



# Healthy Kids in the Kitchen

Involving children in the kitchen is an excellent way to teach basic skills, encourage the tasting of new foods, and boost confidence. Involving children at meal time can also go beyond the kitchen. Serving meals “family style” and creating positive meal environments are excellent ways to build and support healthy attitudes and habits with food that will last well into adulthood. Below are some activities that children can participate in by age group.

## 2-3 years old

- Add ingredients and stir
- Mash soft fruits or vegetables
- Spread peanut butter or jam on bread
- Place trash in the garbage
- Put bread in the toaster
- Wipe counters
- Rinse a can of beans
- Tear lettuce
- Wrap potatoes in foil
- Wash produce



## 4-5 years old

- Whisk eggs
- Mix and roll dough
- Wash fruits and vegetables
- Set the table
- Peel hard boiled eggs
- Find ingredients
- Cut soft foods with a dull butter knife
- Measure liquid and dry ingredients
- Form round shapes with hands

## 6-8 years old

- Clean surfaces before and after use
- Gather utensils and ingredients
- Grease baking pans
- Grate cheese
- Crush crackers in a bag with a rolling pin
- Open cans or containers
- Peel fruits and vegetables
- Knead dough
- Break eggs
- Wash dishes

## **Make it Fun!**

- ◇ Be creative
- ◇ Provide activities to encourage children to try new foods
- ◇ Make meal time stress free by talking about positive and fun things

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# Recipes for Kids in the Kitchen



Depending on the age of the children, they can retrieve ingredients, measure, stir, pour, place the apples on, or flip these delicious pancakes over.

## Apple and Cinnamon Pancakes

- 1 cup enriched flour
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3/4 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 cup apple, peeled and thinly sliced

In a bowl, mix the flour, egg, sugar, cinnamon, and milk. Heat a frying pan and spray with nonstick spray. Pour in enough batter to make a pancake. Quickly arrange apple slices on the top of the uncooked batter and brush the top with a little butter. When the underside is golden, flip the pancake taking care not to dislodge the apple slices. Spray the spatula with a little cooking spray so apples will slide off easily. Make 16 servings for 3-5 year olds at lunch/dinner.

- ✓ Grains/Breads

Source: [www.kidspot.com.au](http://www.kidspot.com.au)

Photo: [www.insanitytheory.net](http://www.insanitytheory.net)

## Pinto Bean and Cheese Tacos

- 1- 15 ounce can pinto beans, rinsed
- 3/4 cup salsa, divided
- 1 cup lettuce
- 6 hard taco shells
- 1 cup low-fat shredded cheese

In a small microwave-proof bowl, combine beans and 1/2 cup salsa. Microwave on high until hot, 1 to 2 minutes. Tear lettuce into bite-size pieces. Divide the bean mixture among the taco shells and top with lettuce, cheese, and remaining 1/4 cup salsa. Makes 6 servings for 3-5 year olds at lunch/dinner.

- ✓ Vegetables/Fruits
- ✓ Meat/Meat Alternates
- ✓ Grains/Breads

Source and photo: [www.realsimple.com](http://www.realsimple.com)



There is a job for everyone in this simple taco recipe. Help the little ones wash and tear the lettuce. Other children can assemble the taco ingredients, count taco shells, measure ingredients, stir, rinse the beans, and push the microwave buttons.