Make meal time easy! Try to plan ahead menus for the week, get ingredients that can be used in multiple meals, and keep your kitchen stocked with quick-to-fix foods like rice, pasta, beans, and frozen or canned favorite fruits and vegetables!

2. Get the whole family involved from start to finish! Family members can be assigned different jobs to make a speedy meal! Adults can be in charge of the entrée, older kids can make a salad and little ones can help set the table, safely stir ingredients, or wash fruits and vegetables. Start slow and give your child time to master each task.

3. Make meal-time fun! Have your children pick a theme night like a fiesta night with tacos or Italian night with pasta or home-made pizza!

4. Remember to practice food safety! Have everyone wash their hands with soapy water for at least 20 seconds and use clean surfaces and utensils after each use when making meals.

COOKING TASKS FOR KIDS!

AGES 3-5 Kids are still fine tuning motor skills at this age! Give tasks focused on mashing, grabbing, and tearing ingredients.
Wash fruits and vegetables, tear lettuce for salads, squeeze lemons, gentle stirring, mash ingredients, knead dough, spread sauce

AGES 5-7 Coordination and motor skills are more developed! This is a great time to introduce them to recipes since they are just starting to read and write.
Set table, scoop batter, measure and count items, mix dry ingredients, crack and whisk eggs, chop soft fruits and veggies with a small "kid-friendly" pairing knife, read along with recipes

AGES 8-12 Kids are becoming more independent at this age! Lay out ingredients and give them simple recipes to follow.
Make sandwiches, toast bread, peel veggies, use can opener

AGES 13 & Up Teens may be ready to master different equipment in the kitchen. Make sure they know proper safety skills before starting.
Make recipes on the stove, bake on their own, use a blender, food processor, designate them as lead cook on one night of the week if they have mastered their kitchen skills!

Remember children develop and learn at their own pace so adjust the suggestions to suit your little one’s skill! Always remember to supervise and teach your children about kitchen safety!

WHY IS COOKING WITH FAMILY IMPORTANT?

- Allow parents to be role models to create a supportive environment that encourages healthy eating!
- Teaches children that taking the time and effort to eat together as a family is important!
- Children will become more familiar and are more likely to try new foods like fruits and vegetables when they help prepare them!
- Helps provide quality family time to tune into your loved ones without any distractions!

Use your phone camera to take a picture of the QR code to bring you to foodhero.org for family friendly recipes!

Scan me
Chicken Cabbage Stir-Fry

GATHER THE FAMILY TO COOK AND ENJOY THIS DELICIOUS, SIMPLE MEAL TOGETHER!

MAKES 6 SERVINGS | SERVING SIZE: 1 CUP

INGREDIENTS
3 chicken breast halves  
1 teaspoon oil  
3 cups green cabbage, shredded (1/2 head)  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder or 1 clove garlic finely chopped  
1/2 cup water  
1 tablespoon soy sauce

DIRECTIONS
Cut chicken breasts into strips.  
Heat oil in a skillet over medium-high heat (350 degrees in an electric skillet).  
Add chicken strips and stir fry, turning constantly until done.  
Add cabbage and sauté 2 minutes until cabbage is crisp-tender. Mix cornstarch and seasonings; add water and soy sauce, and mix until smooth. Stir sauce into chicken/cabbage mixture. Cook until sauce has thickened and chicken is coated, about 1 minute. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes: Add bell peppers, carrots, broccoli, or any other favorite veggies for more color and you guessed it... nutrients!

For Dessert Try...

Yogurt Parfaits

MAKES 8 SERVINGS | SERVING SIZE: 1 CUP

INGREDIENTS
2 cups fresh fruit or unsweetened frozen fruit (thawed, drained, and cut up)  
2 cups low fat yogurt or Greek yogurt  
Optional toppings - 4 tablespoons raisins, dried fruit, chopped nuts, sunflower seeds, crunchy cereal, or granola

DIRECTIONS
Wash fruit and cut into bite sized chunks or thaw and drain frozen fruit.  
Put 1/4 cup fruit into bottom of four bowls. Top with 1/4 cup yogurt. Add another 1/4 cup fruit and top with 1/4 cup yogurt.  
Top with optional ingredients if desired.  
Chill until ready to serve.
Our Favorite Family Friendly Recipes!

