



As an early childhood educator, the language of food has been an instrumental language that brings young children together in a peaceful environment. The setting is carefully designed with purpose and intentionality where children are valued, respected, and where they can feel a sense of belonging. It is more than a cooking experience; the process allows children to connect on an intimate level as they take part in preparing a healthy meal.

More importantly, during the process, social relationships are being formed with the teacher through conversations, questions, and deep listening to spoken or unspoken language. The children are collaborating and sharing their personal experiences in a serene atmosphere. The universal language of food brings out many possibilities from each member in a community setting. Children are naturally eager to help a peer whether it is using a tool, passing an ingredient or offering encouraging words to try an unfamiliar food. Through the cooking experience, children find their own sense of empowerment by being able to choose a tool (whether it's scissors, a child's knife, or their own best tool - their hands).

Food is universal. It strengthens relationships amongst community members, therefore, focusing on the positive similarities we all share. The process of using all their senses allows children to thrive at their own pace in a kind and welcoming environment.

As one of the recipients of the 2015 P.E.A.C.E. Projects, the Language of Food continues to promote meaningful experiences that tap into their curiosity, foster kindness and flexibility to welcome other members, and set the foundation for a more peaceful world. The aesthetically appealing environment lends itself to discussions, connections to home experiences, and to experiments with new healthy ingredients. This journey can only enrich children's overall well being and as a facilitator, I continue to learn and get inspired by them. I remain committed to facilitate language of food gatherings where they can thrive and learn lifelong skills.

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