

Two Kids Cooking

Encouraging families to cook, learn and have fun together in the kitchen.

Cooking with Kids: 5 Cooking Party Themes for Food-Filled Fun



(and a mom)
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Whether it's just the family or the kids and their best friends—cooking together and sharing food is a sure way to have fun and make some memories. Having a theme for your party allows you to plan a menu, games, decorations and all the party festivities around a central idea. Here are 5 party theme ideas that include food suggestions and more. We hope they inspire you to invite some friends over to get into the kitchen and cook up some fun.

Theme 1: Back to School Brain Food Party

Food that's good for the brain is good any time of year, but in the Fall when it's officially that 'Back to School' time of year, or after a long holiday break, well, why not make a party of it?

Invite over a few friends to whip up some healthy, brain food. Your menu should include foods that support brain development. We might suggest:

For starters:

- Trail Mix filled with nuts, whole grains and dried cherries
- Sliced Red Bell Pepper with Carrot sticks and veggie dip

Complex whole-grains help improve memory function.

Nuts like cashews and almonds are a great source of vitamin E, which help protect the brain from decline as we age.

Carrots contain the anti-oxidant beta-carotene and red bell peppers are filled with B vitamins to support brain function.



Trail mix and veggies & dip are very kid-friendly recipes and easy to make with a group. You can find our '[Earth Day Trail Mix](#)' recipe at [TwoKidsCooking.com](#), or mix-up your own. If you'd like to add more veggies to your veggie tray, you can check out our '[Snickety-snacks](#)' or just throw in a few of your favorites.

For the main course:

- Baked Halibut fish sticks
- Steamed broccoli
- Red Grapes

Kids love their proteins in stick format—chicken strips, corn dogs, cheese sticks, fish sticks etc. Halibut fish sticks not only meet the stick-shaped criteria, but they are also nutrient-dense and simple to cook with a few kids. Just cut the fish into strips and set-up stations: First, the egg bath, then, the breading and finally onto the baking sheet for a quick spray of oil. Each guest can take their own fish strips and dip ‘em through each station.

The broccoli just needs rinsing and cutting into bite size bits and then to the microwave for steaming. And the grapes, require only a rinse and then into a bowl, ready for munching.

Halibut is packed with omega-3’s and other essential vitamins and minerals that support brain health.

Broccoli is high in B-vitamins and folic acid, as well as anti-oxidants that help keep memory sharp.

Red grapes support cardiovascular health, making sure to keep blood flowing.



For dessert:

- Berry Smoothies

There’s nothing like a refreshing smoothie. Add some blueberries or strawberries or raspberries or all three to a blender with some vanilla yogurt, ice and milk—voila! A delicious dessert that is good for you and your brain.

Berries are full of anti-oxidants and vitamins to support healthy brain development

Invitation Ideas:

Zazzle.com has lots of great invitation styles, or you can always make your own. Here are a couple from Zazzle.com that we thought would work for this theme:

- [Apple Invite](#)
- [Berries Invite](#)

Game Ideas:

While the kids are noshing on the brain food they whipped up, why not add some brain fun too—board games like [blockus](#), [scrabble](#) or [monopoly](#) are some of our favorites.

Party Favor/Decoration Ideas:

It's always nice to send your guests home with something to remember the event. To keep on theme we suggest:

- Providing each guest with their own clipboard containing each of the recipes they will be cooking along with a mechanical pencil
- Sending each child home with a bag of trail mix, prepared from the recipe they helped make.

Theme 2: Food, Science FUN! Party

One sure way to get the kids in the kitchen, at least at our house, is to say the word 'experiment'. There are the traditional kitchen experiments with baking soda and vinegar, or sugar crystals, but discovering the science behind *real* food items, stuff we actually eat, lends itself well to a Food Science Party!

Some foods and recipes work better for this than others. Real food that would work well in the edible food experiment arena include:

- Making mayonnaise and hollandaise sauce (Emulsions)
- Making Ice Cream in a Bag ([Freezing Point Depression and Colligative Properties](#))
- Meringues and Soufflés (The Power of Egg Whites)
- Cottage Cheese and Ricotta (Catalysts and Coagulation)



There are some other ideas at '[The Accidental Scientist: The Science of Cooking](#)' website that we like, as well. They have experiments involving bread, pickles, candy, eggs, spices and meat. Each section includes recipes, explanations and activities.

