



A large part of many winter holiday celebrations revolve around the kitchen—preparing, cooking and serving meals can be a fun bonding experience for family members. However, it's important to remember that the kitchen can be a dangerous place! There are often more fire and burn hazards in the kitchen than in any other room in the home.

This issue of Safety Lines will remind you of important kitchen/cooking safety tips for yourself and older children, and provide you with lots of ideas for safe ways your younger children can be involved in meal preparation!

Safety Lines

Why is the kitchen so dangerous?

This may seem like a simple question, but in addition to the stove, knives, and other obvious dangers, there are many hidden dangers that we may not think about:

- **Pot handles** turned toward the front of the stove can be bumped or pulled down and can spill hot foods and liquids. Turn pot handles to the back of the stove.
- **Appliance cords** that are dangling over the edge of the counter can be pulled on by small children causing the appliance to fall on the child.
- Where you store a **child's snacks** can be dangerous—if they are stored over a hot stove, the child could get burned reaching for them.
- **Toys on the floor** of the kitchen can cause you to trip while carrying hot foods!
- Even **tablecloths** can be dangerous! Young children may try to pull on the tablecloth and hot liquids or foods on the table can spill and cause burns.
- For more information on kitchen hazards and young children, please visit www.homesafefhome.org and print our "Home Safety Checklist".



Protect your children from SCALD BURNS in the kitchen!

- Keep young children at least **3 feet** away from any place where hot food or drink is being prepared or carried, especially around the stove. Teach children that this is a "**no-zone**"!
- Keep hot foods and liquids away from table and counter edges.
- Never hold a child while cooking, drinking hot beverages, or carrying hot foods or liquids.
- Teach children that hot things burn.
- Drink hot beverages from a **covered travel mug** when children are present.

Preventing other types of burns in the kitchen...

- All **appliance cords** need to be kept coiled and away from counter edges.
- Always use **oven mitts or potholders** when moving hot food from ovens, microwave ovens, or stovetops.
- Never use **wet** oven mitts.
- Never use a dish towel as a pot holder.



Before starting a cooking project with your child:

- Make sure you have a fire extinguisher and fire escape plan. Test your smoke alarms.
- Teach your children about the dangers in the kitchen. Talk about what is hot, sharp, etc.
- Always make sure you and your child wash your hands!



Once safety measures are taken into consideration, cooking can be a fun and educational experience for you and your child! Below are some tasks that children can help with:



Children under two years old:

- ♦ Allow infants and young toddlers to explore various textures of vegetable, fruits, etc. (Always supervise to ensure small pieces don't turn into choking hazards!)
- ♦ Give infants pots, pans, wooden spoons, measuring cups, etc. to explore

Two Year Olds:

- ♦ Clean vegetables with brushes
- ♦ Clean tables
- ♦ Tear, break, or snap foods (lettuce, beans, etc.)
- ♦ Dip foods into dips
- ♦ Mix with hands - make sure the bowl or container is about twice the size of the amount of mixture to help avoid spills

Three Year Olds:

- ♦ Wrap foil around food
- ♦ Press dough into baking pan or wrap dough around meat or vegetable fillings
- ♦ Pour from small plastic pitchers
- ♦ Mix with hands or wooden spoon
- ♦ Shake small jars of food (dressings, etc.)
- ♦ Spread foods using a plastic knife or small spatula

Four Year Olds:

- ♦ Use fingers to peel eggs, oranges, corn, etc.
- ♦ Roll and flatten food
- ♦ Mash foods (potatoes etc.)



Five Year Olds:

- ♦ Measure ingredients
- ♦ Cut soft food with a plastic or dull knife (always teach knife safety first—show how to hold and use the knife safely)
- ♦ Grate food
- ♦ Beat an egg with a manual egg beater



We're on the web!
www.burnprevention.org

Fun Activity! - Baked Dough for Holiday Ornaments

Materials - flour, salt, vegetable oil, water, paint

Instructions:

- Mix together 2 cups of flour, 1 cup of salt, and 2 tbsp. vegetable oil.
- Slowly add 3/4 to 1 cup of water and stir until you get a nice clay-like consistency.
- Once completely mixed, make into the desired shapes for different holiday themes. You can mold shapes, or roll the dough out and use cookie cutters to shape your ornaments.
- Bake your ornaments in a 250 degree oven for approximately 1 hour. This will vary depending on how thick your creations are. Paint your finished ornaments. Make sure an ADULT uses the oven for baking and that small children stay at least three feet away.

Hint: Do not make the ornaments too thick or they will crack when baking.