



Connecticut’s Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services

Feeding Yourself

Autism comes with many difficulties and challenges. Feeding oneself or a loved one with autism is no exception. Finding the motivation to cook, sensory challenges, motor skills, following and remembering directions are just some of the many issues confronted with what may seem a daunting task, yet it’s a very important life skill. Below you will find resources related to cooking or what to consider if you need to find food.

Below you will find a table containing links to articles providing information about the challenges individuals with ASD face when it comes to cooking and some helpful tips to help yourself or someone you know.

Cooking		
Organization	Service Description	Contact number
Autism Awareness Centre Inc.	Article titled 'What's Cooking? Life Skills for Kids with Autism!' Provides information about some of the challenges individuals with ASD experience and some helpful tips to assist individuals with ASD to learn how to cook	https://autismawarenesscentre.com/whats-cooking-life-skills/
Autism Resources and Community (ARC)	Article provides 7 tips for teaching your child with autism to cook	http://blog.stageslearning.com/blog/7-tips-for-teaching-your-child-with-autism-to-cook
The Autism Helper	Provides cooking tips, visuals and recipes	https://theautismhelper.com/communication/cooking/
The Autism Helper	Provides cooking tips and visual social stories to make cooking successful	https://theautismhelper.com/making-cooking-activities-successful/

For whatever reason cooking as part of your daily tasks may not be in your agenda just yet, but you still need to eat. Below are some alternative solutions if you or someone you know needs resources for food, whether you need to bring it home or go somewhere to have a warm meal.

Congregate Meal Sites

Congregate meal sites are locations where individuals can get a cooked meal during certain hours or days. Certain locations will cater to older adults while others will provide meals to individuals that are disabled. These locations can be a local church, housing community or senior center. These locations offer opportunities for individuals to engage socially with other individuals and take part in extra-curricular activities.

You can contact the 211 Infoline for programs in your area or visit www.211ct.org. Search by using the term ***'Congregate Meals/Nutrition Sites'***

Home Delivered Meals

These programs consist of a meal delivery service that allows individuals to receive cooked or prepared frozen meals to their place of residence. These types of programs are typically for older adults or individuals who are disabled and unable to prepare a meal. Typically the program goal is to also provide a nutritionally healthy meal.

You can contact the 211 Infoline for programs in your area or visit www.211ct.org. Search by using the term ***'Home Delivered Meals'***

Soup Kitchens

Soup kitchens are locations where cooked food is offered to individuals unable to access food by other means. Food is provided for free or at a reduced cost. Many soup kitchens will accept anyone in need of food with proper identification while others are open to the public with no questions asked.

You can contact the 211 Infoline for programs in your area or visit www.211ct.org. Search by using the term ***'Soup Kitchens'***

Food Pantries

Food pantries are locations where individuals can pick up nonperishable food items. Some food banks offer fresh produce, meats, dairy products and personal care items. Locations, times, days and eligibility requirements vary.

You can contact the 211 Infoline for programs in your area or visit www.211ct.org. Search by using the term ***'Food Pantries'***

Farmers Markets

Farmers markets sell fresh fruit and vegetables throughout different times of the year. Many of the farmers markets will accept food stamp EBT cards and WIC coupons.

You can contact the 211 Infoline for programs in your area or visit www.211ct.org. Search by using the term **'Farmers Markets'**.

You can also contact the State of Connecticut Department of Agriculture by calling (860) 713-2503 or visiting <https://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=3260&q=398996>

Summer Food Programs

Program was established to be sure children had access to food meals when schools were not in session.

You can contact 211 Infoline or visit www.211ct.org. Search by using the term **'Summer Food Service Programs'**

You can also use End Hunger CT website summer meals location finder by visiting www.ctsummermeals.org

Benefits to be aware of:

Food Stamps Snap (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Program Administration: The Food Stamp program (now known as SNAP) helps eligible individuals and families afford the cost of food at various locations including supermarkets, grocery stores, farmers markets, just to name a few. To read more about the SNAP program and where to apply, visit <https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/SNAP/Supplemental-Nutrition-Assistance-Program—SNAP> or contact DSS directly at 1-855-626-6632.

- **Connecticut FRESH MATCH** allows individuals to visit participating farmer's market locations and increase the individual's purchasing power. Individuals are provided tokens or coupons which allow them to double the value of their snap benefits to purchase fresh fruit, vegetables, herbs, seeds or seedlings. To learn more and find a participating farmers market, contact <https://www.endhungerct.org/services/farmers-markets/>

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): provides funding towards healthcare and nutrition of low-income pregnant women, breastfeeding women, and children under the age of five. To learn more about WIC or to find an administering provider, you can contact the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health at 1-800-741-2142 or visit <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/WIC/WIC>.

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