



Children in the Kitchen



Children usually love to help in the kitchen. Even young children can help with many tasks. One of the best parts about cooking with children is that they are more likely to try foods they helped to make. The next time you prepare a healthy meal, let children help based on the tasks they can safely do.

Simple Tasks

- Washing vegetables and fruits
- Washing and ripping lettuce or other greens
- Tearing bread into smaller pieces
- Spreading butters, jams, or other spreads onto foods
- Pouring liquids into batter (you measure first)
- Mixing batter, dips, or other dry and wet foods together
- Adding dried seasonings to dishes (you measure first)
- Mashing soft fruits and vegetables
- Placing things in the trash, either after cooking or after a meal
- Using cookie cutters

Have an extra bowl and kitchen tools for children to play with while you cook. Talk about what you are doing to teach them new words and let them smell and taste foods.

More Complex Tasks

- Scooping out vegetables seeds or pits
- Kneading dough
- Peeling vegetables and fruits
- Cutting soft foods with a child-safe knife
- Squeezing oranges, lemons, and limes to make juices
- Cracking eggs
- Beating eggs with an egg beater
- Measuring dry ingredients
- Serving foods
- Help with menu planning

Getting children in the kitchen can lead to confidence in cooking skills, a want to cook meals at home, and more healthy choices.

TIP

Be patient. Letting children help will take longer and make more of a mess while they're learning.