

Dear families

Hopefully, you have managed to carry out some, if not all, of the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) activities presented in last week's flyer and are starting to see some exciting results. We will bring you some more ESD activities in another flyer later in the summer. Have fun this week exploring our bodies' amazing sensory capacity to utilise smells and tastes in developing our understanding of the world.

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

Exploring Smells and Tastes

As you are probably aware, two of the symptoms of Coronavirus are the temporary loss of being able to smell and taste which can be very disconcerting. These two senses are strongly linked and interestingly, 80% of flavours we taste originate from what we smell. The taste buds on our tongues can only identify the four qualities of sweet, sour, bitter and salt and the remaining 'tastes' are distinguished by smell.

Smell is also important for warning us of danger e.g. the smell of smoke, gas and rotting food. Unpleasant smells send pain signals to your brain to warn us of potential danger - aren't our bodies amazing?

The following ideas are a great way to explore the power of your noses and mouths and to chat about different smells and tastes, what we like, what we don't like and how they make us feel. Encourage your children to use these senses whenever possible.

Idea 1: What's that smell?

This will need to be prepared beforehand by an adult or older child.

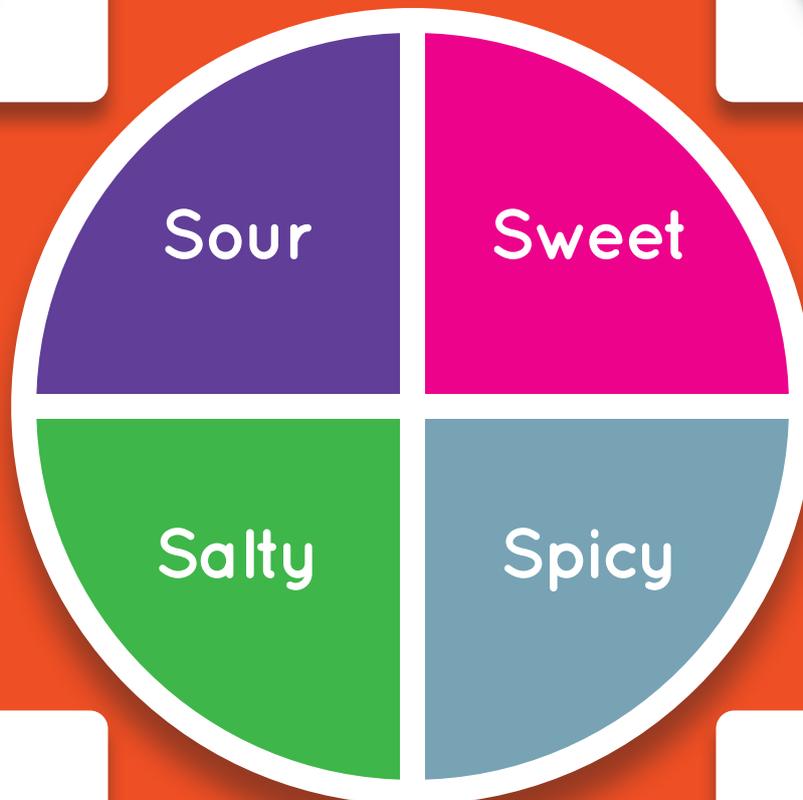
- Explore your cupboards for a range of items that produce different smells. Good examples are coffee, fresh and dried spices and herbs, fresh fruits, bath salts, bar of soap, cheeses, vinegar, mustard, marmite etc.
- Place a small amount of your smelly items into small pots or egg cups
- Cut out paper shapes to cover over the pots and secure with an elastic band or sticky tape
- Pierce small holes in the paper tops to allow the smell to escape
- Have fun with your little ones helping them determine what the smells are
- Uncover the pots to explore and chat about each contents more - which did they like best, which did they like least, which was the most popular of everyone etc?
- At the end of the activity, where possible and hygiene allows, return the items to their original storage to avoid waste.



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Idea 2: What's that taste?

Using some of the food items above, where suitable, and adding other foods e.g olives, Bombay mix, radishes, salami etc that may or may not have a strong flavour, have fun tasting and trying to determine whether they are...



N.B. We have replaced the 'bitter' taste mentioned in the opening paragraph with 'spicy' as bitter foods tend to be unpleasant and we don't want to put children off tasting foods.

However, you may still need to encourage only small bites/dabs of the sour and spicy foods just in case they are not to your children's liking and be vigilant to possible allergies

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Idea 3: Smelly Memories

Which of the items below have a strong smell? Beware there may be some tricky ones here e.g. do crayons or metal have a strong smell? Good opportunity to chat about similar items too e.g. different fruit smells, different flower smells, different toothpaste smells?



Idea 4: Cooking with Children

Children love getting involved in cooking activities and are more likely to eat it if they have been involved in the making. This EASY tasty vegetarian tagine which only takes 5 mins to prepare (maybe a tad longer with your children involved in the preparation), could be a firm favourite for all of you. It's also a great way to serve four of your five-a-day and it's freezable. Make sure you explore the exotic smells of the spices before you add and notice the aromas whilst cooking. If you don't have the spices or are unable to obtain them, the recipe will still provide a nutritious healthy meal without them. As you know, make sure any cutting with sharp knives is supervised and knives are put out of reach afterwards.

Butternut Squash and Chickpea Tagine

By Caroline Hire

PREP: 5 MINS COOK: 25 MINS

SERVES 2 ADULTS + 2 CHILDREN

Ingredients Needed:

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp mild chilli powder
- 500g bag frozen butternut squash chunks
- 2 carrots - cut into small diced squares
- 1 courgette - cut into small diced squares
- 2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
- 1 x 400g can chickpeas, drained
- cooked couscous or rice to serve

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Ginger (jin-jer)
Mainly grown in Jamaica, Africa, India, China and Australia, ginger is the root of the plant.



Cumin (q-min)
An aromatic spice native to eastern Mediterranean countries and Upper Egypt.



Couscous (koos-koos)
Consisting of many tiny granules made from steamed and dried durum wheat.



Cinnamon (sin-ah-mun)
A fragrant spice which comes from the inner bark of a tropical tree. When dried, it curls into sticks.

Method

Heat the oil in a heavy-based pan, then slowly cook the onions for around 10 mins until starting to caramelise. Stir in the garlic, ginger and spices and cook for a further 2 mins. Add the vegetables and canned tomatoes and bring to a simmer. Put the lid on and simmer for around 15 mins or until all the veg are tender. Stir in the chickpeas, heat through and serve with couscous or rice. Recipe from [bbcgoodfood.com](https://www.bbcgoodfood.com), June 2017 – check out more tasty recipes for you to cook with your children at <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/kids-cooking>.

Children learn through play and they learn most from you so make your time together as playful as possible. They will love playing with you and many special memories can be created during this challenging time. Try to create a daily routine for you and your children - include making regular contact with other family members via social media so that children still feel connected to them.

COVID-19: A Letter to Critical Workers on Childcare During the Summer Half Term

Useful information to help explain Coronavirus to your children

Coronavirus explained through a cartoon by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

UNICEF guides to coronavirus for parents and children

If your child is worried or anxious about coronavirus, find professional advice from Parents Helpline experts at Young Minds

This information has been provided by The Education People,
Kent County Council's Education Services Company

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Early Years and Childcare Excellence



Enhancing Family Involvement in Children's Learning

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