

# Cooking with your Child!

Cooking with kids has been shown to improve their diets and willingness to try new foods. Here are some ideas on how to include your child in the kitchen!

## Age 0-2

- Push buttons with assistance
- Shake plastic bottles
- Tear lettuce and greens

## Age 2-5

- Add pre-measured ingredients.
- Mash, mix, and sprinkle cooled ingredients
- Assemble pizza and casseroles
- Cut soft foods with butter knife
- Rinse produce
- Spread ingredients with spoon, brush, or fingers

## Age 5-8

- Measure liquids and dry ingredients
- Use scissors to cut herbs, lettuce, etc.
- Peel eggs and oranges
- Set the table

## Age 8-11

- Use a can opener
- Chop produce with a regular knife
- Handle hot ingredients
- Grate and peel ingredients

## Age 12+

- Chop foods with chef's knife
- Boil, bake, and sauté

## Plan Together

Before the week begins, have your child look at recipes online or in a cook book with you. Encourage meals with a lot of fruits and vegetables. Gather recipes and make a shopping list. Have your children help pick out and gather the ingredients while shopping.

## Share

## Knowledge

Cooking and preparing food are a great time to learn all sorts of skills. They learn how to follow directions and practice fine motor and problem solving skills. Talk about the foods-their names, where they come from, the colors, what they taste like. When they are older have them figure out how to double or half a recipe.

## Safety

Always supervise children in the kitchen. Always be on the side of caution.

Give simple directions and model the task for them.

Be patient! It may take time for them to master a new skill. Be prepared for mess and have them help you clean it up.