

OFFICIAL RULES & TERMS

Healthy Kids Cook-Off

Everything families need to know before entering.

No purchase necessary to enter or win. A purchase or payment of any kind will not increase a participant's chances of winning. Void where prohibited by law.

PARENT QUICK VIEW

The Cook-Off at a glance

WHO Children in PreK through 5th grade	ENTRY One recipe per child or team	SUBMIT Recipe, story, photo and short video
TIME Recipes must take 45 minutes or less	FINALISTS Top 8 nationwide in each division	VOTING 10 days of public voting

ELIGIBILITY

Who can participate

The Healthy Kids Cook-Off is open to children in PreK through 5th grade. All entries must be submitted by a parent or legal guardian who is 18 or older. Children cannot create accounts or submit entries on their own.

PreK & Me

Ages 3–6

The child completes 80–90% of the recipe. Caregivers may assist with up to 20%, limited to higher-risk safety tasks such as knife handling or heat sources.

Little Cooks

1st–2nd Grade

The child independently plans, prepares and completes 100% of the recipe.

Rising Chefs

3rd–5th Grade

The child independently plans, prepares and completes 100% of the recipe.

Cook With Your Bestie

Two-person team

Both participants must be in PreK through 5th grade. Both children must be actively involved and describe their individual contributions in the personal narrative.

Parents may supervise for safety, gather ingredients, taste, take photos or record the video. The recipe itself should reflect the child's creativity and skills.

GETTING IN

How to enter the National Cook-Off

Registration opens Winter 2027. Families may enter through either of the following paths:

VIP Club Members

Active VIP Club subscribers may submit an entry directly during the National submission window.

General Public

Any eligible family may submit one free entry during the open public window.

Each child may submit one recipe to the National Cook-Off. Homeschool families are welcome to enter.

RECIPE REQUIREMENTS

Recipe rules

Every recipe must follow these guidelines. Entries that do not meet the requirements may be disqualified.

MUST DO

- 45 minutes or less, start to finish
- Main or savory dishes: include at least 2 whole vegetables
- Desserts or sweets: include at least 1 whole vegetable
- Use simple, budget-friendly, grocery-store ingredients
- Be an Original Creation or a Healthy Recipe Makeover
- Be repeatable so the child could recreate it the same way again

NOT ALLOWED

- Pan-frying, deep-frying or cooking oils
- Excessive butter, processed fats or refined sugar

Healthy Little Cooks may test and verify submitted recipes and lightly edit finalist or winning recipes for safety, clarity, measurements, wording or formatting.

ENTRY CHECKLIST

What to submit

1. **Recipe name**
2. **Ingredient list** — Complete and measured.
3. **Step-by-step directions** — Clear enough for someone else to follow.
4. **Personal narrative** — 500 words or less. Explain why the child chose the recipe, how ingredients were selected and, for teams, how the children worked together.
5. **Finished dish photo** — At least one clear image.
6. **Recipe video** — Two minutes or less, showing the child preparing the dish and explaining the steps.
7. **Signed forms** — Participation Agreement and any other required forms.

For public display, only participants' first names are published. Caregiver names for PreK & Me entries are collected for internal records but are not displayed publicly.

SCORING

How recipes are judged

Every eligible recipe is scored out of 100 points by an independent panel using the same criteria.

Judging category	Points
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Presentation: photo and video	30
Creativity and personal story	30
Nutrition and ingredients	20
Recipe quality	20

PUBLIC VOTING

Voting

The top 8 scorers nationwide in each division are posted for 10 days of public voting. The top vote-getter in each division is named National Champion.

Voting is monitored for fraud, including bots, click farms, VPN manipulation and vote-buying. Healthy Little Cooks may remove suspicious votes or disqualify entrants who attempt to manipulate results, without prior notice.

WINNING

Prizes

Prize details vary by competition and will be announced before each event. All decisions made by the judges and voting system are final.

Winners are responsible for any taxes on prizes received. National Finalists must return required eligibility and tax forms, including IRS Form W-9 when applicable, within 48 hours of notification or forfeit the prize.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

More questions

What if my child does not win?

Every child who participates should feel proud of what they created. The Cook-Off is designed to build confidence, encourage children to try new foods and help families enjoy time together in the kitchen.

Can children with food allergies or dietary needs participate?

Yes. Because the competition is virtual, families can prepare recipes with ingredients that work for their child's dietary needs. Allergy-friendly recipes are welcome.

What other legal terms apply?

Judging, scoring and vote tracking are proprietary and confidential. Outcomes are final and not subject to appeal. Healthy Little Cooks may adjust timelines, modify or combine divisions if participation is low, or substitute a prize of equal or lesser value. If an in-person showcase is added, additional chaperone and travel agreements may be required.

This document is a plain-language guide. If it differs from the Official Competition Rules & Voting Regulations, the Official Rules govern.

CONTACT

Still have questions?

A member of the Healthy Little Cooks team will be happy to help. Add your contact email, registration link and official rules link below before publishing this document.

Contact email	[Add email address]
Registration page	[Add registration link]
Official Rules	[Add PDF or webpage link]

Healthy Little Cooks — Where wellness meets real life.