Have a Happy, Healthy 4th of July

Posted At : July 2, 2013 1:20 PM | Posted By : Food Bank Staff
Related Categories: Recipes

By Zoe Cooper-Caroselli

When I was growing up the 4th of July meant sandy toes, time with family and friends, fireworks, and delicious barbeque chicken and corn on the cob. I remember the taste of that chicken, with its crisp skin and juicy flesh, and the smell of smoke coming off the grill as I tried to balance sweet summer corn on my paper plate. Food is an intrinsic part of holiday celebrations, and what we eat as children can impact our food choices for the rest of our lives.

As a Nutrition and Health Services Associate at Food Bank, I have the opportunity to help shape how kids think about food because of my work with CookShop, Food Bank's largest nutrition education program. ThroughCookS CookShop Classroom's fun, hands-on workshops we're able to reach children age 5 -12 in more than 1,700 elementary and after-school classes, where they learn to enjoy nutritious food and make healthy choices every day. Kids discover where food comes from, how plants grow, why whole foods are good for their body, how to prepare simple, healthy recipes and much more. The best part of my job is hearing the feedback from teachers and parents who tell me what an incredible impact CookShop has in changing kids' eating habits.

Getting children to eat better comes down to two things: Make it tasty and make it fun. The healthy and delicious Red, White & Blue Yummy Yogurt Parfait below fits the bill on both counts. It's the perfect 4th of July treat for kids and adults alike. Fruits taste their best – and are the most nutritious – when they are in season and don't have to travel too far from the farm to our plates (the same goes for veggies too)!

I've adapted this recipe from our first grade CookShop curriculum, swapping other fruits out in favor of colorful seasonal blueberries and strawberries. Almost all the recipe preparation is appropriate for kids, but make sure that an adult cuts the strawberries. Here's to celebrations, family traditions, and making good food choices that will last a lifetime. Happy 4th of July!

Red, White & Blue Yummy Yogurt Parfaits

1 32 oz container low-fat plain yogurt
¼ cup honey
1 pint blueberries
1 pint strawberries

Wash hands and all produce well. Cut strawberries into small pieces. Combine strawberry pieces and blueberries in a bowl. Put yogurt into a separate mixing bowl. Add honey to yogurt. Stir to combine. Spoon a layer of yogurt into cups. Spoon a layer of fruit on top of yogurt. Add another yogurt layer followed by another fruit layer. Serves 4.

Zoe Cooper-Caroselli is a Nutrition and Health Services Associate at Food Bank For New York City.