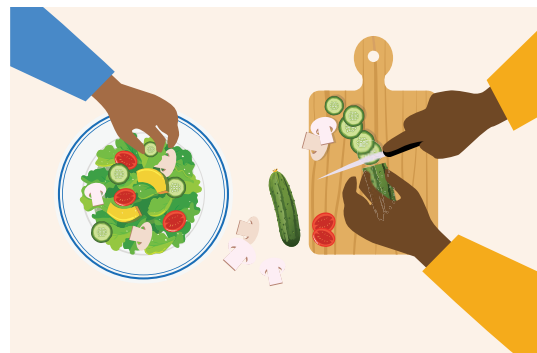




Teaching Children About Healthy Eating and Cooking

Get Children Interested

Getting children interested in cooking helps them have healthy eating habits and try new foods. Children often enjoy cooking and eating the food they make. While you prepare a meal together, talk about healthy eating.



Keep foods that are choking hazards away from small children.

Let Children Help

Here are ways children of different ages can help in the kitchen.

2-year-olds can:

- Wipe tabletops
- Scrub and rinse fruits and vegetables
- Tear lettuce or greens
- Break cauliflower
- Bring ingredients from one place to another

3-year-olds can:

- Wrap potatoes in foil for baking
- Knead and shape dough
- Mix ingredients
- Pour liquids
- Shake liquids in a covered container
- Apply soft spreads
- Put things in the trash, recycle, or compost bin

4-year-olds can:

- Peel oranges or hard-boiled eggs
- Mash bananas or cooked beans with a fork
- Cut parsley and green onions with kid-safe scissors
- Set the table

5 to 6-year-olds can:

- Measure ingredients
- Use an egg beater

Keep in Mind

- 1** Make sure children wash their hands before and after helping in the kitchen.
- 2** Be patient with spills and mistakes. Your goal is to help children learn about healthy eating.



Teaching Children About Healthy Eating and Cooking (continued)

Let Them Be Creative

Let children make a new snack or sandwich from three or four healthy foods



Start with one or two of the following:

- A new kind of bread (whole grain)
- Whole grain crackers
- Mini rice cakes or low-sodium popcorn cakes
- Small, whole grain bagels
- Small pieces of whole wheat pita bread

Spreads could include:

- Low-fat cream cheese or cheese spread
- Low-fat peanut butter
- Bean dip
- Jelly or jam with no sugar added

Toppings could include:

- Slices of apple or banana
- Raisins or other dried fruit
- Strawberries
- Slices of cucumber or squash
- Cherry tomatoes, sliced
- Slices of cheese or hard-boiled egg

Keep in Mind

- 1 When you help children make a new snack or sandwich, talk about why it's healthy.
- 2 Tell them the food groups that make up their snack or sandwich. Explain that eating a variety of foods is healthy.
- 3 Ask why the snack or sandwich tastes good. Is it sweet, juicy, chewy, or crunchy?