

Why Kids Should Learn How to Cook Thanksgiving Dinner

It's Thanksgiving time and kitchens all across the United States are bustling with preparations.

But unless I miss my guess, there's something conspicuously absent from many of those same kitchens: children, teenagers, and young adults.

The reason? Many young people simply [don't know how to cook](#). Sure, they can throw a pizza in the oven or place refrigerated cookie dough on the sheet, but when it comes to making a good, old-fashioned meal from [scratch](#), they're rather clueless.

As a result, they sit around in the living room, rough-housing on the floor, watching football, and waiting for the call to "come and get it!" Parents, grandparents, and other older relations meanwhile rush around preparing the meal, not wanting extra people underfoot and telling themselves that the kids aren't interested anyway and can't be taken away from their fun to actually take on responsibilities in the kitchen.

But does this attitude do a disservice to the next generation? I think it may for several reasons.

For starters, it deprives young people of the sense of accomplishment which cooking knowledge brings. As the *New York Times* noted earlier in the year, many millennials are [flocking to box meal kits](#) such as those provided by Blue Apron because they teach them how to cook, a skill they are lacking, but want to learn.

Secondly, keeping young people out of the kitchen deprives them of the opportunity to interact with older family members, learn about family traditions and heritage, and build bonds over shared experiences.

Finally, shooing the younger generation out of the kitchen – both before and after the meal – denies them important opportunities to take responsibility for others and think less of themselves. Considering that the millennial generation has long been accused of being the [most entitled generation](#) around, they may very well welcome the chance to prove themselves otherwise for a change.

A number of years ago, my young cousins began helping with small tasks for the Thanksgiving meal hosted at their house. Last year, those same cousins, now fresh out of their teen years, prepared a large portion of the meal themselves.

If we expect the next generation to pick up the mantle in basic skills like cooking, we're going to have to take them under our wing and teach them, even if that teaching comes at great inconvenience to ourselves.

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