



Jr. Chef Club Welcome to the Club Lesson 1

Educator Information—Preparing to Teach the Lesson

About the Club

Discuss the value of having a club (a place where everyone belongs and has a particular interest or goal) and a password (to start and end meetings). The Jr. Chef Club will be one time per week for eight weeks. Let students know what to expect from you and what will occur during the sessions (listening, cooking, worksheet, tasting, evaluating, etc.). Ask the teacher for the “quiet sign” typically used to get the children’s attention and quiet them down and let the students know you will be using that sign too. Develop a pledge that the students will repeat; a suggested one is below:

The Club Pledge

As a Jr. Chef Club Member:
I will be kind and listen when others are talking.
I will always wash my hands before touching or eating food.
I will follow good safety practices when preparing food.
I will take a small taste of everything to broaden my food horizons.
This is the only body I have, so I will make healthy food choices for it.
I will practice the physical activities we learn to keep my body fit.

A club needs a password with which to start and end meetings. Guide students in determining a password; perhaps a word related to food, cooking or eating. Write three student suggestions on the board and take a quick vote.

Food Safety

Teaching students about keeping food safe, as well as making sure the food provided for demonstration and samples is safe, is vital to students’ health. It is suggested that the educator obtain a Food Handler’s Permit from the local health department. In addition, please review basic information to ensure that your food safety knowledge is up to date.

- See www.fightbac.org for information, fact sheets and flyers on food safety.
- See www.foodsafety.gov for information on all aspects of food safety; check the section on “Preventing Food Borne Illness.”

Additional Information

Each year, approximately 9,000 people die from food-borne illnesses and another 6.5 to 33 million are sickened. Food related illnesses can mimic the flu with mild nausea and headache, to more severe forms with vomiting, diarrhea or even organ damage. Children (as well as older adults) are most at risk for food borne illnesses because their immune systems are not yet fully developed so they can become sick more easily from bacteria, bacteria’s toxins or other food borne microorganisms.

Most of these cases could be prevented if consumers knew what to do to keep their food safe to eat. Consumers need to be aware that there are steps they can take at every step of the food handling process to ensure their food is safe. First, they must understand that bacteria ((harmful or not) are a part of all living things and are found on all raw agricultural products, whether they are animal or plant. Harmful bacteria can be transferred from food to people, from person-to-person, from person-to-food, and from one food to another. Bacteria grows best at room temperature, so growth can be stopped by keeping foods above 140° F or below 40° F. Cross contamination can be prevented by sanitizing cutting boards and kitchen surfaces with a diluted bleach solution (one teaspoon chlorine bleach per one quart of water).

Primary Food Safety Principals

Below are some primary food safety principles with which educators should be familiar. Background information can be accessed at the websites listed above or through local WSU Extension Offices.

- Keep food, hands, and kitchen surfaces clean.
- Cook foods adequately to proper temperature.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold—above 140° F or below 40° F.
- Avoid raw eggs and products with raw eggs.
- Do not give honey to infants under one year of age—it may cause botulism.
- Cool leftovers immediately by storing in shallow (two inch) containers and refrigerating.

Sanitize Food Preparation Areas

Be sure to sanitize all surfaces in and around where Jr. Chefs will be setting out or preparing foods.

Make a sanitizing solution fresh every day with 3/4 teaspoon *plain* household bleach* mixed in one quart (four cups) water. Put solution in spray bottle and label it; keep away from children. To use, mist surface and let it set for 60 seconds then rinse or wipe off with clean paper towel.

* Do not use bleach with any added ingredients like 'scent.'

Hand Washing

Washing hands before touching, preparing, and eating food is a major step in preventing food borne illnesses—therefore this topic will be revisited in each lesson. For this lesson, emphasize the importance of washing hands to prevent contaminating food with bacteria that may be on hands. Hands need to be washed with soap and warm water before and after handling raw foods such as meat, poultry, fish, and eggs.

The recommended method for washing hands is to lather-up both sides of each hand for at least 20 seconds. Students can sing “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star,” which takes about 20 seconds when sung at a normal, unhurried pace. Scrub vigorously by rubbing hands and paying special attention to cleaning around and under fingernails. Use plenty of water to rinse off soap and bacteria. The water needs to run with enough force to help dislodge bacteria.

Have students stand up, close their eyes, and pretend to wash their hands—just as they would normally do. The hand washing pantomime should allow for turning on the water, washing properly with soap, and drying the hands. They are to sit down as soon as they are done “washing”. The educator times the pantomime for 25 to 30 seconds (the appropriate amount of time needed for proper cleansing) to see how many students are left standing after the 25–30 seconds have passed. The pantomime will be repeated as food preparation begins in each lesson, to help establish the habit and the length of time necessary to do a good job. This also provides data for the project and will be recorded on Data Collection Sheets at the first lesson and optionally during additional lessons if time permits.

When possible, (e.g. hand washing facilities are easily available) have all students actually wash their hands before food preparation in each lesson. If not possible, have only selected Jr. Chef Club members wash their hands. Everyone else will do the pantomime as described above.

Waterless hand washing solutions are popular but may not be as effective as washing. They contain alcohol that kills bacteria. However, research shows that the alcohol typically kills only the top layer or two of bacteria, leaving underlying layers of bacteria on the hands. If using these waterless solutions, it is best to wash them off with briskly running water to dislodge all layers of bacteria. If no water is available, at least use paper towels to help rub off bacteria. Educators

may want to carry some of this for themselves, since they may not be able to exit the room to wash when the food preparation portion of the lesson begins, although they are strongly encouraged to do so.

ALWAYS carry gloves and avoid any bare hand contact with food. Make sure students always wear gloves during food preparation and teach them that gloves must be replaced after touching raw foods such as cracked eggs, or after touching one's hair, face, clothing, or the floor, etc.

Purchase gloves in the smallest size possible. Use plastic or non-latex gloves to avoid problems with latex allergies. Each time food is being prepared; students and educator must wash hands AND use plastic gloves. Explain to students that this is a good way to keep the bacteria from getting into the food they are making. If not done, bacteria can grow and make the people who eat the food very sick.

Many people wonder whether to use anti-bacterial soaps and students may ask about this. These products are usually more costly than regular soap and are not necessarily more effective. Regular soap breaks apart bacterial cells and is effective especially when coupled with scrubbing and brisk rinsing. Anti-bacterial compounds are unnecessary and may contribute to the development of bacterial resistance. Bacteria becoming resistant to antibiotics are a growing medical concern. Plain soap AND warm water are sufficient for cleaning hands.

Food Allergies

Check with classroom teacher and students themselves at EVERY SESSION for any food allergies. Explain the day's ingredients and if any students are allergic to one or more of the items, accommodate them and make sure they do not receive that particular ingredient.

If you know of any food allergies ahead of time, try to bring a comparable food for student(s) with that allergy. Avoid recipes containing foods that are common allergens, especially peanuts, peanut butter, and nuts.