



Read to Succeed  
Parent Tips for Elementary-Age Children

## Cooking Together

It's easy, healthy, and fun to cook with your school-age child!

- ★ **Plan together.** Ask your child what he would like to make for a meal. Look through cookbooks for recipe ideas. Plan the whole menu together, talking about healthy food choices for strong bodies. Include fruits, vegetables, proteins and whole grains. You may have to steer your child in a healthy direction, but respect his preferences and choose together.
- ★ **From start to finish.** Include your child in the whole process. Plan, shop, prepare, and serve the meal together. Make an announcement that he was the special chef today! Have him help in the cleanup process too. Your child will feel proud and want to be involved more often.
- ★ **Try something new.** Go to the grocery store with your child and explore new ingredients. There are many different fruits and vegetables available that are fun to try, such as fresh coconut. Ask your grocer how to know when foods are ripe. Look in the health food isle for grains unfamiliar to you, such as quinoa. Choose something together. Research on the internet or in cookbooks how to prepare it. Sample it raw, cooked, and in the recipe. Talk about what the food looks, smells, tastes, and feels like. Decide if it is a food you enjoy!
- ★ **Plan ahead.** Cooking together requires extra time and patience, so choose a time when both of you can enjoy the experience! Be sure to provide safety supervision.
- ★ **Talk together.** Share with your child special food memories, such as baking with your parents. Talk about your favorite foods.

