year, including fresh berries, melons and vegetables; all perfect for snacks, lunches, parties, picnics, sports events and to pack up for day camp.

"Fruit is nature's candy. Things like watermelon are so sweet and refreshing that it's as satisfying as getting a sugar-laced popsicle - but way better for them."

Watermelon is definitely a healthy treat that's fun to eat, says Stephanie Simek, of the National Watermelon

Promotion Board. "Kids just can't resist."

And introducing this fabulously fun fruit in cuisine creations is a great way to get kids to lend a hand. "There are many fun ways kids can create summer fun with watermelon," says Simek.

Consider getting the kids to make Watermelon Sno-Cones or Watermelon Pizza. From carving fun bowls and centre pieces out of the brightly coloured flesh to using the sweet red pulp in unusual ways, basically any way you slice it, cut it and carve it - and even cook it - watermelon always pleases the palate.

And one slice is never enough.

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