TOP TIPS FOR FOOD TECHNOLOGY FOR PARENTS

**Basic skills for under-fives**

Being able to cook is a great skill to have, and whilst it can sometimes feel like a chore to adults, it’s an exciting and fun activity for children. It’s also a terrific way to get children interested in food in general, or to help children with food issues to feel comfortable with ingredients they don’t currently eat. Start by teaching children the following basic cooking skills:

● Buttering a slice of bread.

● Cracking eggs by tapping the centre of the egg over the rim of a small bowl, and then using thumbs to pull the two halves apart.

● Decorating fairy cakes or biscuits – spreading on the icing butter or just adding the sprinkles or other toppings.

● Kneading and rolling out dough using a rolling pin.

● Cutting shapes out using cookie cutters.

● Using a sieve – by holding over a larger bowl and gently shaking.

● Cutting soft fruit or vegetables, for example, a banana, with a non-sharp knife.

● Grating cheese – especially good if you’ve got a rotary grater.

● Crushing biscuits for bases or non-cook chocolate recipes – in a plastic bag with a rolling pin.

● Rubbing in butter and flour for crumble.

● Crushing garlic in a garlic press.

● Greasing and lining cake tins.

● Mashing bananas with the back of a fork for banana bread/cake.

● Mashing potato with a potato masher.

● Peeling vegetables with a vegetable peeler.

**The recipe for success**

**Choose what you make carefully:** For children under three, choose something like an easy biscuit recipe or a fresh fruit salad – nothing that takes too long or is too involved. As children get older, they can concentrate for longer and you can move on to more complicated dishes and eventually entire meals.