

IMPACT REPORT

2023-2024

ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY



FOOD BANK



SCHOOL FUEL



MEALS 4 CHANGE



FOOD RECOVERY

A MESSAGE FROM CHRIS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As you dive into our 2023-24 Impact Report, I want to share a glimpse of what's been on my mind lately. The past year has been tough for many in our community. The stats are staggering; Simcoe County's food insecurity rates have skyrocketed from 18% to 31% in just one year. That's 1 in 3 households struggling to put food on the table.

The devastating impact of inflation means that folks who were already living paycheck to paycheck are now facing impossible choices between food, rent, and transportation. It's heartbreaking.

But here's the thing: we're not just a food centre; we're a community. And communities come together to support each other. At The Sharing Place, we're working hard to adapt to the growing need. Our team is dedicated, passionate, and sometimes, frankly, exhausted. But we keep going because we know we're making a difference.

As we look to the future, we're taking a bold step. We've embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning process, one that looks not just 3 or 5 years ahead, but 10 years into the future. We're thinking long-term, envisioning the community we want to build and the role we want to play in it. This process is crucial because it allows us to anticipate and prepare for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Our goal is to create a roadmap that ensures we're building a sustainable, resilient, and effective organization - one that can support the growing needs of our community, now and for generations to come. We're examining every aspect of our operations, from food recovery and distribution to community outreach and education. We're asking tough questions, seeking expert advice, and engaging with our stakeholders to ensure we're on the right path.

What does this mean for our future? We're projecting a significant increase in demand for our services - from 2,300 individuals monthly today to 4,000 in the coming years. We're planning for expanded programs, upgraded facilities, and innovative partnerships that will help us meet this growing need.

So, what can **you** do to help? Spread the word about our work and the challenges we're facing. Volunteer your time or expertise. Become a monthly donor to provide us with the stability of recurring revenue. Support local businesses and initiatives that promote community well-being. Reach out to neighbours, friends, and family members who might be struggling. Every action counts, no matter how small it may seem.

Thank you for being part of The Sharing Place community. Your support is crucial, now more than ever.

Warm regards,

Chris Peacock
Executive Director



THE NEED

Canadian food insecurity estimates for 2023 were among the highest in almost

20 YEARS

of monitoring.
STATS CAN



1-IN-3 HOUSEHOLDS

30.7%

in **Simcoe Muskoka** were food insecure in 2023, a significant increase over the prior year, and higher than the provincial average (**24.2%**)

SIMCOE MUSKOKA DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT



1 in 4

Research estimates only **25% OF CANADIANS IN NEED** are actually using a **food bank**.

ELAINE POWER, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY



As of Oct. 2024, **minimum wage** in Ontario is

\$17.20



In Simcoe County the **living wage** is **\$23.05**.

ONTARIOLIVINGWAGE.CA

\$1,297

is the average rent for an apartment in Orillia.

CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION, OCT 2023



In Simcoe Muskoka, the average monthly cost of nutritious food for a family of four in 2023 was

\$1,226



For people on social assistance, the combined cost of nutritious food and rent use most or all of their income.

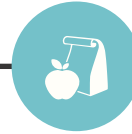
A single person on Ontario Works receives

\$733



monthly. This rate **has not changed in 6 years**. A single person on ODSP receives \$1,368 each month.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RATES IN ONTARIO, JULY 2024



SCHOOL FUEL



YOUTH FOOD INSECURITY STATS

In 2023, over **1 in 4** Canadian children (**28%**) under age 18 lived in a food-insecure household.

"If you're not well fed and you're not getting nutritious food, you don't learn, right?"

The program at The Sharing Place is unique. It's an exceptional program."

JODI LLOYD (SCDSB TRUSTEE)

PURPOSE

- Increase access to nutritious food for local youth
- Create a stigma-free environment by making food available to all students
- Remove logistical barriers by delivering directly to schools, bi-weekly
- Partner with local organizations to offer healthy snacks when schools are closed

IMPACT

- Over 4,000 kids access nutritious meals and snacks daily in 23 schools
- Food-insecure youth have reliable access to healthy food at school
- The Sharing Place funds 50% of food costs, doubling resources for schools

GOALS

- Strengthen school support by exploring gaps in funding, capacity, equipment, volunteer coordination, and training
- Increase protein and nutrient-rich food options
- Onboard new schools and expand into rural regions
- Align with provincial partners to support the National School Food Policy

FOOD BANK



DIGNIFIED FOOD ACCESS

Dignified Food Access means:

1. Quality Food Choices offered in a
2. Respectful Way, in a
3. Welcoming Environment, backed by
4. Advocacy to fight the root causes of food insecurity.

