



Food Literacy Today To Transform Tomorrow



2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Friends and Families,

This year marked a remarkable milestone for Spoons Across America as we celebrated 25 years of advancing food literacy education and helping children build healthy relationships with food. What began as a small initiative dedicated to bringing food education into classrooms has grown into a national movement reaching communities across the country.

Through the dedication of our staff, educators, supporters, and partners, **Spoons Across America reached more than 140,000 children in 411 schools across 39 states.** Together, we expanded access to hands-on food literacy education, ensuring that more children than ever before had the opportunity to explore new foods, develop essential life skills, and build confidence in the kitchen and beyond.

As we reflect on our **25th anniversary**, we are proud not only of how far we have come, but also of the strong foundation that has made this growth possible. For a quarter century, you have believed that every child deserves the knowledge and experiences needed to make informed food choices. That belief continues to drive our work each day.

This year also demonstrated the power of partnership. Schools, educators, foundations, corporations, individual donors, and community advocates joined us in expanding our reach and deepening our impact. Together, we introduced food literacy education to new regions, strengthened relationships with longtime school partners, and equipped educators with the tools they need to inspire the next generation of food explorers.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without your support. Whether you contributed your time, expertise, resources, or advocacy, you played an important role in helping us reach children and families nationwide. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to our mission and your belief in the transformative power of food education.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping make our 25th year one of the most impactful in our organization's history.

With gratitude,



-James Grosso
Executive Director



-Audrey Bellovin
President, Board of Directors





WHO WE ARE

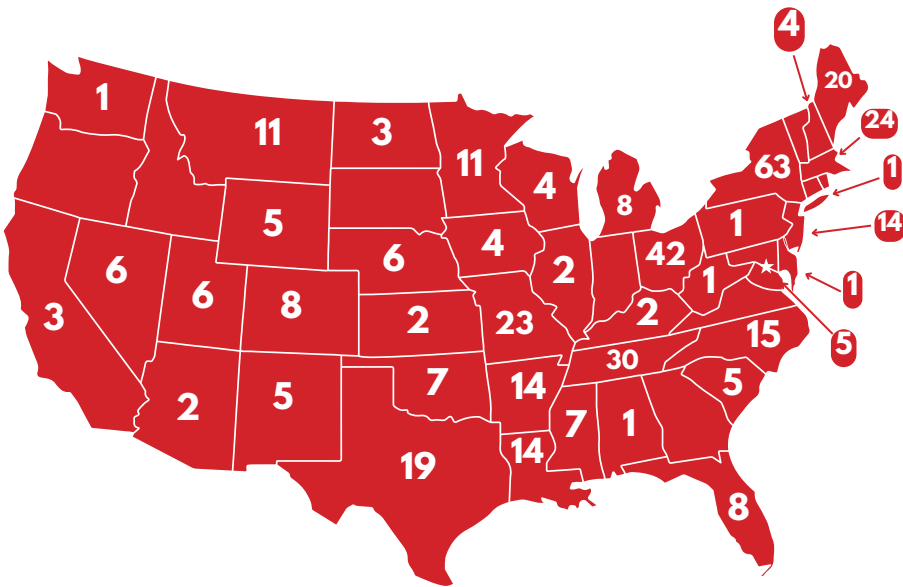
Spoons Across America is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing food literacy for all children. By introducing food education early, our joyful, hands-on programs empower children with the skills and confidence they need to make healthy food choices - setting them up for lifelong academic success, opportunity and wellbeing.

THE CHALLENGE

Food education for children should be a fundamental right, yet a lack of access has resulted in the health, equity, and economic disparities that many children, families, and communities face today:

- 1 in 5 children in the U.S. are overweight or obese, with obesity being the #1 illness in the U.S.
- 28% of children in the U.S. are prediabetic, and the rate of diet-related illnesses in the U.S. is at an all-time high.
- Lower-income communities are often based in food deserts, where children frequently rely on fast food and convenience stores for meals. This leads to even higher rates of diet-related diseases: 34% of children from lower-income households are obese vs. 19% from higher-income households.
- This lack of access to nutritious food plays a role in widening the educational achievement gap for low-income students.
- Poor nutrition in childhood can perpetuate cycles of poverty via health challenges, lower educational attainment, and reduced earning potential as adults.

