

Curriculum Overview: Cooking Matters (Series Classes)

Core Components

Objectives

Cooking Matters (CM) is a series of 6 consecutive lessons that teach low-income adults, families, parents, kids, or teens to “shop smarter,” make healthier food choices using nutrition information, and cook affordable meals. Lesson objectives for each lesson can be found in the Instructor Guide.

Theoretical framework

Cooking Matters courses are hands-on, skill-based and participatory and designed to “increase self-efficacy among participants, thereby enabling positive behavior change.” For more on the research and framework, review information found here: <http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/research/cooking-matters>

Setting & target audience

Setting for this curricula requires ample space for participants to cook together. Hot water must be available with an appropriate place to wash hands. It is recommended that there is access to a refrigerator and a stove. Target audience includes kids, teens, adults (including seniors), parents, and families.

Number and duration of lessons

Lessons must be taught in order and all 6 lessons must be completed. Each lesson is divided into sections and all sections of each lesson must be completed. Two hours are required for the completion of each lesson.

Recommended pacing

Classes are scheduled once a week for 6 weeks.

Instructional order & strategies

Cooking Matters class series are based on key messages. They are:

- ✓ My Plate
- ✓ Choose whole grains as often as you can
- ✓ Eat a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables.
- ✓ Choosing lower fat options
- ✓ Choose drinks with less sugar or make your own.
- ✓ Make your own healthy snacks at home.
- ✓ Choose lean and low-fat proteins
- ✓ Reducing sodium consumption by using spices
- ✓ The importance of eating breakfast every day
- ✓ Exercise
- ✓ Food Safety

Cooking Matters-Kids (Grades 2-8)

Lesson	Topic	Duration
1	MyPlate, knife safety, hand-washing, practice reading recipes	120 minutes
2	Fruits and vegetables	120 minutes
3	Whole grains, eating breakfast	120 minutes
4	Reading nutrition labels, taste and describe healthy beverages	120 minutes
5	Smart grocery store choices, identifying healthy options when out to eat, healthy versions of fast foods	120 minutes
6	Setting health goals for after the course ends, healthy versions of celebration foods	120 minutes

Cooking Matters-Teens (Grades 9-12)

Lesson	Topic	Duration
1	MyPlate, knife safety, hand-washing, practice reading recipes	120 minutes
2	Fruits and vegetables, reading nutrition labels, taste and describe healthy beverages, washing produce and cans, learn about sugar	120 minutes
3	Whole grains, eating breakfast	120 minutes
4	Using lean cooking techniques, finding healthy options when out to eat, finding healthy snack choices, healthy and unhealthy fats	120 minutes
5	Comparing unit prices, identifying healthier choices when food shopping (this lesson is usually at the grocery store)	120 minutes
6	Preparing healthier versions of their favorite meal, setting health goals for after the course ends	120 minutes

Cooking Matters-Families

Lesson	Topic	Duration
1	MyPlate, knife safety, hand-washing, age-appropriate tasks for kids in the kitchen, how to share more meals together as a family	120 minutes
2	Discuss ways to help kids develop good eating habits, fruits and vegetables, whole grains, washing produce and cans	120 minutes
3	Reading food labels, healthier versions of convenience foods, healthy and unhealthy fats, healthy snacks	120 minutes
4	Recipes as a framework, meal planning, eating breakfast	120 minutes
5	Physical activities for families, taste and describe a variety of healthy beverages, benefits of choosing low-fat dairy foods	120 minutes
6	Review key lessons, celebrating their success, set goals as a family to continue after class ends	120 minutes

Cooking Matters-Adults

Lesson	Topic	Duration
1	MyPlate, reading nutrition labels, knife safety, hand-washing	120 minutes
2	Fruits and vegetables, whole grains, washing produce and cans, recipes as a framework	120 minutes
3	Healthier versions of convenience foods, healthy and unhealthy fats, healthy snacks, safe chilling of perishable foods	120 minutes
4	Meal planning, eating breakfast, using herbs and spices instead of salt, safe ways to defrost frozen foods	120 minutes

Lesson	Topic	Duration
5	Comparing unit prices, saving money and making healthier choices when food shopping (this lesson is usually at the grocery store)	120 minutes
6	Healthy beverage taste test, learn about sugar, discuss ways to be more physically active, review key nutrition, cooking, and food budgeting lessons, celebrating their success	120 minutes

Core Activities:

Multiple activity options are available for all lessons.

Materials

Local providers are required to provide all Cooking Matters participants with a grocery bag of ingredients for the recipe made in class. This requirement does not meet SNAP-Ed guidance for allowable food purchases. Support for this requirement often comes from community partners such as a food pantry, retail grocer or a community sponsor.

A list of teaching supplies for implementation of Cooking Matters classes can be found at the bottom of this document. Local providers must either have the teaching supplies available or they can check them out from Solid Ground.

