Broccoli

The little green tree shaped vegetable is packed with nutrients. The problem is that often children turn their nose up at broccoli. Part of the reason for this dislike may be due to broccoli being overcooked which leads to a soft, mushy, dull greenish brown color that is unappealing. The best way to cook broccoli while maintaining the nutrients and flavor is to steam it. To steam broccoli, fill the bottom of a steamer pot with a small amount of water. Once the water is boiling, add the broccoli and steam for 5 minutes. If cooking stems, cook for 2 minutes prior to adding the florets.

Double Delicious Dunkers

1 cup corn flakes cereal, crushed to 1/4 cup
3/4 cup low sodium cheese-flavored snack crackers, crushed to 1/2 cup
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
2 egg whites, slightly beaten
2 tablespoons water
1 small zucchini, cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices (1 1/2 cups)
1 cup cauliflower florets
1 cup broccoli florets
1 cup pizza sauce

In a shallow dish stir together corn flakes cereal, cheese-flavored snack crackers, Parmesan cheese, garlic powder and cayenne pepper. In another small bowl, stir together egg whites and water. Dip zucchini, cauliflower and broccoli into egg mixture. Roll in crumb mixture, gently pressing crumbs onto vegetables. Place on baking sheet coated with nonstick spray. Bake at 400° F for 8 to 10 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender. While the vegetables are cooking, heat pizza sauce in a small microwave-safe bowl on high for 30 seconds to 1 minute or until heated through. Serve as dipping sauce with warm vegetables. Makes 14 servings for 3-5 year olds at lunch/dinner.

✓ Fruit/Vegetable

Recipe and photo from: https://www.fuelgreatdays.com
Creamy Pasta with Broccoli and Ham

1 pound small pasta shells  
3 cups small broccoli florets  
2 tablespoons margarine  
1/2 cup onion, finely chopped  
1 1/2 pounds cooked ham, chopped  
3/4 cup low-fat milk, warmed  
Flour, as needed  
1/2 cup parmesan cheese  
Salt and pepper

Bring a large pot of water to boil. Add pasta and cook until al dente, 8 to 10 minutes. Steam the broccoli while cooking the pasta. Once the pasta is cooked, drain and return to the pot along with the broccoli. Melt margarine over medium heat in a large skillet. Add onion and sauté until softened, about 3 minutes. Add ham and cook, stirring, 2 minutes longer. Stir in milk; bring to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, 3 to 5 minutes. If sauce does not reach desired thickness, add a flour and water mixture to help thicken. Pour cream mixture into pot with pasta and broccoli. Add cheese and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper and serve immediately. Makes 14 servings for 3-5 year olds at lunch/dinner.

✔ Meat/Meat Alternate  
✔ Fruit/Vegetable  
✔ Grain/Bread

Source and photo: http://www.allyou.com
**Broccoli Pasta Salad**

1 pound rotini pasta  
4 cups broccoli florets  
1 cup red bell pepper, roughly chopped  
1/2 cup red onion, roughly chopped  
1/2 cup tomato, chopped  
3 tablespoons lemon juice  
1/3 cup red wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon honey*  
1/4 cup olive oil  
1/2 cup finely grated parmesan  
salt & pepper

Prepare pasta according to the instructions on the package. Drain and set aside. Blanch the broccoli. To do this, fill a large pot with enough water to almost cover the broccoli. Bring the water to a boil and place the broccoli florets in the water and cook for 1-2 minutes. TIP: one minute will yield crunchier broccoli, two minutes gives you bright, green, and firm broccoli. Fill a large bowl with ice water while cooking the broccoli. When the broccoli is done, scoop it out and immediately place in the ice bath for a few minutes to cool. This stops the cooking process. Drain broccoli and set aside. Combine the cooled pasta and broccoli with the red pepper, onion, and tomatoes. To make the dressing, whisk lemon juice, vinegar, honey, and oil together. Toss with dressing (Start with just over half the dressing) and parmesan. Add additional dressing and season with salt and pepper as needed. Serve immediately. Makes 24 servings for 3-5 year olds at lunch/dinner.

- Fruit/Vegetable
- Grain/Bread

*It is recommended that honey should not be fed to children under the age of 1 year.

Source and photo: [http://eatingininstead.com/2012/07/14/broccoli-pasta-salad/](http://eatingininstead.com/2012/07/14/broccoli-pasta-salad/)
Vegetable Calzones

1 1/2 cups chopped broccoli florets
1 1/2 cups corn kernels
1 1/2 cups chopped cauliflower
1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
2/3 cup reduced fat or nonfat ricotta cheese
1/4 cup green onions, thinly sliced
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
All-purpose flour for dusting
20 ounces prepared whole-wheat pizza dough, thawed if frozen
2 teaspoons canola oil

Position racks in upper and lower thirds of oven; preheat to 475° F. Coat two baking sheets with cooking spray. Combine broccoli, corn, cauliflower, mozzarella, ricotta, green onions, basil, garlic powder, salt and pepper in a large bowl. On a lightly floured surface, divide dough into 9 pieces. Roll each piece into a circle. Divide filling evenly and place on one half of each circle, leaving a border of dough. Brush the border with water and fold the top half over the filling. Fold the edges over and crimp with a fork to seal. Make a couple small slits in the top to vent steam; brush each calzone with oil. Transfer the calzones to the prepared baking sheets. Bake the calzones, switching the pans halfway through, until browned on top, about 15 minutes. Let cool slightly before serving. Serve with your favorite marinara sauce for dipping. Makes 18 servings for 3-5 year olds at lunch/dinner.

✓ Fruit/Vegetable
✓ Grain/Bread

Source and photo: www.eatingwell.com