

Pumpkin Fluff Dip

Taking a dip into this recipe is a fun, sensory experience

By their very nature, dips are sensory because dunking a cookie, chip, or finger in and out of a dip is tactile and the smell and taste engage your other senses. This Pumpkin Fluff is perfect for dipping cookies, graham crackers, or fruit. Dip fingers into it or use it like finger paint on a plate or tray. A little bit sweet, a little bit spicy, the flavor appeals to picky eaters, and as the recipe's title suggests, the texture is fluffy.

With each step, we provide sensory suggestions for you to try with your child. You can follow one or all the suggestions – touch, taste, see, smell, and hear.

Happy dipping!





Utensils


- Large mixing bowl
- Measuring cup
- Mixing spoon
- Rubber spatula
- Measuring spoons

Ingredients

- One cup pumpkin puree
- One 3.4 oz. box instant vanilla pudding
- ¼ cup milk
- 2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 8 oz. Cool Whip, thawed
- Favorite cookies, graham crackers, or apple slices for dipping

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
1. Gather the ingredients and utensils.	<div data-bbox="695 1094 743 1146" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div> <div data-bbox="748 1121 1393 1226" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <p>What do they feel like? Are their textures rough or smooth? Does the mixing bowl feel warm or cold? Use a metal bowl if your child likes shiny objects.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="695 1247 743 1299" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-top: 10px;"></div> <div data-bbox="748 1272 1360 1377" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>What happens when you bang the utensils together or against the bowl? Do the teaspoons jingle when you shake them?</p> </div>

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<p>2. Open the can of puree and spoon some into your measuring cup to equal one cup. Pour the puree into the mixing bowl, scraping the sides of the measuring cup with a spatula.</p>	<p> What does the puree smell like?</p> <p> How did the pumpkin get inside the can? You could say, “Remember when we picked a pumpkin at the farm, and we carved our Jack o’ Lantern? People cook the pumpkin flesh and put it into cans so it’s easy for us to cook with. You can even eat the seeds!”</p> <p> Does the puree make any sound when you pour it into the bowl? Talk about what you’re doing with action verbs and descriptive adjectives. “Let’s OPEN the can.” “We’re PUTTING the puree INTO the bowl. Oops, some of the puree is STUCK to the sides of our measuring cup. We’ve got to SCRAPE every last bit out. The measuring cup is EMPTY now.”</p> <p> Talk about the bright orange color. Does the color “pop” in your bowl?</p>
<p>3. Open the box of vanilla instant pudding and add it to the pumpkin puree along with ¼ cup of milk and two teaspoons of pumpkin pie spice.</p>	<p> Smell the pudding mix. Vanilla is very soothing. Talk about what else smells like vanilla in your home – the candle in the family room, the sugar cookies you just bought, or Dad’s favorite vanilla ice cream.</p> <p> As you measure a quarter cup of milk, your child might like some milk in their cup, too.</p> <p> If any pudding mix spills on your work surface, let your child touch it with their hands or feet. Trace some shapes. Is the powder soft and silky or coarse and crumbly?</p> <p> How can you create visual contrast? Sprinkle the dark pumpkin pie spice on top of the white vanilla pudding mix and the milk.</p> <p> Now the fluff is starting to smell like pumpkin pie!</p>

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
<p>4. Fold in the thawed Cool Whip with your spatula.</p>	<p> Who can resist dipping a finger into the container of Cool Whip and the taste of sweetened cream? Try dipping your child's finger into the Cool Whip or putting a little dollop on their foot.</p> <p> Spoon a little bit of Cool Whip on your work surface or your child's tray and try fingerpainting with it. Use descriptive words or phrases such as "The Cool Whip is white and fluffy!". "It feels cold on our hands." "It makes your fingers sticky."</p> <p> Folding is a technique used to gently combine a light, airy ingredient (Cool Whip) with a heavier one (the pumpkin mixture). Talk about how the Cool Whip is LIGHT and the pumpkin mixture is HEAVY.</p> <p> If your child is interested, allow them to stir the mixture. If your child is more hesitant, use the hand under hand strategy and encourage your child to put their hand over yours as you fold in the Cool Whip. They will feel how your hand and your wrist move up, down, and around the bowl to incorporate air and combine the mixture.</p> <p> Let your child watch you fold in the Cool Whip. You could say, "I'm stirring the Cool Whip into the pumpkin" so your child doesn't miss out on any steps. Talk about the colors as they swirl and blend together.</p>
<p>5. Serve immediately with cookies, graham crackers, or apple slices, or refrigerate the dip for up to three days.</p>	<p> Whatever your favorite "dunker" is, it also has a texture, taste, or smell you could talk about with your child. Use action verbs to describe how you're putting the cracker INTO the dip. Or how you SCOOP the dip OUT of the bowl. Maybe you're spreading the dip ON a graham cracker with a spoon.</p> <p> Have fun fingerpainting with the dip and licking your fingertips clean.</p>