

Christmas Food & Nutrition Considerations

Food, drink, activities and more...What to consider this winter if you are a provider for Holiday Activities & Food Programme (HAF)...

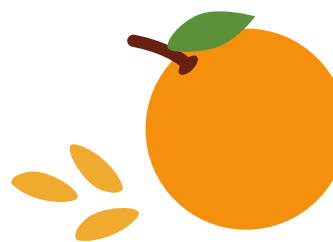
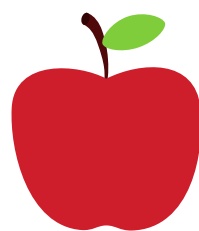
Providing your own food

All providers and venues being used **must be registered with Environmental Health Food Safety Team** at least 28 days prior to commencement (but the sooner the better)

- You must have suitably qualified persons preparing and cooking/serving the food
- As a Provider you must do all the due diligence around allergies and intolerances such as screening/conversations with parents/guardian. Where these are identified make an agreed plan whether you can safely provide food for the child or agree on a suitable alternative such as a cash payment to parents/carers to provide their own lunch.

Consider Different Cultures In Your Menu Planning

- Try to think about inclusion and diversity and the different backgrounds of the children/families you are working with
- Experiment with dishes from other parts of the world where possible-be creative!
- PureWow have 19 Festive Christmas Foods Around the World; The spiced carrot dish idea from Finland sounds yum (careful on the sugar however)... And also the Russian gingerbread cookies.



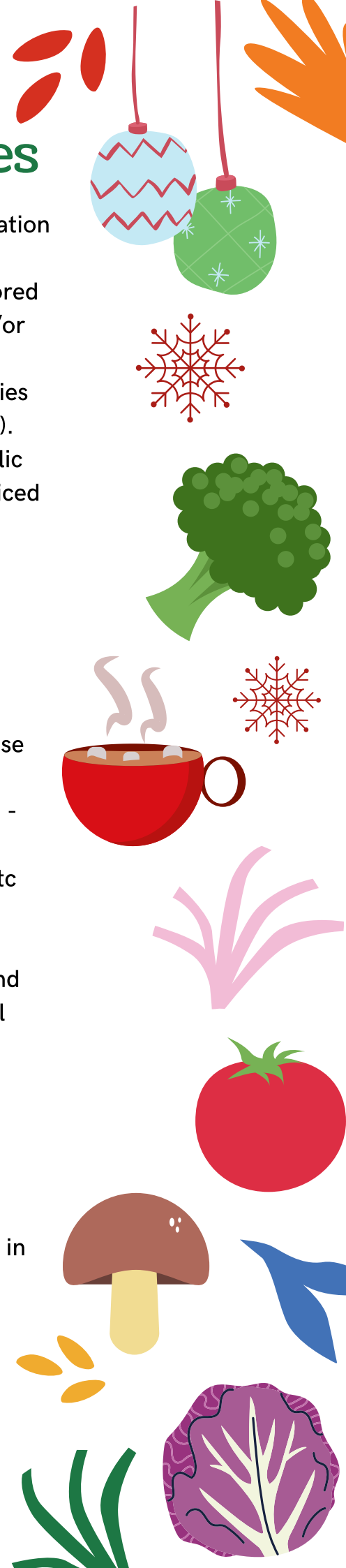
Involve Children & Young People In Cooking & Activities

Are you able to involve children & young people in the actual preparation of the main meal or with food & drink activities?

- Food safety as well as covid risk assessments all need to be factored in as well as appropriate supervision from suitable qualified and/or experienced staff.
- Plan in food & drink activities as part of your 'enrichment' activities (depending on the venue and facilities/staff & volunteer capacity).
- Try decorating bottles or jars and fill with something non-alcoholic like - cucumber and basil cocktail or homemade lemonade or spiced apple syrup with clementines & cloves (reducing the sugar for children)

