



# Mealtime Minutes

## Cooking With Kids

**Adults who develop cooking skills tend to enjoy cooking more. Children who learn cooking skills are more likely to increase their consumption of more nutritious foods, including fruits and vegetables. Cooking together helps create family traditions and provides opportunities to share family stories.**

### TIPS FOR PARENTS

How can children help?

**Children who are 2-3 years old can:**

- Help set the table with napkins and utensils
- Wash fruits and vegetables
- Clean counters and tables

**Children who are 4-5 years old can:**

- Mix and stir ingredients
- Pour liquids
- Garnish or “decorate” dishes
- Clear the table after dinner

**Children who are over 5 years old can:**

- Help read recipes
- Measure ingredients
- Cut or chop fruits and vegetables with a table knife or child-safe cutting implements
- Peel vegetables such as potatoes or carrots

Use your time in the kitchen together to talk about how foods look, smell, and feel. Children learn best when they use all of their senses. Remember that it doesn't have to be perfect! Children learn by trying. Use your time together in the kitchen to tell family stories about learning to cook.

