

# COMMON THREADS

## AT A GLANCE



Common Threads  
COOKING FOR LIFE

## ABOUT

Founded in 2003 in Chicago, Common Threads is a national nonprofit that **provides children and families cooking and nutrition education to encourage healthy habits that contribute to wellness.** We equip under-resourced communities with information to make affordable, nutritious, and appealing food choices wherever they live, work, learn, and play. We know that food is rooted in culture and tradition so we promote diversity in our lessons and recipes, encouraging our participants to celebrate their culture.

Common Threads aspires to build communities that embrace healthy cooking, healthy eating, and celebration of culture.

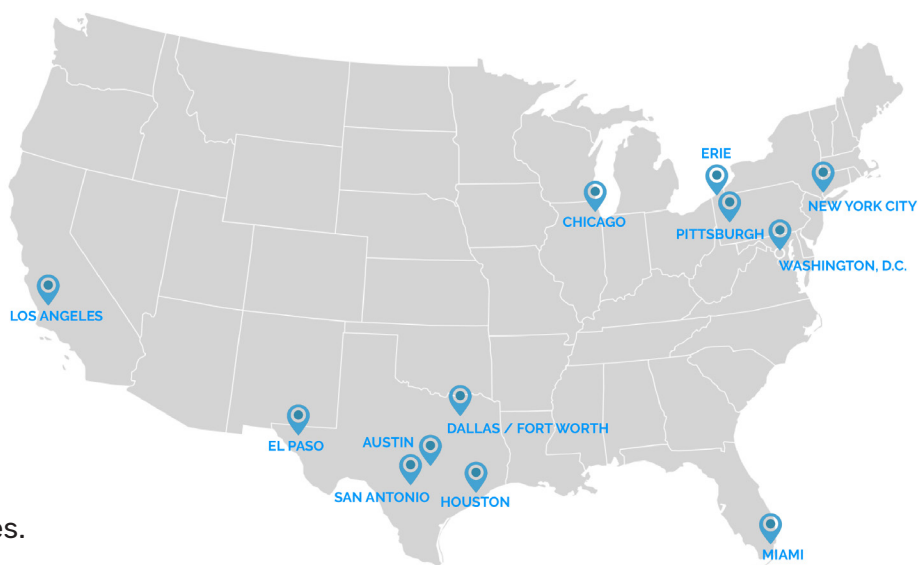
“Our world is a large quilt and its people are the fabric – colorful swatches of beautifully woven material – all joined together by these common threads: family and food.”

– Art Smith, Co-Founder

## WHERE WE WORK

Common Threads offers direct programming in 12 markets around the country.

In addition, people everywhere have access to Common Bytes, our digital nutrition education platform. The **Common Bytes** website mobilizes classrooms, communities, and families around nutrition and cooking through access to interactive recipes, games, videos, and resources.



## IMPACT

### OUTCOMES

Our programs have been proven to create sustainable behavioral change. Participants in our Cooking Skills and World Cuisine program demonstrated statistically significant increases in:

- Nutrition knowledge
- Overall fruit and vegetable consumption
- Liking of fruits and vegetables
- Self-confidence in cooking skills
- Frequency of helping to cook at home
- Communication about healthy eating to the family

### REACH

During the 2018-19 program year, Common Threads:

- Reached more than 106,000 students, parents and teachers
- Trained 2,700 teachers
- Cooked & served 747,000 healthy meals & snacks
- Partnered with 900 schools and community organizations
- Provided more than 1 million hours of cooking & nutrition education

# PROGRAMMING

Common Threads delivers culturally relevant cooking and nutrition curricula for youth, families, and teachers that result in life-long healthy eating habits. We partner directly with schools and community-based organizations in under-resourced communities across the country, targeting schools where 80% or more of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch.



## PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

### **Small Bites: Nutrition Education through Healthy Snacks**

This in-school or after-school program teaches PK-8th grade students about nutrition and healthy snackmaking through a series of eight lessons. The lessons give students the opportunity to connect math, language arts, and science concepts to hands-on experiences that provide tools for students to live longer, healthier lives.

### **Cooking Skills and World Cuisine**

This 3rd-8th grade program engages students' tastes and minds. The class explores the cultures and cuisines of ten different countries around the world. In the kitchen, young chefs learn how to follow a recipe, prepare and cook ingredients, and always leave the kitchen as clean as they found it! This class challenges students to use a wide variety of cooking equipment and ensures that they know how to safely and effectively use each tool, including chef's knives, graters, peelers, stoves, and ovens.

## PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

### **Parent Workshops**

Common Threads' Parent Workshops provide parents and caregivers a space to learn about and practice implementing healthy eating habits at home and with their children. Each session provides flexible formatting that allows the workshops to be incorporated into other parent-related programs, like parent meetings, health advisory councils, and health fairs.

### **Grocery Store Tours**

This chef-guided tour takes place at a local grocery store and engages participants on how to economically buy healthy foods.

### **Family Cooking Class**

This program teaches parents and kids how to cook healthy and economical meals. The classes focus on family participation, healthy ingredient substitutions, and convenient cost-saving recipes. The goal is to teach families how to cook together and incorporate healthy habits at home, while maintaining their existing traditions. Topics include: Breakfast: Getting a Healthy Start, Family Meals Made Easy, and Restaurant Meals You Can Make at Home.

### **Healthy Teacher Training**

This professional development empowers educators to be healthy role models by teaching basic nutrition and healthy cooking through classroom-based activities.