

NEWS RELEASE

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Cooking With Kids

Cooking with kids can be great fun! Not only do they learn the valuable skill of food preparation, but it also gives them the opportunity to increase their vocabulary, practice fine motor skills, learn about nutritious foods, and it aids in building family bonds.

Winter is a perfect time to cook with children since they spend more time indoors. Allow extra time so there is no pressure. For younger cooks starting out, have some patience, focus on simple tasks, and remember they will make a mess. Work together as a family to clean up spills. Let your children plan meals and go grocery shopping with you, make the ingredient list together, and allow them to choose the fruits and vegetables to cook that night.

Here are some tips to make your cooking experience a success:

- Start with weekend breakfast foods; make eggs, muffins or pancakes.
- Create a cooking tool drawer for your children.
- Help them make an apron or chef hat to wear when cooking.
- Good cooks of all ages always wash their hands before cooking.
- Expect spills and messes.
- Children have short attention spans. Give them quick and simple jobs. Keep instructions simple and give instructions one-step at a time.
- Children get excited and forget. Repeat directions as often as needed.
- Young cooks need constant supervision.
- Give children jobs to help with cleanup.
- Provide children with positive feedback to encourage continued participation.



For more information, contact University of California Cooperative Extension, 530-889-7350, or visit us online at http://ucanr.edu/sites/Nutrition_BEST/.

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