**Mexican Vegetable and Beef Skillet**

*MAKES 8 SERVINGS | SERVING SIZE: 1 CUP*

**Ingredients**
- 1/2 pound lean ground beef (15% fat)
- 5/4 cup onion, chopped (3/4 cup medium onion)
- 1 cup uncooked white rice
- 1 can (15 ounces) diced tomatoes (about 2 medium fresh tomatoes)
- 1 1/2 cups vegetables fresh, frozen, or canned and drained (try one or more: zucchini, bell pepper, broccoli, corn, cauliflower)
- 1 3/4 cups water
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1/4 cup cilantro
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) shredded cheese

**Directions**
- Cook beef in a large skillet over medium-high heat (350 degrees in an electric skillet) until no longer pink. Drain fat.
- Add onion and cook until soft, about 5 to 10 minutes.
- Bring to a boil; cover; reduce heat; simmer until pasta is almost tender, stirring occasionally.
- Add rice, tomatoes, vegetables, water, and spices. Stir and bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat to medium low (250 degrees in an electric skillet). Cover, and simmer for 20 minutes or until rice is cooked. Add more water if needed.
- Remove from heat. Sprinkle with cheese and cover for 1 to 2 minutes to allow cheese to melt.

**Notes**
- Try ground turkey or 1 1/2 cups of cooked beans (a 15-ounce can, drained and rinsed) in place of beef.
- Try brown rice and simmer for 20 more minutes.
- Try whole wheat pasta instead to increase fiber and make this a whole grain meal.

**One Pan Chicken Alfredo**

*MAKES 9 SERVINGS | SERVING SIZE: 3/4 CUP*

**Ingredients**
- 1 large chicken breast, cubed (about one cup)
- 2 tablespoons of oil
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1/3 cups chicken broth
- 1/3 cups nonfat or 1% milk
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika or chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) mozzarella cheese

**Directions**
- In a skillet over medium-high heat, brown chicken in oil.
- Add onion and cook until soft, about 5 to 10 minutes.
- Bring to a boil; cover; reduce heat; simmer until pasta is almost tender, stirring occasionally.
- Add broccoli, cover, and cook until broccoli is tender.
- Remove from heat and stir in cheese.

**Notes**
- Use whole wheat pasta instead to increase fiber and make this a whole grain meal.

**Fruity French Toast Casserole**

*MAKES 8 SERVINGS | SERVING SIZE: 1 CUP*

**Ingredients**
- 1 English muffin (try whole grain)
- 2 tablespoons reduced fat or fat-free cream cheese (see notes)
- 2 tablespoons sliced strawberries
- 2 tablespoons blueberries
- 2 tablespoons crushed pineapple
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) shredded cheese
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 3/4 cups water
- 3/4 cup onion, chopped (3/4 medium onion)
- 1/2 pound lean ground beef (15% fat)
- 1 can (15 ounces) diced tomatoes (about 2 medium fresh tomatoes)
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 large chicken breast, cubed (about one cup)

**Directions**
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- Split open the English muffin and toast the halves until lightly browned.
- Spread cream cheese on both halves.
- Divide the fruit between the two muffin halves and arrange on top of cream cheese.

**Notes**
- Use any combination of fruit for topping the pizza, such as apples, raisins, pears or peaches.
- No cream cheese? Try peanut butter, sunflower seed butter, or any yogurt! Sprinkle with nuts or seeds for added crunch.

**Ranch Dip**

*MAKES 2 CUPS | SERVING SIZE: 2 TABLESPOONS*

**Ingredients**
- 1 cup low-fat cottage cheese
- 1 cup low-fat plain yogurt, depending on thickness desired
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley

**Directions**
- For a chunky dip, mix cottage cheese, yogurt and seasonings of your choice in a bowl.
- For a smoother dip, mash cottage cheese with a fork before adding yogurt and seasonings.

**Notes**
- Serve with your favorite fresh vegetables!