

Pointers For Parents

Start Kids Cooking In The Garden

(NAPSA)—One way to increase kids' interest in healthy eating is to start them growing nutritious foods in a garden.

Planting and growing vegetables, fruits and legumes, then using the fresh produce to create healthier meals, is a great way for families to spend fun, quality time together.

Mollie Katzen, author of *Moosewood Cookbook*, which was inducted into the James Beard Foundation Cookbook Hall of Fame in 2007, has a few ideas parents can use to weave more nutritious foods like USA-grown peanuts and peanut butter into their kids' diet. Kids love to eat most any food when it's paired with peanut butter.

- Get kids off the couch and into a garden. Kids are more likely to eat fresh produce—fruits, vegetables and nuts—that they grow themselves.

- If you can't grow your own garden, take children to a farmer's market so they can meet the farmers and learn more about where food comes from.

- Grind your own peanut butter by putting peanuts and some peanut or vegetable oil in the blender. Augment it with fresh produce like apples and carrots. Or make a peanut dipping sauce for veggies like green beans and broccoli as a snack or appetizer. Or make a peanut butter smoothie with yogurt and honey. All these recipes provide much-needed nutrients for children and adults.

- Peanuts and peanut butter contribute more than 30 essential nutrients and phytonutrients and can be part of a varied, balanced diet that promotes good health.

For more recipes, visit www.nationalpeanutboard.org.

Broccoli Dipped in Wonderful Peanut Sauce

- 1 bunch broccoli (1½ pounds)**
- 1 cup smooth peanut butter**
- 1 cup hot water**
- 2 to 3 tablespoons soy or tamari sauce**
- 3 to 4 tablespoons sugar or light-colored honey**
- 1½ teaspoons minced or crushed garlic**
- 2 teaspoons cider vinegar**
- 3 to 4 tablespoons finely minced cilantro**
- Salt and cayenne**

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil. Trim and discard the tough stem end of the broccoli and slice the rest lengthwise into 6 to 8 hefty spears.

2. Lower the heat to a simmer and plunge in the broccoli for 2 minutes if you like your vegetables al dente, and for 3 minutes if you like them tender.

3. Drain in a colander and run the broccoli under cold running water. Drain thoroughly, then dry the broccoli by shaking it briskly and then patting it with paper towels. Seal in a zip-style plastic bag and store until use.

4. Place the peanut butter in a bowl. Add the hot water, and mash and stir patiently with a spoon or a small whisk until uniformly blended.

5. Stir in the remaining ingredients, adding salt and cayenne to taste, and mix well. Serve right away, surrounded by steamed broccoli of any temperature. (You can also cover it tightly and refrigerate for up to a week. Let the sauce come to room temperature before serving.)

Yield: 4 to 5 servings

Recipe from *The Vegetable Dishes I Can't Live Without* by Mollie Katzen (Hyperion; 2007).