Training

Solid Ground is the lead agency for Cooking Matters in the state of Washington and they have the responsibility to ensure the curriculum is implemented according to national guidelines. Solid Ground conducts training for the series classes at their office in Seattle, WA. Below are specific training requirements:

- ✓ Attend an in person orientation session at Solid Ground in Seattle.
- ✓ Attend volunteer training at Solid Ground in Seattle.
- ✓ Review Instructor Guide and materials for the Cooking Matters curriculum you will use.
- ✓ Observe another educator teach a Cooking Matters lesson (if possible)

Recipes

Recipes are included for each lesson. Educators are highly encouraged to use recipes that are provided in the curriculum or those found on the Cooking Matters site, provided below. Recipes should always support core content of lessons. Other recommend recipes resources can be found below, please be sure to check the Cooking Matters Recipe Guidelines (see below) before using recipes outside of the curriculum:

<https://cookingmatters.org/recipes>

<https://cfacaa.human.cornell.edu/dns.fnec/files/resources/4HRecipeBookFinal.pdf>

<http://www.foodhero.org/>

<https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipes/>

Cooking Matters Recipe Guidelines

1. Recipes must be low-cost
 - a. Choose ingredients in their most whole form (e.g. whole carrots instead of baby carrots, a block of cheese instead of grated cheese, etc.)
 - b. Choose packaged ingredients that are available in a store-brand equivalent
 - c. Choose ingredients that are able to be used in multiple meals or snacks
 - d. Choose ingredients available for purchase in bulk when possible
 - e. Choose dried spices instead of fresh
 - f. Always consider whether a less expensive form of an ingredient can be used
2. Ingredients should be accessible to families (e.g. are the ingredients found in a mainstream supermarket in the area where the class is?)
3. Recipes should be nutritious
 - a. Vary the forms, types, and colors of fruits and vegetables
 - b. Choose whole grains instead of refined grains
 - c. Minimize the use of added sugars
 - d. Use leaner cooking techniques and ingredients (e.g. bake instead of frying, use canola oil instead of margarine, use leaner meat or non-meat proteins)
 - e. Limit sodium
 - f. Use multiple food groups (for a snack, use at least two food groups, and for a meal, use at least three)
4. Recipes should limit the use of special equipment
5. Recipes should be relatively quick to prepare
6. Recipes should be simple and explained clearly.

Fidelity is...

The extent to which a curriculum or program is delivered in accordance with the intended (and tested) design. This means:

- Using program materials
- Adhering to recommended pacing
- Keeping the program's instructional order
- Utilizing the program 'routines'
- All teachers using the same materials to equalize student learning opportunities and meet instructional objectives

Making adjustments while delivering with fidelity

You can make some adjustments to the curriculum without impacting fidelity. Examples include:

- Supplement core lessons with appropriate additional activities¹
- Modify an activity (e.g. having participants measure shortening onto paper plate rather than making "Blubber Burgers" with actual hamburger buns,)
- Provide participants with coaching, ongoing support, and individual instruction when needed
- Adjust group size
- Increase opportunity for participants to engage and ask questions, and provide answers

¹ Many curricula have several options for activities. Choose from these options first. If you plan to use additional activities, outside of the written curricula, please review with your supervisor to ensure they meet Snap-Ed guidance.

Evaluation

Check with your supervisor for required evaluation tools and current evaluation protocol. **Please note:** Solid Ground requires a specific pre/post survey for Cooking Matters. This is done in coordination with the Washington SNAP-Ed Evaluation Team.

Links to curriculum:

To review the Cooking Matters series class curriculum and to find out how to become a satellite partner with Solid Ground please contact their staff at: cooking@solid-ground.org



Cooking Matters Equipment Kit Checklist

Sharps Box

- 8 Chef Knives
- 8 Knife Covers
- 1 Paring Knife
- 1 Scissors
- 1 Can Opener
- 1 Meat Thermometer
- 1 Vegetable Peeler
- 1 Box Grater
- 1 Tongs

Cooking Kit #1

- 1 Pitcher
- 6 Metal Bowls (2 Large, 2 Medium, 2 Small)
- 1 Strainer
- 1 Colander
- 2 12" Non-Stick Skillets
- 1 Oven Mitt

- 1 Pot Holder
- 15 Cutting Mats
- 1 Bottle Canola and/or Olive Oil*
- Salt and Pepper*

Cooking Kit #1 (Utensils Bag)

- 1 2-Cup Measuring Cup
- 1 Set Measuring Cups
- 1 Set Measuring Spoons
- 1 Whisk
- 1 Ladle
- 1 Large Mixing Spoon
- 2 Spatulas (Turners)
- 1 Rubber Spatula

Cooking Kit #2

- 1 Aluminum Baking Sheet

- 1 Baking Dish (9x9 or larger)
- 1 Stock Pot with Lid
- 1 Cleaning Spray Bottle
- 2 Propane Burners
- 1 First Aid Kit*
- Food Models Kit with MyPlate Poster
- 4 Cans Butane*

Cooking Kit #3

- 20 each Plastic Plates, Bowls and Cups
- 1 Bag each Plastic Spoons, Forks, and Knives*
- 1 Box Ziploc Bags*

**denotes refillable item*

Checked out to: _____	Date: _____
Deposit received \$ _____	
Kit returned to: _____	Date: _____
Deposit amount returned: _____	



Cooking Matters Equipment Kit Checklist

The value of Cooking Matters Equipment Kit is \$800. If all supplies are returned in usable condition, \$100 out of the \$200 deposit will be refunded to Satellite Partner.

If materials are lost or damaged upon return, Solid Ground's Cooking Matters will deduct all or a portion of the cost to replace equipment from deposit and refund any remaining amount to Satellite Partner. Items considered "refillable" are provided upfront, and once emptied the refills are at the expense of the Satellite Partner.

Renewal of use for Cooking Kit occurs annually when Satellite Partner renews partner agreement. If Satellite Partner chooses to terminate its partnership agreement or Cooking Matters dissolves the partnership due to Satellite Partner not meeting requirements and standards, the cooking kit must be returned and the refundable portion of the deposit will be evaluated based on the condition of the kit.

Cooking Matters is a program of Share Our Strength, presented locally in partnership with Solid Ground.