

Family Fun with Math: Fractions in Food

Math learning can happen anytime! Here are a few ideas to help your children see the math all around them.

Why fractions?

This can be an intimidating topic when formally introduced, so getting even the youngest learners used to hearing the terminology can be extremely beneficial. Fraction vocabulary can be easily introduced in a natural way.

Try it Out: Compare fractions

- During snack, try showing your child how to break food into halves, thirds, or quarters.
- Ask your child if they would rather have a quarter of a biscuit or a third of a biscuit (remember to show them the pieces).
- If they are really liking something you could show them how much is left: “Oh we ate half of the fruit salad already.” Or “Wow, we only have a quarter of it left. That’s even less than a few minutes ago.”

Talk about It:

- Here are some ways we can incorporate fractions:
 - Wow, I noticed you ate one of three celery sticks today. One-third is a big jump from yesterday!
 - Include them when you are cooking. Give them a choice in the ingredients, like do they want more edamame or more carrot in the fried rice; talk about how you are adjusting the proportions. “Usually we do half edamame-half carrots. This time I will do $\frac{2}{3}$ s edamame and $\frac{1}{3}$ carrots. Can’t wait to eat it!”
- Talk about times when you botched a meal because you read the recipe wrong. Like putting in half a cup of salt instead of half a cup of sugar. Bring out the measuring cups and spoons and maybe some water and mixing bowls as visual aids.
- Try baking cookies! There are some 3-ingredient bakes (like [this shortbread recipe](#)) which is a great way to show kids how fractions are used in everyday life. Make adjustments to the recipe based on how large or small your family!

Make it Work for Your Child:

- Try using foods that are very crunchy if you are breaking things apart so there is a sensory cue (veggie sticks or celery will snap in half very well). Bonus, some kids are motivated to eat crunchy food!

Make it Work for Your Family:

- Older siblings could become sous chefs and help with portioning out the ingredients for meals (as well as help cooking the meals).

- All family members can simply talk about the foods they prefer in things. "I like it when the fruit cobbler is half strawberry."