

Getting kids involved in the kitchen

Starting from a young age, inspiring children to shop, cook, and prepare food can set them up for a lifetime of healthy eating. It can be fun and rewarding to involve kids in meal preparation.

Here are 4 tips for getting your kids involved:

1. Assign age appropriate activities

- Age 2-3: Wash produce
- Age 3-4: Mixing batter, mashing potatoes
- Age 4-6: Measuring ingredients, setting table
- Age 6-8: Assemble snacks or simple breakfasts
- Age 8-12: Help with meal planning, pack lunches

2. Make them feel like part of the process

- Ask kids to identify their favourite foods or a recipe they would like to make.
- Shop for groceries together; having children pick out a new fruit or vegetable to try.

3. Get excited!

- Show your enthusiasm about healthy eating and involving children in the kitchen
- It will be messier and more time consuming to involve children but it will be worth it. Try not to cry over spilled milk.

4. Keep it fun!

- Try a themed food night (i.e. Meatless Monday, Taco Tuesday).
- Build your own: pizza, sundaes, trail mix, smoothies, etc.



For more information on how to set children up for a lifetime of healthy eating

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Simplifying School Lunches



- **Take advantage of convenience foods:** hummus, unsweetened apple sauce, individual yogurt, cheese, mini pitas, etc.
- **Shake it up!** Try cutting new foods into fun shapes using cookie cutters. Try varying the colours and the textures at lunch to make meals more engaging for kids.
- **Chop & Wash:** Prepare produce at the beginning of the week, to reduce lunch prep time in the evenings.

Aim to choose one item from each food group

Vegetables

- Raw vegetables (carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, etc.)
- Cooked leftover vegetables (broccoli, stir fry vegetables, etc.)
- Vegetable soup
- Salad

Fruit

- Fresh fruit (strawberries, apples, pears, etc.)
- Frozen fruit mix
- Unsweetened dried fruit
- Unsweetened canned fruit

Protein

- Leftover meat, fish, poultry
- Eggs
- Greek yogurt, cheese, milk
- Beans, lentils, chickpeas
- Nut butter/alternative

Grains/ Starches

- Whole grain muffin
- Oatmeal
- Potatoes/sweet potatoes
- Whole grain bread
- Rice, pasta, quinoa
- Whole grain crackers, wraps
- Whole wheat English muffin, pita