

Mini Jam Heart Pies










A fun and easy sensory experience for Valentine's Day




These adorable pies will warm little hearts and hands! The rolling, patting, and crimping will help your child build fine motor skills. The recipe is super easy because it only requires two ingredients!

Ingredients

- One package of refrigerated pie crust (14.1 oz., 2 ct.)
- Strawberry jam (or your favorite flavor)
- Jumbo heart sprinkles or other sugar sprinkles (optional)

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
<p>1. Gather the ingredients, a baking sheet covered in parchment paper or a silicone baking mat, a teaspoon, a small bowl, a fork and a three-inch heart cookie cutter.</p>	<p> Touch your utensils. What do they feel like? Are their textures rough or smooth? Be careful - cookie cutters have sharp edges.</p> <p> What happens when you bang the teaspoon against the cookie sheet? What sound does it make?</p> <p> Talk about your kitchen utensils. Is your cookie sheet shiny or is it dark? Talk about where else you might find hearts - on a Valentine's Day card, on your child's shirt, and even inside your body!</p>
<p>2. Remove the pie crusts from the package and unroll them on a clean countertop, cutting board or a piece of parchment paper.</p>	<p> Smell the pie crust. It should smell like dough!</p> <p> Invite your child to put their hands on top of yours as you unroll the pie crust. Is the dough sticky or does it unroll smoothly? Pat the pie crust. Does it feel soft?</p> <p> The crust is a light color which will contrast with a brightly colored cookie cutter.</p>
<p>3. With your cookie cutter, cut out an even number of hearts, using both rolls of dough. The number of pies you make will depend on the size of your cookie cutter.</p>	<p> Invite your child to put their hand over yours as you place the cookie cutter on top of the dough and press down.</p> <p> 1...2...3..Count the number of hearts you're making out loud. Your child will learn how things follow in a sequence. This is especially true for cooking!</p> <p> As you remove each heart from your cutting board, talk about the heart shapes you see or feel that are left in the dough. If your counter top or cutting board is colored, you'll see the hearts even better because of the visual contrast.</p>

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
<p>4. Lay out half of the hearts on parchment-lined baking sheets. Put some strawberry jam in a small bowl. Place a heaping teaspoon of jam on top of each heart.</p>	<p> Touch the jam in the bowl. It feels sticky.</p> <p> If your child isn't already licking the jam off their fingers, put some on your finger and touch it to their lips.</p> <p> As you spoon the jam on each heart, smell the fresh berries. Or maybe you used another fruit jam that's just peachy!</p> <p> Talk about how many hearts fit on your baking sheet. Is there a heart for everyone in your family?</p>
<p>5. Place another cut-out heart on top of the one with the jam and crimp the edges with a fork to seal the heart. Make a tiny slit in the middle of each heart so the pie can vent.</p>	<p> Invite your child to hold a cut-out heart while you assemble the other pies. This heart is meant to be "kneaded" and broken by little hands. Sensory play is how children with visual impairments learn about the visual world.</p> <p> Invite your child to put their hands on top of yours as you crimp the edges of each heart with a fork.</p>
<p>6. If the heart pies get too soft, refrigerate them for about 20 minutes before baking. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Bake the pies for about 20 minutes until golden brown.</p>	<p> Brr! The inside of the refrigerator is cold. When you preheat the oven, it gets hot!</p> <p> What do the hand pies smell like as they're baking? What do other pies smell like? Grandma's pies might smell like apples on Thanksgiving.</p> <p> When you set the timer on your oven, talk about how long it will take for the pies to bake and listen for the "beep" when the pies are done.</p>

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
<p>7. Cool the hearts on the baking sheet. Add one jumbo heart sprinkle in the center of each pie, securing it with a dab of jam. Or you could also decorate the hearts with sugar sprinkles before baking them.</p>	<p> Now you can eat your pies! Sharing them with friends and family is a sweet idea, too.</p>