



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## COOKING WITH KIDS CAN ENCOURAGE HEALTHY EATING

Nutritionists and other health professionals are encouraging parents to cook with their children during the upcoming school holidays.

Children, Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS) nutritionist Rita Alvaro said during school holidays it was tempting for children to sit in front of the television and not get the amount of activity they needed.

"Children will need a range of activities to help keep them occupied, so these holidays, we suggest parents get the kids away from the TV and into the kitchen by involving them in cooking," she said.

"Cooking is an important life skill – teaching children where their food comes from, and helping them develop the skills they need to enjoy healthy eating. And the great thing about cooking is that children think it is fun!

According to Rita, encouraging children to make meals and snacks based on fresh healthy ingredients, such as fruit and vegetables costs a lot less than buying ready prepared meals and snacks.

"Children are also more likely to eat something they have helped prepare themselves," she said. Even younger children, with the supervision of an adult, can assist with making simple healthy summer treats like fruit smoothies, fruit kebabs, summer salads, stir-fries, and salad wraps."

Rita said whilst children think cooking is fun, it also important to keep safe. Some ways to ensure safety in the kitchen are:

- Choose recipes that aren't too complicated.
- Read the recipe with your child before you start cooking. Decide which parts your child can safely manage.
- Ensure thorough hand washing using soap and warm water.
- Keep young children away from sharp knives, hot items or electrical equipment. Teach older children how to use knives safely. Help children with moving hot items or taking hot food out of the oven. Adults should be present at all time when knives, hot or electrical items are being used.

The South Australian Fruit and Vegetable Coalition, of which the CYWHS is part, supports cooking with kids. The Coalition encourages South Australians to consume the recommended daily intake of two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables each day for good health.

The Centre for Health Promotion, Children, Youth and Women's Health Service has information on healthy eating and fruit and vegetables. For more information call the Health Information Centre on 8161 6875.

**For more information, contact Kirsty Mudge, Communication Consultant, on 8161 8313.  
Email: [Kirsty.mudge@cywhs.sa.gov.au](mailto:Kirsty.mudge@cywhs.sa.gov.au). After hours: 0401 125 630.**