PROGRAM IMPACT



GROWTH: YEAR OVER YEAR

STATES



PARTNERS



CHILDREN



PROGRAM IMPACT

The #1 way to improve health and reduce illness in the U.S. is nutrition education & healthy eating. [Research has proven](#) that children who have hands-on opportunities to prepare nutritious foods are more likely to eat them, highlighting the value of involving kids in food preparation.

Through our food education program, Spoons Across America plays a critical role in addressing limited access to healthy food by empowering families, shifting behaviors, and building long-term resilience. This is achieved through:

- **Nutritional Literacy:** Children and parents learn what makes a meal healthy, how to read labels, and the importance of balanced nutrition. Increased awareness of the long-term health impacts of processed foods and sugary drinks enables children and families to make healthier choices.
- **Behavioral Shifts:** Repeated exposure to healthy foods in educational settings (taste tests, cooking demos, etc.) can shift preferences and normalize healthy eating. Children who participate in these programs often influence family eating habits at home - especially when parents are invited to participate.
- **Cooking and Meal Prep:** Engaging children in the food creation process equips children with skills to prepare nutritious meals affordably and helps reduce dependency on ultra-processed meals.
- **Shopping Smart:** Children in our programs share the knowledge that they have learned about how to make nutritious meals using few ingredients with their parents, which helps families learn how to stretch meals and shop wisely.
- **Community Empowerment:** Food literacy does more than improve individual eating habits. As children and families become more informed about nutrition and the impact of their local food environment, they are better equipped to advocate for healthier options in their schools and neighborhoods. Over time, this awareness can help build community demand for greater access to nutritious foods and support efforts to create healthier, more equitable food systems.

HOW IT WORKS

At Spoons Across America, we believe the best approach to good nutrition is to encourage children to lift their spoons, excite their senses, and taste new and healthier foods. That is why we offer our **free programs** to schools, afterschool programs, libraries, and community organizations across the US.

Our programs come equipped with “Food Explorer Kits” that are shipped to schools and include:

- 10-12 session(s) program for Pre-K through 6th grade that brings together foundational food and nutrition literacy lessons in a progressive and developmental sequence.
- All kitchen, cooking, tasting, and serving equipment.
- Recipes and taste tests that use a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and that are adaptable to what is locally and seasonally available in their community.
- In-class and homework assignments that initiate family meals, encourage family participation, and enrich the family eating experience.



OUR PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

THE FOOD EXPLORATION CORE CURRICULUM

Spoons Across America provides free, hands-on food literacy and nutrition education programs to schools and community organizations nationwide. Each program includes comprehensive curriculum materials, classroom equipment, and educator support, ensuring teachers have everything they need to successfully implement the lessons.

Our comprehensive, eight-year food exploration journey grows alongside children, beginning in Pre-Kindergarten and continuing through sixth grade, building knowledge, confidence, and lifelong healthy eating habits at every stage.

BEGINNING EXPLORERS

PRE-K & KINDERGARTEN: THE FRUIT EXPLORATION CHALLENGE

Young learners begin their journey with a fun, interactive introduction to healthy eating by exploring, tasting, and learning about 48 different fruits through engaging, worksheet-based activities.

1ST GRADE: CONNECTING FOOD TO CULTURES + COMMUNITY

Through ten imaginative lessons, students dive into where food comes from and how to handle it safely. Storybooks bring farming, identifying parts of a plant, and culinary courage to life - helping children explore a wide variety of foods with curiosity and confidence.

Flexible Learning from 1st-6th Grade

For schools, after-school programs, or mixed-grade settings from 1st to 6th grade, our 12-lesson Food Exploration Project offers a flexible, all-encompassing curriculum that touches on key themes from each grade level.





INTERMEDIATE EXPLORERS

2ND GRADE: **CONNECTING FOOD TO CULTURES + COMMUNITY**

This unit connects students with ten lessons exploring how food reflects culture, time, and place - locally and globally. Kids develop cultural awareness and discover the deep ties between food and identity.

3RD GRADE: **FOOD LABELS, ADVERTISING + NUTRIENTS**

With a critical thinking lens, students engage in ten lessons unpacking food labeling, advertising tactics, and nutritional content - empowering them to make informed food choices.

ADVANCED EXPLORERS

4TH GRADE: **ENVIRONMENTAL + PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS TO FOOD**

Through ten dynamic lessons, children explore the relationship between food, the environment, and their bodies. They engage in hands-on activities to understand sustainability and reduce food waste.

