



HUNGER REPORT 2014

GOING HUNGRY TO PAY THE BILLS: THE ROOT CAUSES
BEHIND THE PERVASIVE CYCLE OF HUNGER IN ONTARIO

FULL LENGTH REPORT
AVAILABLE ONLINE



ONTARIO
ASSOCIATION OF
FOOD BANKS

WHAT WE DO

The Ontario Association of Food Banks is a network of 125 direct member food banks and over 1,100 affiliate hunger-relief programs and agencies across the province, including: breakfast clubs, school meal programs, community food centres, community kitchens, food pantries, emergency shelters, and seniors centres.

Together, we serve 375,000 adults and children every single month.

The OAFB and the provincial food bank network are working very hard to develop long-term solutions that address the root-causes of hunger and ultimately make food bank use history.

HUNGER IN ONTARIO

As the inequality gap continues to widen, and the availability of secure, quality employment continues to diminish, poverty remains a pervasive issue in this province. Ontario has a decision to make: do we continue to let thousands of Ontarians be caught in the never ending cycle of poverty or do we work together to create solutions for the health and longevity of the province.

On the provincial level, the OAFB would like to make the following recommendations to the Government of Ontario:

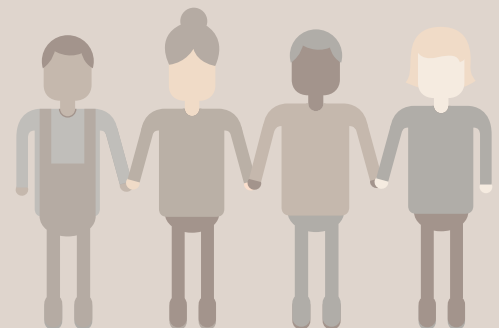
- Implement a monthly Ontario Housing Benefit for low income tenants, based on their rent and income
- Increase payments and updates to Ontario's social assistance programs
- Support the OAFB and food bank network through funding that ensures the acquisition and distribution of fresh, healthy food across the province

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Visit our website to learn more in this year's full length Hunger Report: www.oafb.ca/hungerreport2014 and visit www.oafb.ca to find out how you can:

- **Donate** – support our efforts. Every \$1 donated can provide the equivalent of three meals for someone in need
- **Volunteer** – join our team
- **Advocate** – write to your local MP and MPP

Together we can help end the cycle of poverty and hunger.



2014 HUNGER COUNT

At first glance, this year's March Hunger Count numbers for Ontario appear very similar to the last (375,814 individuals in March 2013). There is, however, one important exception: the number of households accessing food banks for the very first time has increased by 20%, from 14,206 in 2013 to 17,182 households in March 2014.



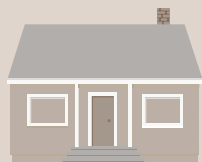
374,698

Individuals access food banks every month



131,144

Are children



17,182

Households helped for the first time in their lives. Over 20% increase from 2013



739,256

Prepared meals provided to Ontario's hungry in March 2014 alone

SURPRISING STATISTICS ABOUT FOOD BANK USERS

Since 2009, food bank use has not dipped below 370,000 individuals each month (pre-recession numbers were 314,000 in March 2008 and 318,000 in March 2007). It is estimated that approximately 770,000 unique Ontarians access food banks annually.

A particular area of concern for the OAFB is the rising number of students, especially in rural communities, that are accessing food banks. With rising rental prices, tuition fees, food prices, and a limited income, they are often forced to choose between food and other necessities.



35%
are children under 18 years of age



46%
are single-person households



8%
are students or senior citizens



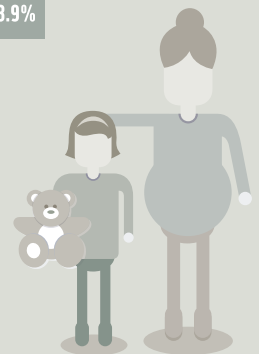
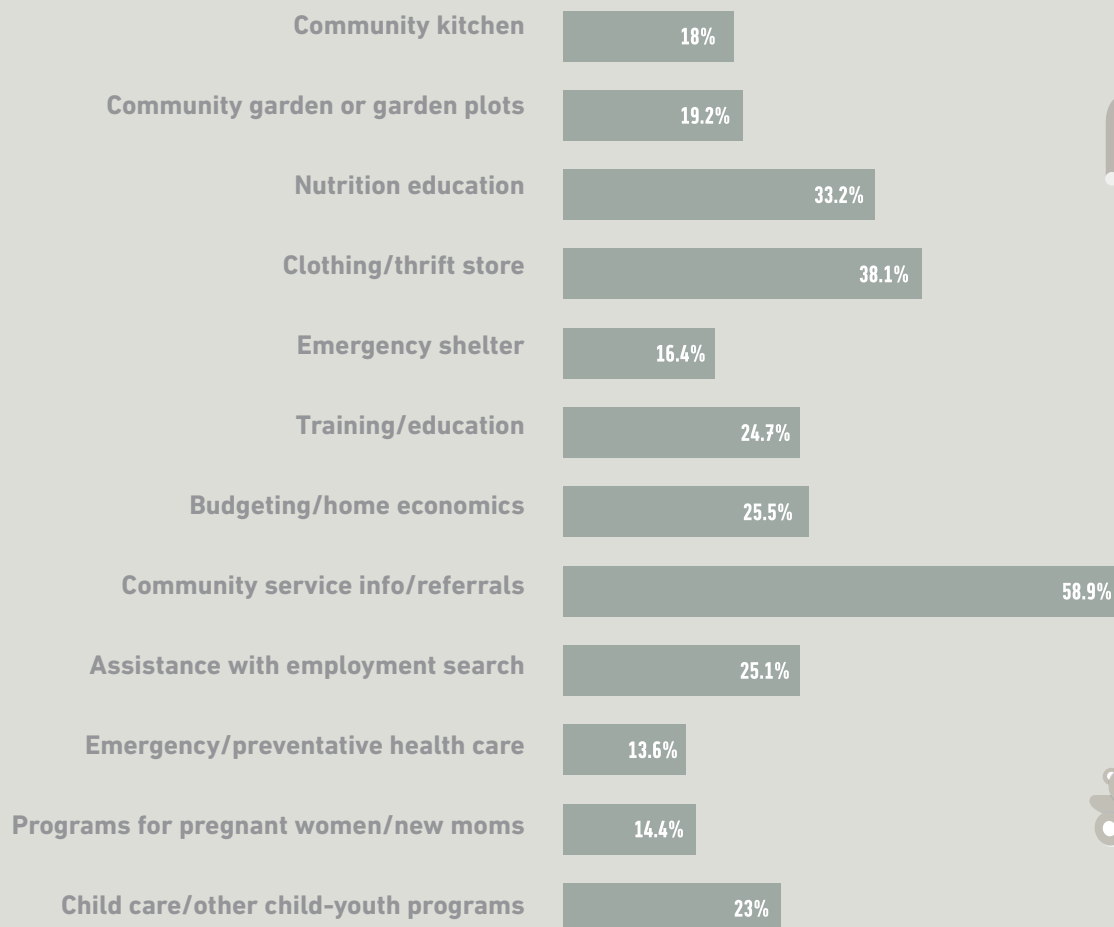
30%
have a disability

