



THE FEED

January - March 2022 Newsletter

Message from Chris Peacock Executive Director



I would like to welcome you to The Feed. A quarterly newsletter that will provide an update on what we have been up to at The Sharing Place Food Centre and highlight some of our plans for the coming months. We encourage you to pass it along to family, friends, or colleagues that you feel would be interested in the work we are doing.

As many of you know, The Sharing Place Food Centre has been busy trying to break out of the traditional food bank model and provide our members with dignified access to programs and information that go beyond a healthy food supply and really create an impact in our community.

Over the next few months, we are renovating our space to provide three key improvements to The Sharing Place Food Centre.

- Accessibility with new entrances, washrooms, and hallways to allow for a barrier-free environment.
- Office upgrades to allow for 2 intake offices for our members. This will improve wait times at our Food Bank and provide confidential spaces to assist members with information about other community resources.
- Meals-4-Change Commercial Kitchen. We are creating a full-scale commercial kitchen to prepare, cook and package our Meals-4-Change. These pre-made meals will be distributed out of our food bank and partnering agencies.

These significant improvements to our organization would not have been possible without the generosity and support from our funders, donors, and volunteers. We look forward to celebrating the completion of these renovations with you in the spring and will keep you posted on how this will happen.

I hope you and your loved ones had a safe and happy holiday season. The month of December is an amazing time to be at The Sharing Place Food Centre and this year did not disappoint. We distributed over 400-holiday hampers filled with all the trimmings for a wonderful dinner and breakfast. We did this while still operating our food bank and helping over 1,500 members with a healthy 6-day supply of food. This was complemented by many individuals and companies dropping off food and financial donations that will help fund our programs for months to come.

Thank you for taking the time today to learn more about The Sharing Place Food Centre. We are working hard to continue to make smart but bold improvements to what we do each day. If you have any questions about the information in this newsletter or the programs that we run, please reach out via email or phone.

All the best for 2022 and we look forward to staying connected.

Kind Regards,

Chris

Thank you Orillia and Surrounding Areas!

Whew! It's been a very busy Healthy Holiday Donation Drive season and we here at The Sharing Place Food Centre are overwhelmed with the support from Orillia and surrounding areas. This year saw a significant increase in the number of donation drives, and we couldn't help but notice how excited you all were to be out and active in the community. January comes to us with some time to catch up from the last few months, but also with a sense of missing the hubbub of activity and seeing your faces in our door, on our social media and out in the community. However, we are planning some exciting events for 2022, which will give us all a chance to reconnect and support those in our community who experience food insecurity.

One in five people in Orillia live below the poverty line and recent studies have shown that those that were just getting by pre-pandemic are now struggling with difficult financial choices. They are forced to decide whether they can afford food or rent. This has resulted in a 15.8% increase in food bank usage in 2021 over 2020.

Until the issues of low income, high housing costs, and rapid food inflation are addressed, The Sharing Place will continue to work towards reducing hunger in the community, with the support of our amazing community.

2021 Impact

We've been busy! See how your support impacted The Sharing Place Programs in 2021.



Children that
accessed the School
Fuel Program:

96,760



Food Bank Members
that accessed a six-
day supply of food:

14,553



Pre-made meals
prepared and
distributed:

22,695

Volunteer Highlights

The Sharing Place Food Centre team of volunteers are the backbone of this organization, and we would not be able to support people who experience food insecurity without them.

Volunteers are responsible for everything from driving The Sharing Place van for the Food Recovery program and making School Fuel deliveries, working in the warehouse to sort and move skids of food, welcoming members, and distributing food in the Food Bank program. We rely on volunteer participation and every single one of our volunteers rises to the challenge with a smile and dedicated compassion.

In future quarterly newsletters, we will be highlighting a single volunteer, focusing on their skills, ability, and drive, but we wanted to take this opportunity to give a big shout out to all the amazing people who show up to make this organization a welcoming, well-run operation.



In The Spotlight - Food Recovery Program



The Sharing Place Food Centre partners with local farmers, grocery stores, and food service providers to recover surplus food that is within a few days of its best before date. We collect, prepare, and store this food in a responsible way, meeting all local food safety and health regulations, allowing us to distribute it to our members and share with community partners while it is still fresh, or after it has been prepared and stored through our Meals-4-Change program.

Meat and produce make up a large portion of the food recovered, which enables us to share more meat and produce than we would otherwise be able to purchase. Even then, meat and produce shortages occur, and with the rising costs of these items, The Sharing Place Food Centre relies on financial donations to supplement and ensure that our community has access to fresh, healthy food.

The Food Recovery program also contributes to Orillia's circular food economy by creating a food system that minimizes waste. Surplus edible food is distributed, processed, and stored and any waste is transported to local farms for compost and animal feed.

The Food Recovery program is a successful collaboration between food industry partners, providing access to healthy, nutritious food and contributing to a more balanced circular food community.

Food Recovery in 2021

- 324,000 Lbs. of food recovered
- 12,884 Lbs. of waste redistributed to local farmers

Our Contact Information

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