5TH GRADE: **CULINARY SKILLS, CAREERS + RECIPE CREATION**

In this capstone year, students sharpen their culinary techniques, explore STEAM careers in the food industry, and unleash creativity through recipe development - all in a series of ten inspiring lessons.



QUOTES FROM THE CLASSROOM

"We opened up our kits and did our first cooking activity yesterday. The kits are amazing!!!!!! The children were soooooo engaged and loved everything. They wouldn't stop talking about all the fun that they had. Our lesson yesterday focused on parts of a plant/vegetables. During the early morning, we read the story "*Tops & Bottoms*" and talked about the different types of vegetables you can grow, etc. In the afternoon, we made chicken fajitas!!!! They used various bell peppers/onions, and chicken. They absolutely loved it!! I want to thank you sooooo much for the wonderful curriculum."

-Educator from Roosevelt Elementary School, Dayton, OH

"It was easy to implement, the supplies are student-friendly, the students enjoyed them. ... The students were excited to use the knives and not cut themselves, they really enjoyed the recipes. ... Thank you for a great program and introducing students to healthier options as well as comparing the unhealthy foods they enjoy. It was interesting to create the flavor of Doritos using chickpeas, they were in awe. Even creating a smoothie with natural sugars, that was their favorite."

-Educator from D.P. Morris Elementary - Arlington, TX



"This is an amazing toolkit that teaches the most fundamental life lesson (nutrition) in a fun and informative way! ... These materials are well researched and truly a treasure for teaching kids! ... Thank you for creating this valuable program! It would be beneficial in every school across America!"

-Educator from Our Lady of the Lake Children's Health - Baton Rouge, LA

"I am so incredibly thankful that we found this program and that we have the opportunity to participate! it has been a wonderful addition and we will be continuing it moving forward."

-Educator from Erving Elementary School, Erving, MA

OUR PROGRAMS IN ACTION



FOUNDATION SUPPORT

Spray Foundation Inc

THE
RACHAELRAY™
FOUNDATION



**WILSON SONSINI
FOUNDATION**

CORPORATE SUPPORT



Asprey
L O N D O N



HGGC



OFAOLAIN

alice + olivia
BY STACEY BENDET



Morgan Stanley

MEASURING SUCCESS

We are committed to delivering high-quality food literacy education that creates lasting change. Through educator surveys, classroom observations, and student engagement, we measure how our programs increase children's knowledge, curiosity, and willingness to explore healthy foods. This feedback guides continuous improvements, ensuring our curriculum remains engaging, effective, and impactful for every classroom we serve.

95%

of respondents chose Good or Excellent to rate the overall quality of The Food Exploration Project curriculum.

89%

of respondents state that it was 'Very Easy' or 'Easy' to integrate The Food Exploration Project into their existing curriculum

98%

reported an observable improvement in students' knowledge about food and nutrition

88%

reported that sessions were 'Very Engaging' or 'Engaging' for their students.

89%

reported witnessing a child try a new fruit or vegetable.

300

Food Explorer Kits delivered amongst **237** new partnering sites

5,925

Child-safe knives given classrooms for safe preparation of healthy recipes

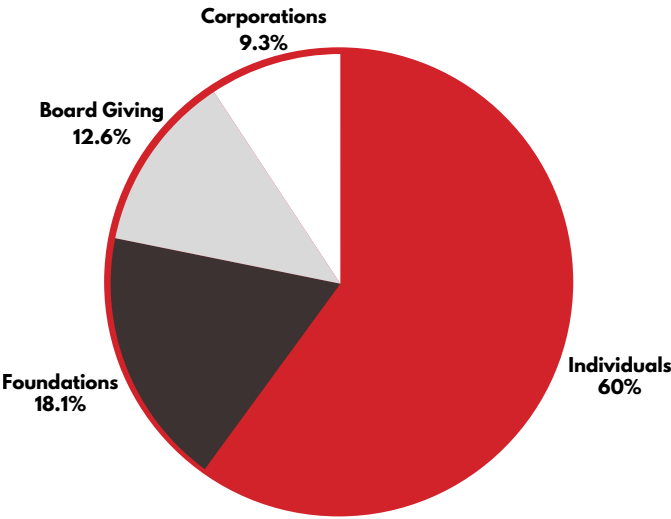
1,185

Measuring cup sets provided to help encourage "Recipe Math" and help prepare new and exciting dishes