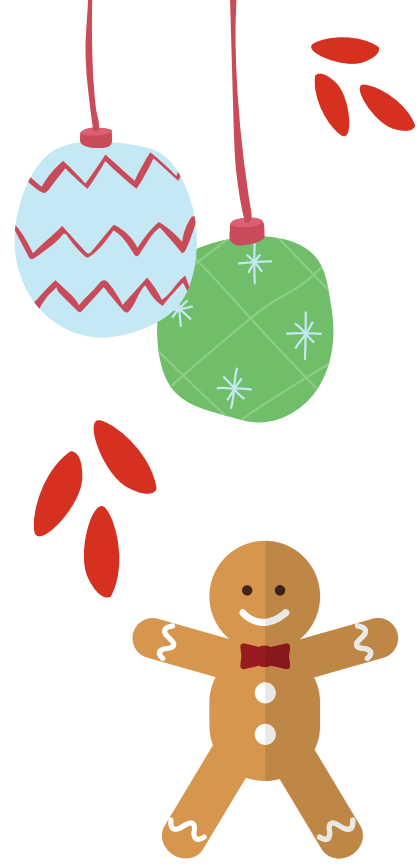
Cooking Tips

- Try to incorporate herbs and spices where appropriate to minimise the use of salt
- Consider a 'hot' sandwich where limited facilities and equipment - a hot roast chicken sarnie with stuffing, Quorn sausage & mushroom) or how about toasties, panini, grilled tortilla wraps etc (using mozzarella rather than cheddar which lowers the fat content) then think about some festive fillings (Turkey, Cranberries, stuffing) in addition to some of the classics (tuna) and adding a salad garnish to finish it off....consider shredded Brussel sprouts rather than lettuce leaves as the base of the salad
- Try filling Yorkshire puddings if you have adequate oven space (you could buy then ready made and just make a hot tasty nutritious filling/stew)
- Where possible please consider cooking the dishes from scratch rather than relying on pre-packaged/ready-prepared/jar sauces etc. This way you are minimising additives and preservatives and in control of the amount of fat, salt and sugar. Even something like pizza that's not considered healthy-if made from scratch with sensible amounts of cheese and lots of veg incorporated can actually be quite balanced (served with a salad rather than garlic bread for example)



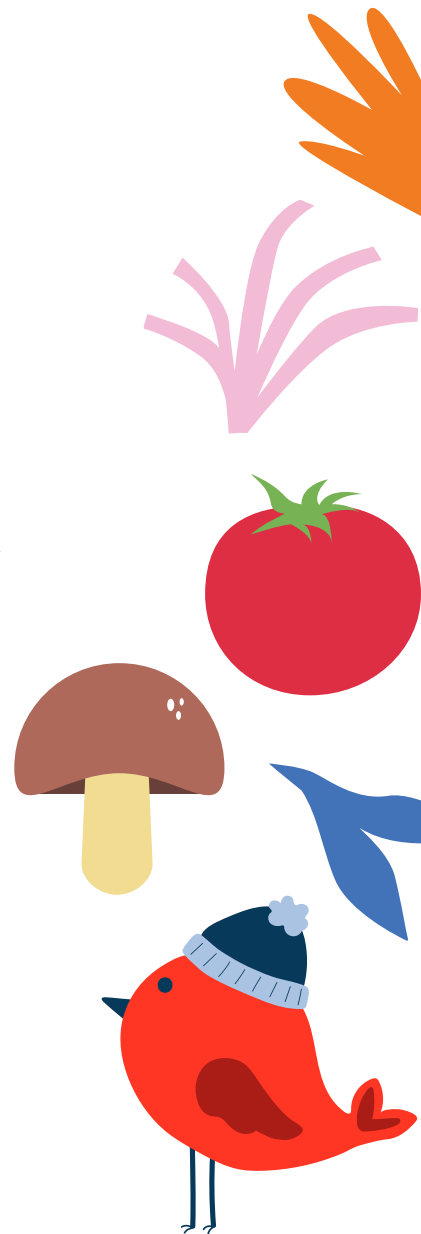
Cooking Tips

- Try to add a festive twist to traditional dishes/popular dishes (eg if making soups how about spicy pumpkin/parsnip-served with a ciabatta roll or crusty type bread so it's a substantial meal).
- Instead of a sweet sticky hot pudding how about making gingerbread men (or buying small ones!) and decorating (lightly with white piping icing) this then becomes an enrichment activity too not just a dessert
- Strongly encouraged is to experiment with some plant-based dishes-it's a good way to introduce children and families to things they may not have tried before and its good for the planet, environment & children's health too.
 - Kirklees has a climate emergency commitment so think about what HAF can do to support the wider council objectives when meal planning.
 - Something like a jacket potato but with some creative meat/fish free fillings... a mixed bean chilli with some festive spices, a Quorn curry/shepherd's pie. For some further ideas check out sneaky veg website



Additional Considerations

- The eating environment is important at any age; could you enhance the experience by using decorations at lunch/teatime such as bunting and/or festive themed tableware (paper-plate/bowls, tablecloths, napkins, straws, crackers)-check out your local pound shops and discounters.
- Be aware of what constitutes a correct portion size for the age range you are working with-this is even more important when serving those dishes that are calorific, dense or treat foods
- Could a cooking/baking enrichment activity be sent home with each child (ensuring any allergies and intolerances have been taken into account). To learn more about allergens visit the Food Standard Agency website.



Extra Inspiration

- Insert Suggested websites here

