

## Yes, Kids Belong in the Kitchen!

Most children like to cook, and want to learn cooking techniques. Most importantly, children will often eat and enjoy what they cook!

**When we take time to teach children to cook, we set them up with skills they will use for the rest of their lives.** Having the skills to prepare and cook food, allows us to put our knowledge of healthy eating into action. Encouraging kids to cook with vegetables, fruit, whole grains, milk products, and beans/legumes, is great way for them to try new foods, and learn that healthy eating tastes great!

### What are the benefits of getting kids in the kitchen?

- Cooking is a fun, hands-on way to learn
- Food skills promote a lifetime of healthy eating
- Kids can build confidence and be creative
- Food skills are needed to prepare meals safely
- Cooking as a family passes on family and cultural traditions



### What are food skills?

**Food Skills** are the skills we use to provide safe, healthy and culturally acceptable meals. Some examples include:

- Knowledge of healthy eating and food safety
- Meal planning
- Creating and modifying recipes
- Preparing and cooking foods

Cooking with children is a hands on job: it's messy and there's plenty of room for creativity. There's also a sense of achievement at the end.

### Are kids old enough to cook?

You are never too young to help out in the kitchen! Encourage children to get involved today! Every child is different, and may be ready to start practicing different types of food skills at different times. As children learn to prepare recipes, they may need your help or supervision with tasks such as chopping, and using the oven or stove. For information on cooking with kids of different ages, visit [www.eatright.ontario.ca](http://www.eatright.ontario.ca)