

Pre-School Pages



A newsletter for parents of pre-schoolers
 packed with food, facts & fun
 from your local county extension office

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Dollars and Sense



Understanding the Election Process

No matter what your political beliefs, there's one thing parents can agree on: We'll be inundated with election coverage over the next few weeks. Chances are that your child has begun to notice campaign signs, television commercials, news coverage, T-shirts, bumper stickers, buttons, and conversations about the election. Here's some tips to help them better understand what they are seeing.

What is voting?

You can explain to preschoolers that voting is a way for a group to make a decision. Family members can cast votes for a favorite meal, favorite book, or favorite weekend activity.

Who can vote?

School-age children are ready to learn that when this country began, the Founding Fathers wrote a constitution describing how we would govern ourselves. It said people should vote but didn't say who could vote. That was left to each state to decide, which created problems. In the past, people were denied the right to vote because of social class, gender, or ethnic origin. Now after centuries of protest, four amendments to the Constitution and several new laws, all U.S. citizens, 18 years or older, are allowed to vote.

Can I become president?

Tell your aspiring world leader that, according to the Constitution, a person must meet three conditions to be eligible to become president. An individual must:

1. be a citizen who was born in the United States
2. have lived in the United States for fourteen years
3. be at least 35 years old

What does the President do?

Children may understand that the President leads the nation, but you can explain that he also serves as the head of the military, makes agreements with other nations, and chooses people to hold important government jobs. He doesn't do it on his own, however. Introduce kids to the three branches of government: the Legislative, which includes Congress; the Judicial, which includes the Supreme Court; and the Executive, which includes the President, Vice President, and Cabinet. Each branch can limit the powers of the other so none becomes too powerful.

Source:

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/special/election/article-the-raceison.html>



Let's Eat

Crescent Roll Cornucopia



Ingredients:

- Refrigerated crescent rolls
- Foil
- Vegetables such as carrots, celery sticks, cherry tomatoes, broccoli florets, cauliflower, or colored peppers
- Cheese bricks such as Colby Jack or Cheddar
- Ranch salad dressing

Directions:

- Unroll the dough, pinch together to create one sheet, and along the long side of the rectangle, slice it in about 1/2 in. long strips
- Shape foil into a V shape cone (about 4 inches long, and about 1/2 inch wide at the point, and 2 inches wide at the top) – Cut a square of foil, and start by pushing your fingers into the center of the square, fold the foil up and around your hand. Continue to shape it until you get your desired size
- Starting at the bottom of your V, start wrapping a strip around the foil overlapping each time by a little bit, and pressing to seal where needed
- Pull the tip up a little for a curved shape
- Bake according to the package directions, or until the dough is turning nice and golden in color – about 10 minutes
- Let cool
- Squeeze the foil together so it's a little smaller at the top, and while holding onto the crescent roll, gently twist the foil back and forth until it loosens from the sides and pull it out
- Use miniature cookie cutters – fall shapes, to cut cheese, peppers, and anything else you think might work!
- Dry any vegetables that are a little moist on paper towel

- Fill your cornucopia with prepared vegetables
- Serve with Ranch dressing.



Source: Recipe adapted from www.kidfriendlythingstodo.com

Play Time

When the leaves are on the ground and it's too cold for outside fun, consider playing some inside games to keep your children engaged and exercising. Play a friendly game of fall "Simon Says" but changing the names to "the turkey says" or "the pilgrim says." Instruct children to do jumping jacks, jog in place, or to do stretching activities such as touching their toes. This game can also help with chores around the house when "the turkey says to unload the dishwasher." Be creative and keep your kids moving as the weather gets cooler.



Sincerely,

County Extension Agent
for Family & Consumer Science