

CNDH: Community Education



CNDH offers cooking classes for both young and old. Food demos and cooking classes provide interactive instruction on healthy cooking techniques, modifying favorite recipes to include healthier ingredients by reducing the sugar, sodium, and fat. Kids cooking classes provide children between the ages of two and five with hands-on cooking experiences.

Demonstration foods include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, dairy, and protein. Research has shown that the more exposure preschool aged children have with healthy foods, the more likely they will be to engage in healthier lifestyle choices later in life.

Chef Herbert Holden, better known as "Chef Herb," is a nutrition educator for the Center for Nutrition, Diet and Health. He grew up in a rural town in Delaware and began cooking for his family at an early age. He is a professionally trained chef and has worked in many restaurants. While working as a Head Start chef for three to five year olds, he realized there was a significant need for nutrition education in the community, particularly for young children.

According to Chef Herb: "If children learn how to eat healthy at a young age, that behavior will continue through their life."

As a CNDH nutrition educator, he works in the DC public schools, child development centers, and faith-based organizations, introducing three to five year-olds to healthy eating, the U.S. dietary guidelines (updated every five years), and proper sanitation techniques. He also does educational outreach at health fairs and other locations requested by community members (like community centers). Chef Herb also works with parents of young children so they understand the importance of healthy eating for themselves and their children.

He attends local farmers markets and conducts fresh food demonstrations including fruit and vegetable carvings to get children interested in eating



healthier foods. He also informs farmers market customers about that buying fruits and vegetables in season is cheaper and gives them information about how to preserve the produce out of the current season.

Chef Herb says the biggest challenge is getting community members to change behaviors. Fast food is very convenient and people do not make the time to cook at home very often. However, if children learn at an early age to eat fruits and vegetables, they will stick with it. His goal for the future of CAUSES is to provide affordable, healthy meals with a food truck in low-income residential areas and shelters.

Check out this [video comment](#) from one of Chef Herb's demonstrations. Contact Chef Herb at hholden@udc.edu.