

Top tips for creating winter menus



As you start to plan and create your winter menus, here are a number of top tips to think about:

- Use seasonal veg in your recipes. If you grow your own, start harvesting the winter vegetables such as potatoes, sprouts, cabbage or grow some indoor/windowsill herbs and add these to your dishes!
- Shop locally if you can. Support local fruit & veg suppliers and agree a good price for regular custom
- Create desserts with the children. Try different flavours of crumbles such as apple/blackberry or rhubarb or apple & raspberry. Give each age group/room a recipe to create for the menu so they take ownership of it. Send these recipes back home to grown ups to try at home.
- Try and offer smaller portions in the first instance and if children are asking for more offer seconds. This will eliminate waste.
- Soups are a fantastic way of offering lots of variety of vegetables into children's diets. There are so many options when making soup. Choose seasonal produce that is cheap e.g. leek & potato, lentil, broth, fresh tomato soup
- Batch cook – try making a big batch of soup or fresh sauce for pasta and freeze if storage allows.
- Stews, casseroles, and curries are a great winter dish to serve. Try adding in some beans and pulses to bulk out the dish. These plant-based proteins provide a good source of fibre and keep tummies fuller for longer. Lentils can be added to soups which give a lovely flavour.
- Hot puddings can quite simply be a bowl of custard with some stewed fruit alongside. Try seasonal fruit such as stewed apples, rhubarb or blackberries.
- Keep a nice, varied menu so children are kept interested and tastes and textures are being educated.