Here are a couple other internet locations we go to when we're looking for science-y food to cook:

- [A to Z Home's Cool Homeschooling](#)
- [About.com:Chemistry \(and search food\)](#)

Party Favor/Decoration Ideas:

- Why not offer your guest their beverages in a '[beaker](#)' glass?
- Send your guests home with their own experiment – Put together a [Rock Candy](#) making kit following the recipe at The Accidental Scientist.
- You could also supply all guests with an [apron](#) or lab coat for use during your 'experiments'
- Wire whisk along with a recipe for an emulsion experiment are another way to send some science home with your guests.

Theme 3: Pizza Pizzazz Party!

What kid doesn't like pizza, especially if he or she gets to make their own! Ahead of time, prepare small bowls, each containing a different topping (i.e. pepperoni, cheese, onions, garlic, etc.) Have each kid make his own individual pizza! The kids will have fun rolling out the dough and choosing toppings. As an appetizer, serve a veggie pizza. For dessert, how about a fruit pizza with a chocolate chip cookie crust?

Here are a couple recipes that suit themselves to a pizza party and that are perfect for making with kids--you might have seen them on Two Kids Cooking TV.

Pizzadillas

Main Ingredients:

Flour Tortillas
Cheese – Mozzarella, Cheddar, a Marbled variety,
whatever you prefer
Pizza Sauce for dipping
Cooking Spray

Optional Ingredients:

Pepperoni
Sausage
Chicken
Olives, black and/or green
Artichoke hearts
Onions
Whatever you like on your pizza



Instructions:

The first thing you'll want to do is prep the ingredients. Grate the cheese, slice your olives, cut up your chicken, etc... Next, give everyone two of the tortillas and have them start adding their favorite toppings. Be careful not to overfill or it will be hard to flip when it's in the pan. Once each person is satisfied with the contents of their pizzadilla, add the second tortilla to the top and you're ready to melt it up.

Heat a pan on the stove top. Once it's hot, spray it with cooking spray and then set in your first pizzadilla. When the first side is browned, spray the side facing up and then flip the pizzadilla over. After side two has browned and the cheese has melted, lift it out of the pan and let it cool on a plate. Next, it's time for cutting! We usually cut ours into either 4 or 6 pieces.

Once your pizzadilla is cut to your satisfaction, serve with a side of microwave-warmed pizza sauce and you've got yourself a quick, easy and tasty meal!

Personal Pizza Pockets

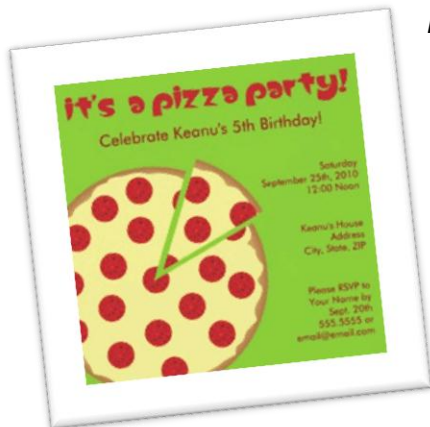
1 package refrigerator pie dough
1 jar pizza sauce
Mozzarella
Pepperoni
Olives, Black and/or Green
Any Pizza fixings that you like

First, take the pie dough and cut each piece in half. Next place each half on a foil-covered cookie sheet. Add the pizza sauce, cheese and fixings to half of each pie dough section. You will then fold the pie dough over and seal the edges by pinching them together.



Be creative with your pizza, add whatever topping/fillings you want. Alex loves chicken, and Sophie prefers no sauce...so that's how we make 'em!

To finish the pizza creations, bake them at 350 degrees for about 10 to 15 minutes. This recipe makes 4 personal pizzas.



Invitation Ideas:

Make Your Own: If your kids love to make crafts as much as they like to cook, making your own invitations provides another opportunity for some bonding. We recommend making 'em pizza shaped.

Buy 'Em: If you're less of a crafter, no worries, there are plenty of ready-to-go options available for invitations too. Here are a couple places we use when we order invitations:

- Zazzle.com
- BirthdayInABox.com

Decoration Ideas:

Make Your Own: If you want to go all out, you'll probably still have to buy a few things like streamers and napkins, but avid do-it-yourselfers can whip-up a few custom pieces, including placemats, namecards, centerpieces and even a banner!