Inspired by the Dignified Food Access Handbook produced by the Roots Community Food Centre.

PURPOSE

- Offer a 7-day emergency food supply, up to 14 times a year
- Treat all members with dignity and respect
- Understand system navigation and connect members to local social services
- Provide nutritious food without means testing
- Remove barriers to improve food access

IMPACT

- 26,785 food bank member visits (+10% vs LY)
- 1,769 new members served (+ 25% vs LY)
- Over 50% of hamper is fresh food through food recovery efforts
- Busiest month on record was June 2024 with 2,502 members served
- The Sharing Place spends on average \$20,841/month to stock the food bank

GOALS

- Train 100% of volunteers on Dignified Food Access
- Engage 100+ community members in poverty reduction advocacy
- Expand the Rx Food program by partnering with 5 additional healthcare and social service agencies, increasing access to vital nutrition for more individuals. Rx Food partners with healthcare providers to prescribe food as a necessary part of patient care, reducing the stigma of food banks while offering both in-person and home delivery options through The Sharing Place.





FOOD RECOVERY



A QUOTE FROM OUR CHEF

"Food recovery is a crucial input to our Meals 4 Change program. Thanks to our efforts in food recovery and the generosity of our donors, we're proud to serve and share up to 2,000 nutritious meals each week to our community."

CHEF LEOR ZIMERMAN



A heartfelt thank you to our local farmers, grocery stores, and community partners for their generous donations that strengthen The Sharing Place programs.

PURPOSE

- Rescue surplus food from grocery stores, food service providers and our very own local farmers
- Preserve dignity for our members by curating and removing unfit portions
- Enable fresh, wholesome options in our Food Bank and Meals 4 Change
- Minimize waste by giving unusable produce to farmers for feed and composting

IMPACT

- 609,462 lbs of fresh, healthy food recovered from grocery stores
- Over 57,600 lbs of non-salvageable food diverted from waste to local farmers
- The Food Recovery drivers rescue food 6 days/week
- Share recovered food with local community agencies and food banks

GOALS

- Conduct annual meetings with each food recovery partner to expand the program
- Recover 600,000+ lbs of food from our community
- Collaborate with 5+ new agriculture partners

MEALS 4 CHANGE



A QUOTE FROM OUR PARTNER

"I know that for some clients, this represents about 50% of what they eat during the week. These are people that have fallen through the cracks. I don't understand how a person lives on \$1,100 a month. They're...existing. And that's really what this whole program is for."

BOB, DRIVER FOR HELPING HANDS ORILLIA

PURPOSE

- Produce nutritious, precooked meals that are ready to heat and serve
- Make use of Food Recovery donations to keep costs low
- Partner with community organizations to distribute to severely food-insecure individuals

IMPACT

- 72,686 meals prepared in 2023-24
- 34,818 meals shared with 8 community partners
- Volunteers spent 3,897 hours in the M4C Kitchen
- \$1.95 is our average cost per meal including packaging, staff, ingredients and overhead

GOALS

- Welcome 2 new agency distribution partners
- Launch 8-week food literacy program for 50+ participants annually
- Keep meals costs below \$2.00 per meal. This includes packaging, staff, ingredients and overhead



EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

OUR PARTNERS

The Sharing Place holds membership and actively collaborates with various organizations focused on food system and poverty issues. These partnerships enable us to learn, advocate, and access resources to better support our community.



SHARING ACTION TEAM

MEMBER-BASED ADVOCACY

The **Sharing Action Team** is a newly formed, members-based advocacy group that meets monthly to discuss topics such as poverty, mental health and addiction support, affordable housing, and social justice.

Participants actively share ideas, attend and volunteer at events, and engage in advocacy letter-writing workshops to take concrete actions.

To learn more or join the team, visit sharingplaceorillia.org/advocacy

SHARING ACTION TEAM

OUR PARTNERS:



FORK IN THE ROAD

WWW.FEEDONTARIO.CA/FORK-IN-THE-ROAD

Food insecurity arises when individuals lack sufficient income to afford their basic needs.

Feed Ontario created **Fork in the Road**, an interactive digital experience that illustrates the difficult choices faced by those trying to make ends meet on a low income. Take a moment to empathize and imagine yourself in someone else's situation.

