

# Wee Learn

Wee Experts  
(5-6 Years):  
8 Fun Ways To Teach  
Kids About Healthy  
Eating



Making children eat their peas doesn't exactly get them "jazzed about healthy eating", but there are plenty of fun ways to introduce them to the subject.

Good nutrition is all about maintaining simple habits. When it comes to kids, involving them in meal planning and preparation and introducing nutrition into everyday play can help set them up for success. Try these fun ideas and they'll learn to love a healthy lifestyle in no time.

## **Involve them in Menu Planning**

Children are more likely to look forward to eating healthy meals if they are included in the menu planning. Choose a day and time in the week where you can sit with your children to plan out breakfast, school lunches, family dinners, and even desserts. This is an opportunity to point out and discuss how healthy each meal you have planned together is.

## **Colourful Presentation**

Use colourful plates, utensils, and cups to add an extra "dash" of fun to a "well-balanced" meal. When foods are colourful and visually pleasing, children are more likely to try them. Make each meal colourful, ask your child to select foods by colour, i.e. yellow peppers, green apples, red fruits, white milk to create a well-balanced meal. It's a great way to teach children colours and nutrition!

## **Pretend Play**

Every child loves to pretend play, so why not turn meal prep into pretend play? Assign family members roles and pretend you are cooking and serving a meal at a restaurant. Children can help plan the menu, or be your 'sous' chef, or a server and then of course the 'customer' as they eat! It's a fun way to get them involved in the meal prep process for the family.



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## Meal Prep

Helping to prepare meals is one of the best ways for children to get excited about nutrition. Children can get involved in washing the vegetables and fruits, or tearing up lettuce for salad, etc. As children get older, they can help season poultry, measure out ingredients, and perform “hands on tasks” such as making a burger.

## Kid - Friendly Kitchen Utensils

As kids get older and are ready for more advanced kitchen duties, invest in kid-friendly utensils. This will make them feel special, that they have a special area in the kitchen for their own utensils and cooking tools.

## Ready to Cook on their Own

As children become more comfortable in the kitchen, let them choose recipes that they can prepare on their own. You can start with breakfast, by asking them to make their own toast, or asking them to make simple dinners for the family like pizza (always making sure you are there to supervise the oven).

## Kitchen Safety

Through out their journey in the kitchen, teach children the importance of kitchen and food safety, such as washing hands before and after meal prep, when to and not to touch hot surfaces, etc. Also, teach them what is ‘ok’ and not ‘ok’ to eat in the kitchen while cooking.

## Eating as a Family

Eating together as a family and talking about the meal that was prepared is a great way to teach children about eating healthy. As you are chatting as a family during meals, let children play with and explore their meals, so that they will know what foods they like or don't like. The more children are involved in meal preparation and cooking, the more likely they are to eat and choose healthy foods.

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