

# HEALTHY AT HOME

## Cooking with Children



Making a quick dish in the kitchen may not seem like the perfect teaching moment but it could provide several benefits. When inviting children to help in the kitchen start slow and think about the age and capability of the child to keep things safe. Don't cry over spilled milk because it is most likely going to be a messy adventure. However, a messy kitchen provides a teachable moment to learn about cleaning up and keeping the kitchen safe for children. For smaller children things like stirring and mashing can help with dexterity while older children can help with measuring and learn math skills about fractions and measurements. Research has shown that children who help in the kitchen eat more vegetables and are more open to try new foods. Try making an adult food that might not have a desirable texture for a child like hummus into a kid friendly food like peanut butter hummus. Instead of using the stove or oven, teach children new ways to cook like using a slow cooker or making smoothies with a blender. Involvement in the kitchen, even pouring contents into a slow cooker, could provide a younger child with an interest in cooking. Older children can learn to read a recipe and proper knife safety when cooking with a slow cooker. No matter the dish that is being made in the kitchen the addition of children can be fun and educational for everyone and it may just get a picky eater trying new foods. For more information and fun recipes on cooking with children visit:

<https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/nutrition-age/children/kids-kitchen>

### MINDFULNESS SERIES

#### USEFUL RESOURCES



Rutgers Cooperative Extension

[njaes.rutgers.edu](http://njaes.rutgers.edu)



Get Moving - Get Healthy NJ

[gmghnj.rutgers.edu](http://gmghnj.rutgers.edu)



Get Moving - Get Healthy NJ Workforce

[gmghnj.rutgers.edu/workforce](http://gmghnj.rutgers.edu/workforce)



Family & Community Health Sciences Department

[njaes.rutgers.edu/fchs](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/fchs)

### Tip.....

When starting children in the kitchen for the first time having them help with everything might be overwhelming to both adult and child. Pick tasks that the child will be successful and comfortable with and tell them what you want them to do ahead of time. Easy introduction tasks will make everyone more comfortable when beginning.

## Healthy Recipe

### In Instant Pot One-Pot Pasta with Cherry Tomatoes & Basil

1 Tablespoon Olive Oil (optional), plus more

1 small yellow, diced

¼ teaspoon red peppers flakes

1 lb. uncooked short pasta (penne, fusilli, or bowtie)

1 teaspoon salt

4-5 cups water

1 pint cherry tomatoes

1 bunch basil, torn or sliced

¼ drained capers

1 cup shredded vegan Parmesan cheese

On the Instant Pot, select Saute (Medium), heat the oil in the pot

until hot. Add the onion & saute until softened & golden, 3-5 minutes. Add garlic & pepper, saute 1 minute longer. Press cancel.

Add the pasta to the inner pot of the Instant Pot. Add salt & water until just covered, or about ¼" above the pasta. Add the tomatoes on top without stirring.

Lock the lid on the Instant Pot & ensure steam release & is set to the sealed position. Select Pressure Cook (Low) & set the cook time for half the cook time on the pasta package, rounding down. Example: if the pasta package calls for 10-12 minutes on the stove, set the cook time for 5 minutes.

Once the cook time is complete, immediately click release the pressure & remove the lid. Add fresh basil & capers, then stir to complete. Drizzle with a little olive oil if desired. Serve immediately with Parmesan cheese, salt & pepper to taste.

For added protein- stir in a cup of cooked chickpeas, cannellini beans, or serve with vegan Italian sausage. You could also wilt some spinach or arugula at the end.

<https://www.bluezones.com/recipe/instant-pot-one-pot-pasta-with-cherry-tomatoes-and-basil/>



#### **\*\*Disclaimer\*\***

Always consult a qualified medical professional before changing, starting, or stopping any part of your healthcare plan, including nutrition, physical activity, or exercise. Be sure to follow all work-place safety rules, procedures and policies, and check with supervision before conducting any exercises or recommendations contained in this newsletter while at work. Rutgers Cooperative Extension does not assume any liability for injuries or health concerns arising from participation in activities mentioned or outlined in this newsletter.

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## More Resources....

[choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov)

[njaes.rutgers.edu/health](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/health)

[getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu](http://getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu)

Family & Community Health Sciences  
Healthy Recipes

[vimeo.com/getmovinggethealthynj/videos](http://vimeo.com/getmovinggethealthynj/videos)

Explore our healthy recipe videos!

[EatingWell.com](http://EatingWell.com) has lots of healthy recipes.

Mayo Clinic Healthy Recipes

[mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/recipes](http://mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/recipes)

The Food Network's Healthy Dinners in 40 Minutes or Less

[foodnetwork.com/healthy/packages/healthy-every-week/quick-and-simple/healthy-dinners-in-40-minutes-or-less](http://foodnetwork.com/healthy/packages/healthy-every-week/quick-and-simple/healthy-dinners-in-40-minutes-or-less)

## More Resources

[Cooking with Kids, PBS Archive](#)

[Cooking with Kids, For Parents](#)

[Cooking with Kids, Eating Well](#)

[Healthy Kids Recipes & Meals](#)

[20 No-Bake Treats to Make with your Kids](#)



## 8 Benefits of BAKING with Kids

1. Builds Math Skills
2. Enriches Oral Vocabulary
3. Teaches Scientific Concepts
4. Boosts Reading Skills
5. Introduces Life Skills
6. Develops Fine Motor Skills
7. Promotes Social Skills
8. Provides Fun "Connect" Time!

One Time Through



Baking is how you start kids at cooking in the kitchen.

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