

Play with your food! Getting your children to eat homemade dinners with less hassle.

Hearing the phrase “don’t play with your food,” may bring you back to a time where your parents would insist you not play with your food at the dinner table. In fact, you may have muttered that same phrase to your child. However, what if the answer to the rejection of specific food items, like our poor vegetables, was answered from playing with their food?

Picky eaters will cause hassle and aggravation across any dinner table in the country. Most parents will experience a time their child will downright refuse to eat a meal because it “looks funny,” or “smells weird.” Many parents work hard all day and come home to prepare a meal, only to have their child reject the hard work, love, and care they put into cooking a nutritious dinner for their family. Well, it’s time to get your kids in the kitchen playing, watching, and helping with the food they will be eating for dinner!

A great deal of research suggests getting your children involved in the preparation and cooking process, will decrease the number of times they reject a meal or food item. Getting your child to assist in the shopping, all the way to prepping and cooking the meal are ways that will help promote healthy eating habits in the future. Your children may then become children who are willing to taste rather than reject food. The idea of kids in the kitchen, not only assists in getting your child to eat, but also gives you the opportunity to talk to your children about healthy eating behaviors and enjoy some fun family time.

Some may think that their child is just too young to be helping in the kitchen, but researchers suggest children as young as three can assist. Although, the kitchen may be messier and distractions may occur, that’s ok, don’t pressure your kiddo let them have fun with you!

Start off small. Buying dough and making homemade pizzas may be an excellent place to start. Your child will get the feel of the squishy dough and will be able to play with it before cooking the pizza. Let them choose the toppings they want on their pizza, and include vegetables they can place on their pizza. It will be a colorful and fun experience for everyone. Slowly increase the difficulty of the meal until your child can assist you with more complicated meals. Maybe, under supervision, they can put the diced vegetables into the pot and stir them around.

Allowing your children to participate, will give them the chance to see what is in their food, and provide them with the incentive to try what they helped make with mom and dad. Cooking with you will give them a sense of accomplishment because they helped make what everyone is eating for dinner. It is a way to get your child away from that TV screen, and in the kitchen communicating with you. So tonight, go home put your chef hat on your kiddo and start cooking! Just remember safety first, make sure you all wash your hands and have fun!

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