Buy 'Em: If you'd rather purchase some premade decorations, or if you just need a few supplements to your own decorative works. Again, our favorite places for ordering decorations online include:

- Zazzle.com
- BirthdayInABox.com

Party Favor Ideas:

- Send each guest home with their very own Apron and Hat. [Curious Chef's 15 pc Pizza Party kit](#) is perfect for this option.
- If you want to supplement the Apron and Hat, why not throw in a [Curious Chef Pizza Cutter](#) and/or [Rolling Pin](#)?

Theme 4: Chillin' Ice Cream Party!



Regardless of the season, ice cream is always a big hit!!! Alex would eat it every day if I would let him! During the colder months, have the kids fix their own ice cream sundaes. Provide a variety of ice creams and toppings, and of course bananas and cherries. Have the kids be creative in making and naming their sundae creations. Provide a prize for the best sundae.

During the warmer months, go outdoors and make ice cream! Use a recipe for a basic vanilla ice cream and have lots of yummy ingredients that can be added (i.e. strawberries, nuts, pineapple, caramel).

Have some outdoor games planned too--water balloons, a small swimming pool and a sprinkler are great for keeping the kids occupied while everyone takes turns monitoring the ice cream's hardening progress. Oh yeah, be sure to take lots of pictures.

Decoration/Party Favor Ideas:

- [Curious Chef has the perfect kit for an ice cream party](#) and you could let each guest bring home their mug and bowl from the party, along with their apron and hat
- And, why not get an extra [ice cream scoop](#) for each of them too so everyone can have their own?

Theme 5: Sweet Attitude Party!

Mmmm....cookies and muffins--some of our favorite kids party foods and simple to make with a group! For the muffins, mix up the batter ahead of time. Give each kid six cupcake paper liners of the same color. Use a different color for each guest. Provide a bunch of fun choices to be added to the batter (i.e. blueberries, raisins, chocolate, etc.).



Kids love making sugar cookies, too. They get to help roll out the dough and then select their cookie cutters. Make sure to have lots of different color icings, sprinkles and tiny candies to decorate with so the kids can personalize their creations.



Also, be sure to have some healthy snacks available so sugar overload is kept to a minimum. Encourage the kids to eat one or two of their creations and to take the rest home.

One of the easiest Roll-out cookie recipes we've found is the Curious Chef recipe that's on the box of their 6 piece cookie kit, plus, it comes with all the tools you'll need to make the cookies (you can see the kit and what it comes with in action on our [Roll Out Sugar Cookies episode](#)).

If you're looking for something other than cookies, you might want to try [Batter Up Kids Delicious Desserts Cookbook](#) for other sweet ideas. (Alex, Soph and I will be reviewing this one soon).

Invitation Ideas:

Make Your Own: A cupcake or cookie shaped invitation card with glitter sprinkles is a wonderful way to be invited to a Sweet Attitude Party. You'll get to spend some cupcake decorating time with the kids that's sugar-free before the event.

Buy 'Em: If you'd rather focus on the food and fun, [Zazzle.com](#) has lots of cute invites for this theme, as well.

Game/Decoration Ideas:

- Pinata's are a great way to have the kids burn off some of that sugar induced energy. If you want to avoid adding additional sweets to an already sugary event, fill it with toys like bouncy balls, mini cars, toy rings, etc...

- Feature a lollipop bouquet centerpiece on your table, surrounded by bowls of sprinkles that will be used by guests for decorating.
- BirthdayInABox.com has lots of cute accessories for this type of them too.

Party Favor Ideas:

- Curious Chef has cute [Cookie Cutters](#), or you can pick some up at a local store and send two or three home with each child, tied with a ribbon on top of a plate of the tasty treats they helped make.
- And, if you have a Lollipop bouquet, or other centerpiece featuring sweet treats, make sure each guest gets some!



There you have it—Five Cooking Party Ideas for Food-Filled Fun! We hope on or more of these Party Theme ideas inspire you to invite over a few friends and cook up some delicious treats together. In the meantime, here are a few of the Mom’s favorite websites for you to peruse for recipes and ideas to help get your family in the kitchen together.

Kids Cooking Resources the Two Kids and Mom Love

- [Food with Kids Appeal](#)
- [Super Healthy Kids](#)
- [What’s Cooking Blog](#)
- [Birthday in a Box](#)
- [The Accidental Scientist: Science of Cooking](#)
- [Print Free Coupons](#)
- [Cooking with Kids](#)
- [Cooking.com](#)
- [Kid Approved Meals](#)

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