



Dear Parents...

It's easy to get your kids to eat their vegetables, especially when they're one of the main ingredients in a bowl of hot, homemade soup. Did you know your kids can practice spelling and eat soup at the same time? Try this recipe.

Alphabet Vegetable Soup

Serves 6

Source: *The Produce Foundation for Better Health*

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| 1 teaspoon vegetable oil | 1 cup carrots, sliced |
| 1/2 cup onion, chopped | 1 cup celery, sliced |
| 1 clove garlic or 1 teaspoon garlic powder | 1 cup corn (fresh, frozen, or canned) |
| 2 cans (14.5 oz. each) chicken or vegetable broth | 1 cup green beans (fresh or canned) |
| 1 can (28 oz.) crushed tomatoes | 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, optional |
| 1/2 cup alphabet pasta (uncooked) | |

Directions

1. Heat oil in saucepan.
2. Add onion and garlic, and cook until onion is tender.
3. Add chicken broth, tomatoes, and pasta.
4. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer 10 minutes.
5. Add carrots, celery, corn, and beans, and cook for 10 more minutes.
6. Top with Parmesan cheese before serving, if desired.

There are lots of great books that can motivate your kids to eat more vegetables. Check out these books from your school or local library.

Rabbit Food by Susanna Gretz

Grandpa's Garden Lunch by Judith Caseley

Growing Colors by Bruce McMillan

Tops and Bottoms by Janet Stevens

Oliver's Vegetables by Vivian French

Raising a Reader



“What Does That Say?”

When your child asks, *What does that say?*, he or she is telling you: I want to learn to read! **That’s exciting.** Already your child knows that the lines, circles, and marks you make on paper, or the letters on a sign or label, mean something. **Now your child is ready to learn what they mean!**

As a parent, you can help your child start to learn to read common words by taking a look at the world around him. Start with words your child sees every day such as STOP signs, logos, restaurant names, or food packages such as cereal boxes or cans. Next, you can label items around your home. Write the name of objects (for example, desk, chair, sink) on pieces of paper, and help your child attach it to the object at eye-level. This can quickly turn into a great reading

game with your child. Make learning these new words fun and exciting by asking your child what the labels say. Your child will feel proud to be able to read these words without help.

There are lots of fun and exciting books available at your child’s school or at your local library that will help your child begin to read simple words. Listed below are a few good books that will help your child learn to read **and** learn a little bit about food and nutrition at the same time. Your child will be able to use the picture clues to read many of the words in these books, and before you know it, he or she will be saying:

“I know what that says!”

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert

In the Kitchen by Susan Canizares and Betsey Chesson

Market Day by Lois Ehlert

Me and My Amazing Body by Joan Sweeney

Vegetable Soup by Ann Morris

Other Ways to Link Nutrition and Reading

1. Play a rhyming game with your child. Think of words that rhyme with your child’s favorite food. For example: eggs, legs, pegs, etc.
2. For fun during mealtime, ask your child to point to a food that begins with a certain letter. Then let your child choose the letter and ask you to find the food.
3. Help your child write food riddles. Try them out on family members or friends.



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