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# Cooking Matters

a program of The Idaho Foodbank

IMPACT REPORT

AUGUST 2018



*Developed by Share Our Strength, Cooking Matters is a six-week, hands-on cooking program that teaches food preparation and food budgeting skills that people need to make lasting changes to their eating habits. Cooking Matters at the Store is a one-day program (also included in each Cooking Matters course) that teaches students how to identify healthy and less expensive options at their local grocery store.*

## A Community-Based Program

The Idaho Foodbank offers the six-week Cooking Matters courses to adults, seniors, kids, teens and families. Each course is team-taught by a volunteer chef and nutrition educator and covers nutrition, meal preparation, grocery shopping and food budgeting. After each class, participants take home a bag of groceries so they can practice what they just learned. In the end, people learn how to prepare meals that are healthy AND tasty on a tight budget. Cooking Matters also offers store tours where participants learn how to shop, plan and budget for healthy and affordable meals.

## Solving Hunger in Idaho

2018 FISCAL YEAR

**74,39**

cooking/in-store classes statewide

**1,229**

participants statewide

**97%**

graduation rate for six-week classes

**469**

volunteers enlisted statewide

## Students report:

- **82%** of adults felt more confident in buying and cooking healthy foods on a budget
- **49%** increase in the consumption of fruits and vegetables by adults
- **37%** of teens choose healthier options at restaurants
- **99%** of kids liked coming to class

# Healthy Change That Lasts

Share Our Strength has conducted participant surveys since the program's inception in 2010. Responses clearly show that up to a year after completing the program, graduates continue to cook healthier meals, pay more attention to food safety, save money on food purchases and eat new foods more often. A healthier diet is especially important. If sustained, this will put graduates at lower risk for many diet-related diseases such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer.



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“I now look at food preparation as an adventure rather than a challenge.”  
– Cooking Matters for Adults participant

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“This course has taught me that eating healthy on a small budget is possible.”  
– Cooking Matters for Adults participant

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“It has made me realize I can still eat healthy on a budget. Healthy food isn't always expensive.”  
– Cooking Matters for Adults participant

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“My favorite part of this cooking class is making and trying new foods.”  
– Cooking Matters for Kids participant

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The Idaho Foodbank is an independent, donor-supported, nonprofit organization founded in 1984, and is the largest distributor of free food assistance in Idaho. From warehouses in Boise, Lewiston and Pocatello, the Foodbank distributes around 1.5 million pounds of food each month through a network of more than 400 community partners. These include schools, food pantries, emergency shelters, feeding sites, and senior centers. The Foodbank also operates direct-service programs that promote healthy families and communities through good nutrition.



For additional information about the Cooking Matters, visit our website:  
[idahofoodbank.org/programs](http://idahofoodbank.org/programs)

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