

Getting the family involved in cooking

- Keep a menu for the week on the fridge and tonight's recipe on the counter. Whoever gets home first can get the meal started.
- Kids of all ages can help set the table. Even preschoolers can have fun carrying unbreakable placemats, utensils or plastic cups to the table.
- Let kids as young as 2 or 3 years old help scrub potatoes or tear lettuce leaves for a salad. Once a little older, they can help measure, mix and stir ingredients that are not on the stove.
- Invite kids to read recipes and help collect the ingredients and utensils needed.
- Older kids can be responsible for at least part of the meal – a vegetable platter with dip, a salad or even dessert.
- Just about everyone can help in the clean-up after a meal. Find ways to make the task more fun. See who can do it the fastest on different nights, play favourite music during the process or reward kids for involvement. Make a chart and give kids points towards a prize for every time they help in making meals, clear the table, wash dishes, sweep the floor or take out the trash. Ultimately, teach kids that meal preparation and clean up are responsibilities of being part of a family.

Top 5 Ways to Involve the Family in Grocery Shopping:

1. If anyone says “We have nothing to eat”, encourage them to add a couple of healthy options to the grocery list.
2. Minimize stress by choosing a shopping time that works for everyone who will be going. Being too rushed or hungry can make the job extra challenging.
3. Encourage kids to help find healthy foods that offer good value for the price. Have them look for key information on the Nutrition Facts table and compare different sized packages and prices.
4. To learn more about variety, encourage kids to choose a healthy item they have never eaten before. For example, an exotic fruit or uncommon vegetable.
5. Ask if your store has a grocery tour program and attend as a family. Some stores offer educational school tours and kids cooking classes.

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