Have you ever thought about how often you count, measure, estimate, and compare when you’re cooking? Measuring one cup of this and ½ cup of that teaches your child how to compare the relationship of parts to wholes. Your kitchen is rich with fun and yummy ways your child can learn the basics, and here are some easy ways to start.

**Preparing Food**

- Ask your child to compare the sizes of measuring spoons. Use words like smallest, small, medium, big, bigger, and biggest to describe each spoon.

- Line up the fruits you’ll use for fruit salad from smallest to largest. (Try starting with a blueberry and ending with a watermelon.)

**Setting the Table**

- Think about plate sizes. Ask, “Do we need big plates or small plates for this meal?”

- Put your spoons down on the table and ask, “Who has a long spoon? Who has a longer spoon? Who has the longest spoon?”

**At Mealtime**

- Show your child a whole piece of toast and cut it in half. Then say, “These two pieces are the same size. They’re called ‘halves.’” Cut each piece in half again. After your child counts, “1, 2, 3, 4 pieces,” say, “These four pieces are called fourths. Fourths are smaller than halves.”

- At snacktime, say, “We have an orange and an apple for a snack. Which one is wider?”

- Have your child hold two different pieces of fruit in her hands and ask, “Which one is heavier? Which one is lighter?”

- At dinner, compare the size of your food portions. Say, “You have more carrots than I do. I have fewer carrots than you.”