



# SPRING 2022 AT THE TABLE



Daily Bread  
Food Bank

## Towards a More Resilient Toronto

Last year, there were 1.45 million visits to food banks in Toronto – the highest number ever recorded in our city’s history. As unemployment and underemployment soared at the height of the pandemic, new clients outnumbered existing clients at food banks with a 61% increase compared to the year prior.

Although food banks are designed to provide emergency food relief, no one could have predicted the magnitude and far-reaching impact of COVID-19, particularly on low-income, racialized communities. As we enter year three of the pandemic, we are reflecting on the collective efforts of Daily Bread Food Bank’s community of donors, volunteers and advocates. **With your support and focused vision, we were able to distribute nearly 17 million lbs of nourishing food to tens of thousands of adults, seniors and children experiencing hunger. This, in addition to opening 22 new food programs (compared to 1-2 pre-pandemic) in high-priority neighbourhoods, to continue to provide low-barrier food access.**

While working to meet the immediate food needs of the city, we continue to make strides in advocating for impactful, long-term systemic change. Last December, we welcomed MPPs from across Ontario to Daily Bread for a special food sort and to explore solutions for food insecurity. **At the event, each MPP was presented with a Daily Bread petition containing over 27,000 signatures, calling for Ontario to commit to a 50% reduction in poverty by 2030.** You can read more about this important event in the pages ahead, along with other recent highlights and impactful community stories.

As we look back to the eventful past few months, I would also like to acknowledge our incredible front-line workers. There isn’t a day that goes by that I am not grateful for, and inspired by, the staff and volunteers at each of Daily Bread’s member agencies – their impact is extraordinary.

Thank you for your continuous support. Thank you for being there for Toronto now, and advocating today for a better tomorrow.

In partnership,



Neil Hetherington  
CEO



# Ontario MPPs Receive Daily Bread Petition Calling for Province to Reduce Poverty by 50% by 2030

This past holiday season (December 10, 2021), sixteen MPPs representing multiple parties and ridings across Ontario joined the team at Daily Bread Food Bank to help sort food donations that would be distributed to community members across the city. This day was also an opportunity to have important conversations about the root causes of food insecurity and to explore solutions to this growing crisis.

At the event, each MPP was presented with a copy of a **Daily Bread petition containing 27,407 signatures calling for Ontario to commit to a 50% reduction in poverty by 2030**. The outpouring of signatures received on this petition is a clear indication that Ontarians are determined to see poverty reduction as a top issue on the political agenda.

Last year, there were over 3.6 million visits to food banks across Ontario, with close to 1.45 million visits in the city of Toronto alone. **Leading into the holiday season, a new record was set at Daily Bread member food banks, with 127,000 client visits in a single month**, caused by a ripple effect of unemployment and underemployment, increasing cost of living, and the high price of housing.

**In our 2021 *Who's Hungry* report, we call on all levels of government to address key systemic drivers of food insecurity: precarious work, unaffordable housing, and an insufficient social safety net.** With food bank use at all-time high, and with an unpredictable forecast due to the pandemic, it is critical that all political parties take immediate strong action.

We are deeply grateful for the support of Ontario's MPPs, and we look forward to continuing these important conversations to advance policy change.

Visit [dailybread.ca/takeaction](https://dailybread.ca/takeaction) today to send a letter directly to Ontario party leaders, calling for stronger poverty reduction targets.



## Numbers:

# 1.45M

VISITS TO TORONTO FOOD BANKS  
LAST YEAR

# 127,000

CLIENT VISITS TO DAILY BREAD  
MEMBER FOOD BANKS IN NOVEMBER  
2021 – THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF  
MONTHLY VISITS TO DATE

# 61%

INCREASE IN NEW CLIENTS  
ACCESSING FOOD BANKS,  
COMPARED TO YEAR PRIOR

# 51%

OF FOOD BANK CLIENTS HAVE  
MISSED A MEAL TO PAY FOR  
SOMETHING ELSE

# \$9.17

PER PERSON PER DAY LEFT FOR  
FOOD AND OTHER ESSENTIALS,  
AFTER RENT AND UTILITIES ARE PAID



Back row: MPP Mike Schreiner, MPP Suze Morrison, MPP Peter Tabuns, MPP Jeremy Roberts, MPP Deepak Anand, MPP Rudy Cuzzetto  
Front row: MPP Jill Andrews, Talia Bronstein, Neil Hetherington, MPP Robin Martin, MPP Christine Hogarth, MPP Kinga Surma, MPP Chris Glover.



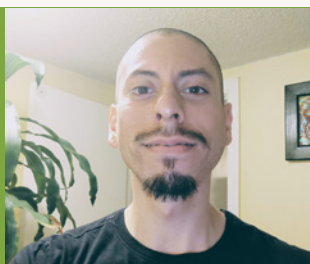


## Hope for Tomorrow: Jorge's Story

According to Daily Bread Food Bank's 2021 *Who's Hungry* report, **51% of food bank clients reported missing a meal to pay for something else.** As the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis continue to ripple through our city, food bank visits are in a steady climb. In fact, between the months of October to December 2021, Daily Bread member food banks saw a 77% increase in client visits compared to the same period pre-pandemic.

Jorge is one of the tens of thousands of Torontonians faced with the mounting challenges and pressures posed by COVID-19 and the growing need for food access. He currently visits his local food bank once a week to pick up groceries and staples to help meet his vegan dietary needs. Throughout the past two years, Jorge has seen the increase in clients at his local food bank, but he is still able to pick up hearty essentials like canned chickpeas and fresh vegetables to help him through the week. "When I get a lot of carrots, I make something like a stew with chickpeas or lentils," he says. "If I get some squash, I will make some stuffed veggies."