DEVELOPED BY FEED ONTARIO



SCAN HERE TO TRY FORK IN THE ROAD



THE PATH AHEAD

2025: A YEAR OF VISION AND COLLABORATION

As food insecurity continues to rise in Simcoe County—from 18% to 31% in just two years—The Sharing Place Food Centre is taking proactive steps to address this growing challenge. In 2025, we will develop a **comprehensive 10-year strategic plan** to guide our efforts and create lasting impact. This plan will be shaped by input from a wide range of stakeholders, ensuring we meet the needs of our community effectively and sustainably.

Our Strategic Focus Areas

Our plan will be shaped by these key priorities:

- **Enhancing food access** by improving how we operate
- **Strengthening partnerships** with local organizations and services
- **Building regional capacity** and working closely with regional food banks to ensure collective progress
- **Expanding food literacy** and advocating for policy changes to address root causes of food insecurity
- **Ensuring long-term financial stability** to support our core operations

Your Input Matters

In the months ahead, we will be engaging with community members, partners, and experts to refine our strategy. Your input will be crucial in shaping our plan to address the evolving needs of our community. We look forward to collaborating with you to build an organization that can meet future emergency food needs and foster long-term solutions to reduce food insecurity.

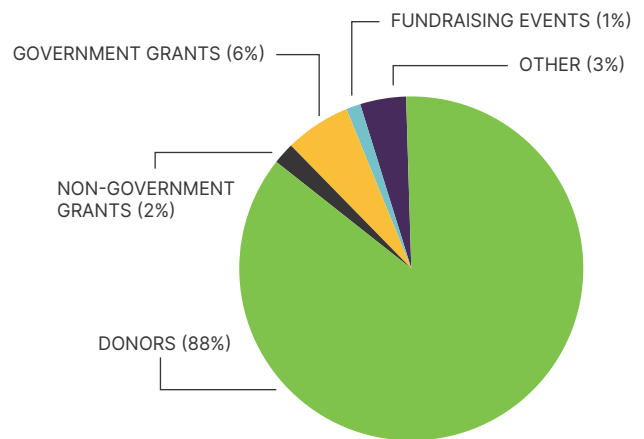
YOUR DONATION MATTERS

At The Sharing Place Food Centre, donations play a vital role in ensuring that we can continue our mission to support individuals and families in need. Your generosity makes an impact - thank you for considering how you can help!

HERE ARE FOUR IMPACTFUL WAYS YOU CAN DONATE:

<p>▶ ONE-TIME DONATION</p> <p>Make a one-time donation to address immediate needs.</p>	<p>▶ MONTHLY DONATIONS</p> <p>Set up recurring donations to provide predictable, ongoing support for our programs.</p>
<p>▶ THROUGH YOUR WILL</p> <p>Leave a lasting legacy by including The Sharing Place in your estate plan, ensuring future generations have access to vital resources.</p>	<p>▶ TRANSFERS OF SECURITIES</p> <p>Donate stocks or bonds for potential tax advantages while directly benefiting our community.</p>

SOURCES OF INCOME



2nd Annual
**HARVEST
HOEDOWN**

A sincere thank you to Orillia Mazda for supporting us as a Gold Sponsor for our annual Harvest Hoedown in September 2024.



Stay tuned for an invitation in 2025!



VOLUNTEERS

The success of The Sharing Place's programs relies on the steadfast generosity and commitment of more than 150 volunteers. These extraordinary individuals are true champions of our community, and we are profoundly thankful for their dedication.

To our volunteers, thank you.

WAYS TO HELP

MAKE A DONATION: [Sharingplaceorillia.org/donate-now](https://sharingplaceorillia.org/donate-now)



MAKE A DONATION

Community donations are an essential source of funding for our programs. Visit our website to donate today: [Sharingplaceorillia.org/donate-now](https://sharingplaceorillia.org/donate-now)



FUNDRAISE

Raise funds in support of The Sharing Place by engaging your organization, club, team, or neighborhood. Financial donations keep our programs running!



STAY CONNECTED

Sign up for our quarterly newsletter, The Feed. [Sharingplaceorillia.org/thefeed](https://sharingplaceorillia.org/thefeed)



VOLUNTEER

Make a meaningful contribution by donating your time. Apply online to join our amazing volunteer team! [Sharingplaceorillia.org/volunteer](https://sharingplaceorillia.org/volunteer)



SHARE OUR IMPACT REPORT

Help raise awareness by spreading the word.



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YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

