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## Moraga mom launches Veggie Explorers Club subscription for kids

By Jenn Freedman



Kit focuses on four senses Photos provided

Local mom and "The Family Kitchen Coach," Amy Jizmagian, has created an engaging and educational subscription box for kids. Veggie Explorers Club creatively introduces vegetables to children through simple sensory activities focused on sight, smell, touch and taste.

Veggie Explorers Club is part craft kit, part cooking kit. Each month's kit focuses on one in-season vegetable. The eco-conscious box arrives at the child's doorstep and includes everything needed except the food.

"I created Veggie Explorers Club because it was the thing I wished I had as I was introducing new foods to my kids," Jizmagian shares. Before having kids, Jizmagian assumed raising healthy, adventurous eaters would be easy: introduce vegetables first, make healthy food taste good, and minimize junk food. "And while these do help, I underestimated how much kids are their own little people. They have their own natural preferences, tastes, and development patterns."

Jizmagian utilizes scientific research showing that kids who have no-pressure, and even non-eating interactions with food are more likely to eat it. "As a result, all of the activities in the kits are invitations to play and explore - not pressure to eat - knowing that even if they don't try it now, it will likely help them be more open to eating it in the future."

Jizmagian's idea for this kit for kids came to her in the fall of 2020, smack in the middle of the pandemic, when she had very little time to herself. And yet, amazingly, Veggie Explorers Club was born just a few months later in March 2021.

Her biggest challenge has been developing the physical product in a thoughtful way. We all hate getting more "stuff" in the house, so Jizmagian is mindful of striking the right balance between "fun for kids" and "good for the earth." For example, each box contains at least one useful tool that kids can use over and over again. And the art activities are generally paper-based with minimal components that can be easily recycled.

Each box incorporates a recipe for the "taste" activity. Recipes include modifications for gluten-free, vegetarian, vegan, and dairy-free.

Veggie Explorers Club customers can choose from several subscription options: a one-time box for \$29.99, an ongoing monthly club membership for \$24.99 per month (with free cancellation at any time with no minimum commitment), or a 3 month gift for \$75. And you can add a sibling for \$9.99 per box as well.

Conscious that busy parents may feel pressed to find enough time to supervise their children through the activities each month, Jizmagian offers an optional online "playtime" class as well. At no additional cost, parents can sign up their kiddos for a 1-hour Zoom session with her. During playtime, Jizmagian leads up to 10 children through the activities from the box.

This reporter can vouch from experience . my kids have thoroughly enjoyed the activities and have even tasted asparagus and artichokes for the first time ever.

If you've been wondering how to get your kids or grandkids involved in the kitchen, give them exposure to healthy food, and maybe even try a new vegetable, Veggie Explorers Club may be a fun option for the little one(s) in your life.

For more information or to order a subscription, go to [www.veggieexplorersclub.com](http://www.veggieexplorersclub.com).



Amy Jizmagian Photos provided

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