582

Children's Books provided to instill curiosity around fresh ingredients, farming, and culture in younger Pre-K through 1st grade classrooms

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



FUNDING SOURCES

\$584,405	Individuals
\$176,463	Foundations
\$122,152	Board Giving
\$90,252	Corporations
\$973,272	Total Revenue

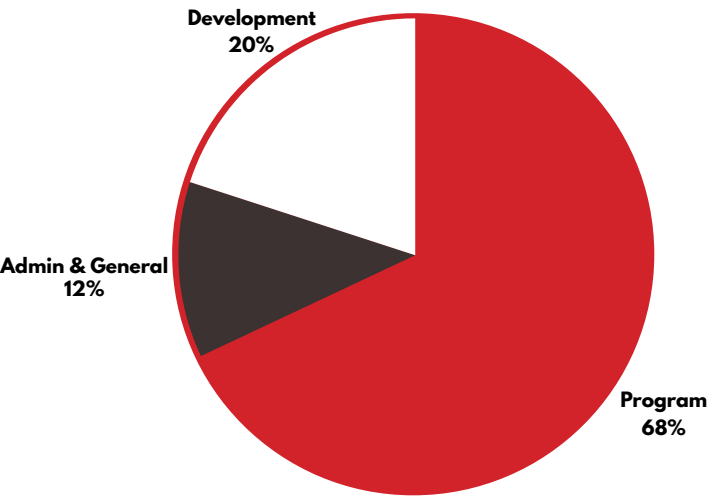
Financial information is unaudited and reflects FY2025-2026 operating results as of 6/30/2026.

To view Spoons Across America's 990, please [click here](#), where you will be redirected to Candid

Platinum
Transparency
2026

Candid.

ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES BY FUNCTIONAL AREA



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS



1995 | Planting the Seed

A group of educators, chefs, and food professionals created Days of Taste®, an experiential food education program designed to reconnect children with where their food comes from. The hands-on curriculum continues to inspire New York City students to explore healthy eating, local agriculture, and the joy of sharing meals.

2001 | Spoons Across America is Founded

Building on the success of Days of Taste®, Spoons Across America® was established to expand food literacy education for children and families. Through classroom, community, and health-focused partnerships, the organization began empowering children with the knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices for life.

2023 | A National Expansion

Leveraging more than two decades of experience, Spoons Across America launched The Food Exploration Project, a scalable food literacy curriculum designed for schools, afterschool programs, libraries, and community organizations nationwide. The program marked the beginning of our national expansion, bringing hands-on food education to children across the country.

2026 | Celebrating 25 Years of Impact

Twenty-five years after our founding, Spoons Across America has grown into a national organization serving more than 140,000 children in 411 schools across 39 states. This milestone reflects the dedication of our educators, supporters, partners, and donors who have helped make food literacy education accessible to more communities than ever before.

LOOKING AHEAD

WE ARE COMMITTED TO ONBOARDING 300 NEW SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS EVERY SCHOOL YEAR!

CREATION OF TRAIN-THE-TRAINER VIDEOS

These short videos will offer tips and techniques for common activities. Titles include Teaching Knife Skills to Children, How to Demonstrate Measurement Accuracy, and Cultivating Family Involvement.

STRENGTHEN EDUCATOR SUPPORT:

- **Educator Portal:** A password-protected online hub with exclusive lesson extensions, enrichment activities, and classroom resources for participating educators.
- **Field Trip Guides:** New pre- and post-visit lesson plans and activities that extend learning beyond the classroom through visits to grocery stores, gardens, and other food-focused destinations.
- **Holiday & Seasonal Lessons:** Curriculum celebrating seasonal foods and holidays while connecting children to healthy eating, sustainability, and food traditions throughout the year.
- **Family & Community Activities:** Hands-on lessons designed to engage families and caregivers, encouraging food exploration beyond the classroom.
- **Seasonal Classroom Displays:** Printable bulletin board materials and interactive activities that celebrate seasonal produce and showcase student learning.

THE VEGETABLE EXPLORATION CHALLENGE

Adding 48 worksheets to expand upon the existing Fruit Exploration Challenge in the Beginning Explorers Kit.

OUR TEAM

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