

## Mario Batali & Food Bank Cook Up New Nutrition Initiative

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*By Josh Wessler,*

This week, in a joint venture with the [Mario Batali Foundation](#), the Food Bank is launching an exciting new nutrition and health education program, [Community CookShop](#), at food pantries and soup kitchens across the city.

The Community CookShop pilot program breaks new ground for the Food Bank. For the first time, our nutrition workshops will pair parents and caregivers with their [children](#) to learn and cook together. Also a first, the workshops will be available at several of our member programs — [food pantries and soup kitchens](#) — in all five boroughs. And finally, it is our first time partnering with the Mario Batali Foundation.



The Food Bank and the Mario Batali Foundation share a belief in the power of hands-on learning to equip families for a healthier future. Based on that belief, Community CookShop engages whole [families](#) in practicing strategies to get the most food at the best quality for the lowest cost. Community CookShop is modeled on the Food Bank's successful CookShop program, the largest provider of nutrition education in New York City public schools. Like CookShop, the new Community program will use hands-on activities to enhance participants' skills for maximizing their food budgets, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and preparing tasty recipes.

All recipes for Community CookShop have been crafted by internationally-renowned chef, author and restaurateur, Mario Batali, who is also a dedicated member of Food Bank's [Board of Directors](#), the chair of our [Culinary Council](#) and an active proponent of child nutrition. All of Mario's CookShop recipes use nutritious, affordable ingredients that are available in local stores and food pantries throughout the city.

"Having been on the board and working with Food Bank for over 10 years, I feel honored and privileged to partner with them on this important step towards improving nutrition education," said Mario Batali. "The Food Bank's strong ties in the community will undoubtedly make huge strides for many deserving families in NYC and hopefully help lead the way for the entire nation."

Lucy Cabrera, [President and CEO of the Food Bank](#), said, "We are thrilled to partner with the Mario Batali Foundation on this important nutrition initiative. Thanks to the Foundation's generous support, we will now be reaching even more families, in their own communities, providing them with lifelong skills to create and sustain a healthier future."

The Food Bank's integrated services — [food distribution](#), [income support](#) and [nutrition education](#) — help New York City families keep healthful food on the table through the toughest times.

*Josh Wessler is CookShop Classroom Associate at the Food Bank. For more information about Community CookShop or to get involved, email [cookshop@foodbanknyc.org](mailto:cookshop@foodbanknyc.org).*