

Cooking With Grandkids Spans Generation Gap

ROSEMONT, IL — Nothing transcends the generation gap like grandparents and their grandkids. Even if today's seniors are more energetic, affluent, sophisticated and well traveled, chances are they're traditional in their all-out affection for their grandchildren.

Moms may not cook the way they used to and ditto for Grams, but an encounter in the kitchen is still a warm way for the generations to come together. It takes just a little thought to make cooking sessions with kids education, meaningful and memorable. First, select several recipes (that taste good, of course) and let your grandchild make the final choices.

Next, establish some rules that lay the foundation for good safety and organizational skills. They might include:

Safety first! Instill a healthy respect for sharp knives and hot ranges. Talk about using hot pads, turning saucepan handles away from the edge of the stove and keeping towels and pot hold-

ers away from open flames or hot burners.

Wash hands! Emphasize hand-washing before cooking and often during the process, especially after scraping the bowl clean and licking your fingers. (Why does buttery dough taste so good unbaked?)

Clean Up! Make sure that the young cook understands that part of cooking is cleaning up as-you-go and afterwards. Point out that spills are easier mopped up before given a chance to set.

With these essentials understood, your involvement depends a lot on the age of the child. Throw in some kitchen terms when appropriate. Explain the value of good ingredients — fresh real butter or cheese, for example. Talk about the difference between melting and simmering/boiling when melting the butter to make the Blondies in the following recipe. Explain baking versus broiling when putting the oatmeal Raisin Biscuit dough in the oven.

And whenever possible, follow a hands-on philosophy. Let the kids knead the biscuit dough, pointing out that too much kneading can lead to tough biscuits, but let them knead the dough scraps to their hearts' content. Most of all, keep it fun.

BLONDIES Yield: 16 Squares

6 tablespoons butter
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup peanut butter chips

Preheat oven to 350°F. Melt butter in medium-sized heavy saucepan. Remove from heat. Stir in brown sugar until dissolved. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder and salt. Stir into butter mixture. Spread batter evenly in well-buttered 9-inch square pan. Sprinkle

peanut butter chips over top. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool completely in pan on wire rack before cutting.

OATMEAL RAISIN BISCUITS Yield: 18

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup quick oats, uncooked
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon EACH: salt, baking soda
1/2 cup golden raisins
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
3/4 cup buttermilk

Preheat oven to 425°F. Combine flour, oats, sugar, baking powder, salt and soda in large

mixing bowl. Stir in raisins. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in buttermilk just until dough holds together. Knead dough on lightly floured surface about 10 times. Roll dough to 1/2-inch thickness. Cut with a 2-inch diameter round cutter. Place biscuits about 1-inch apart on buttered cookie sheet. Bake 12 to 15 minutes, or until golden. Cool slightly. Remove from cookie sheet. Serve warm or cold with butter.

***Variation:** Butterscotch Oat Drop Biscuits - Substitute butterscotch chips for the raisins. Increase buttermilk to 1 cup. Follow directions above. Drop by teaspoonfuls about 1-inch apart on buttered cookie sheet. Bake as directed above. Yield: 20.

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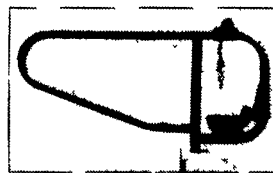
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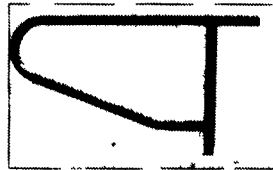
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