



**UW**  
**Extension**

*Nutrition Education Program - Brown County*  
*1150 Bellevue Street, Green Bay, WI 54302-2259*  
*Phone: 920-391-4610*

## Ease The Kids Into Helping With Meals

Back in the legendary Homemaker Era of the 1950's and 60's children weren't often welcome in the kitchen. Mom didn't want the little ones underfoot while she cooked; besides, she had plenty of time during the day to bond with them. But in today's harried culture, parents want to snatch every moment they can. A special issue of *Cooking Light* magazine, *Quick & Easy Weeknights*, suggests the following ways to include kids in the food preparation scheme. Here's what they can do.

### Ages 3 - 6

- Add ingredients to a bowl
- Fill the napkin holder
- Gather ingredients and supplies
- Help set and clear the table
- Peel finger foods like bananas and hard-boiled eggs
- Strip carrots using a vegetable peeler
- Roll dough, meatballs, peanut butter cereal balls, and so on
- Tear salad greens, break broccoli and cauliflower into florets and snap beans
- Wash fruit and vegetables; scrub with a brush
- Clean plastic utensils and equipment

### Ages 6 - 8

- Use an egg beater
- Fill up and level measuring spoons and cups
- Hand-juice citrus fruits
- Set and clear table
- Shuck corn
- Use small, dull knife to cut semi-soft foods

Ease the kids into helping with the Meals

Ages 8 - 10

Assist in making recipes that don't require more than a few ingredients

Use a can opener

Use a microwave oven

Ages 10 - 12

Grate fruits and vegetables

Shred cheese

Use a conventional oven

Use a kitchen knife

Teenagers

Prepare recipes with multiple ingredients

Work more independently in the kitchen

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