

HEALTHBREAK

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Kids in the Kitchen

Bringing children into the kitchen can be very beneficial. With a little flexibility and prep work, you can create a culinary adventure and lay the foundation for a lifetime of healthy eating habits.

Stirring up a child's culinary curiosity can help:

Build basic skills. Having kids in the kitchen can help them hone basic skills, like science, math, literacy, and fine motor skills. For example, if you're baking cookies, count together as you spoon dough onto a cookie sheet. Reading a recipe together can help introduce new words.

Encourage an adventurous palate. Children can be picky eaters. Use the kitchen as an opportunity to encourage kids to taste new things and explain to them how eating healthy foods can make their body grow.

Explore senses. The kitchen is the perfect place for kids to explore their senses. Have them listen for the whir of the mixer. Show them how to watch bread dough rise, smell it in the oven, and taste it in its final form. When

something smells and looks good, kids are more likely to try it.

Boost confidence. Kids love to show what they can do. Working in the kitchen allows them to do just that. Even if the end-results aren't what you would go for, praise their efforts.

Choose cooking-related activities that your child can successfully complete independently or with minimal help. Here are some examples:

- adding ingredients (ex. pouring oats into a mixing bowl)
- sprinkling cheese on top of a casserole
- using cookie cutters
- stirring pancake batter
- putting pepperoni on a pizza

Spending time in the kitchen and cooking together is a fun way to foster a life-long interest in food, promote good nutrition, and make memories in the process.

Source: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cooking-preschool.html>

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