Jorge also mentions the challenges he faces financially as he tries to stretch government supports, like ODSP. In addition to paying for essentials such as housing and transportation, he now also has to allocate money to buying face masks, gloves and sanitizer to protect himself from COVID-19. As a single individual, he sympathizes with families living in poverty who have to provide for children and protect them from the virus.



**"I didn't know food banks existed until I Googled it because I was having a hard time with money. I didn't expect that food banks could help you in such a great way – with good food. Food banks are helping a lot of people, in a lot of ways."**

Despite the challenges, Jorge forges on and is thankful for the additional support he is able to receive from the food bank. With a love of healthy, simple cooking, Jorge plans to return to school in the near future to study nutrition. He hopes to one day open a wellness shop or bakery where he can serve hearty plant-based dishes, patisseries and other sweet treats.

**With a median income of \$1,106 per month – which falls well below Toronto's poverty line of \$2,060 per month – food bank clients have \$9.17 left per person per day after rent and utilities to pay for food and other necessities.** This is simply not enough to make ends meet. It is through the generosity of supporters like you that Jorge and thousands of individuals facing similar challenges, can access the food they need – THANK YOU!

To make a donation and support Daily Bread's critical food programs, please visit **[dailybread.ca](https://dailybread.ca)** to give today.



# New Member Agency: Spadina Fort York Community Care

Spadina Fort York Community Care (SPAFYCC) is one of Daily Bread Food Bank's newest member agencies. Their mission is to bring hope, dignity, humanity and care, while providing individuals in need with meals, groceries, and hygiene and supply kits.

SPAFYCC started in March 2020 as part of a collaboration with Portland Place, which at the time had to cease operation of their congregate dining program due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At around the same time, a growing number of individuals living in encampments were also facing mounting challenges and state of crisis due to shutting down of local drop-in programs and services.

**Shauna Harris is the Executive Director at SPAFYCC and took immediate action to address the needs she was seeing in the community. Together with her team, they started delivering food hampers to residents of Portland Place twice per week, and food and hygiene and supply kits to encampment residents and other street-involved individuals.**

The team at SPAFYCC also identified that many seniors and individuals living with disabilities were facing challenges with food access at the height of the pandemic. Many were dealing with health issues and were unable to leave their homes to pick up necessities, and many were unable to afford traditional home delivery programs. Through the home delivery program, these individuals were able to access the essentials they needed. SPAFYCC serves a large population of Chinese seniors, many of whom have faced discrimination and isolation.

**Today, Shauna and the team at SPAFYCC are running two pop-up food banks in Alexandra Park and St. Lawrence Market. Their busy delivery service provides outreach to more than 700 unhoused individuals in the downtown core. It is their hope that they will be able to continue to expand their service to reach even more people in need of support.**

We are very excited to welcome Spadina Fort York Community Care (SPAFYCC) to the Daily Bread network and look forward to working together to support our communities!







## Daily Bread Opens New Community Meal Program



Last November, Daily Bread Food Bank introduced a weekly community meal program to serve the South Etobicoke community. Operating from our distribution centre at 191 New Toronto Street, this new program runs weekly on Thursday evenings from 5:30-7:00pm. This Community Meal program provides nourishing, warm meals to families and individuals experiencing hunger, and those who may not benefit from traditional food bank service due to lack of access to a kitchen, cooking tools, or other barriers to food preparation.

Guests attending the program are welcomed with a warm coffee or tea, and served a hot, hearty restaurant-style meal. This winter's menu included a selection of beef stew with bread rolls, plank-crusted haddock, as well as plant-based options like sweet potato aloo gobi and black bean vegetarian bake. All meals are prepared on-site at the Daily Bread kitchen by our talented kitchen staff and a wonderful team of dedicated volunteers.

Alongside a nourishing dinner—and as part of a rights-based approach to service—this program also provides information and referrals services for guests who experience hardships beyond hunger and would benefit from additional resources relating to housing, employment and more.

As we further develop this program, it will be essential to continue to learn about the community. Once COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, there will be additional opportunities for participants to make their voices heard. We want participants to take an active role in developing a comfortable, welcoming space where they can come together and feel safe as a community. The people who access the program will also help to shape the future of the program.

We would like to thank and acknowledge everyone who made a donation through our Giving Tuesday campaign for raising over \$140,000. This much needed financial support from the community goes directly towards critical food programs and services, including our Community Meal program. THANK YOU!

# Get Involved:

Food bank visits have increased over 47% compared to the year prior. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused economic hardship in our communities, leading many to turn to food banks for the first time. In fact, last year, new clients accessing Toronto food banks outnumbered existing clients by 61%.

## We need your help to build a stronger, more resilient city!

Here is how you can help:

- **Advocate for change.** Contact your MP's constituency office to let them know you want to see the government commit to addressing the root causes of food insecurity through affordable housing, income supports, and decent work.
- **Make a financial donation or sign up to be a monthly donor.** Your donations will help to ensure that everyone can access the food they need today as we work towards long-term change to end poverty.
- **Sign up to be a Community Champion.** Rally your network to raise food and/or funds in support of Daily Bread Food Bank, we will provide you with all the resources you need to run a fun and successful campaign.
- **Drop off non-perishable food items at your nearest firehall.** Check out our most needed items below.

Learn more at [dailybread.ca](https://dailybread.ca)



## Most Needed Items:



CANNED  
VEGETABLES



CANNED FRUIT



CANNED  
TOMATOES



CANNED FISH  
AND MEAT



PEANUT BUTTER



PASTA



RICE



PASTA SAUCE



CANNED SOUP



OATMEAL



BEANS (LENTILS,  
CHICKPEAS, ETC.)



100% FRUIT JUICES



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