SERVICES BEYOND THE TABLE

Throughout the provincial food bank network, hundreds of dedicated staff and volunteers work tirelessly to provide nutritious foods and balanced meals to those who are hungry, while providing additional services designed to support and empower clients. Food banks have grown beyond the traditional notion of the non-perishable food pantry, and now offer programs that include everything from job fairs and resume writing workshops to health programs with registered nurses and dental hygienists, as well as on-site community gardens, thrift stores and emergency shelters.

Our 125 member food banks offer programming and services that address the root causes of both poverty and hunger to the 375,000 Ontarians requiring our support each and every month

% OF FOOD BANKS OFFERING EACH SERVICE



As a province with so much, there is no reason that any child should have to go to bed hungry, or that any adult or senior should have to skip meals simply because they cannot afford it.

SNAPSHOT: THE WORKING POOR

For generations, Canadians have been taught that with hard work and dedication, you can get ahead financially – this is no longer the case. Ontario's employment structure has seen a growth in part-time, casual, or insecure forms of work, with over 80% of the jobs that have been created since 2008 being temporary positions.

Since the recession, Ontario has seen a rapid increase in what is commonly referred to as the “working poor”.

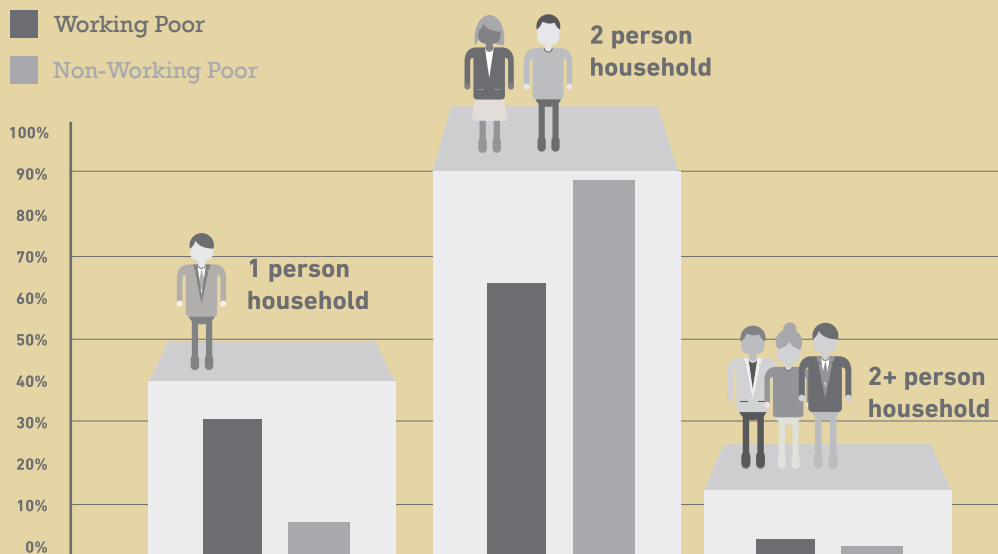
Ontarians are considered part of the “working poor” if he/she:

- Has an after tax income that falls below the Low Income Measure (LIM)
- Has earnings of at least \$3,000 per annum
- Is between the ages of 18 – 64
- Lives independently*

An individual who is food insecure, as a result of economic and social factors, such as working in poverty, will experience significant health implications. From 1996 to 2009, the self-reported health of Ontarians working in poverty declined significantly, with fewer individuals reporting good health (68% to 49%) and a larger number of individuals reporting poor health (8% to 19%).

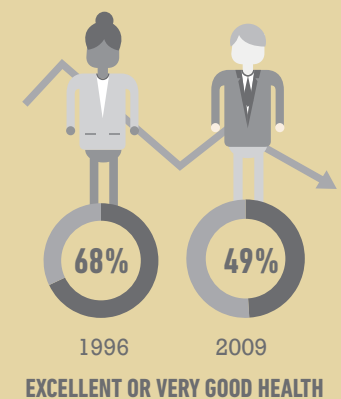
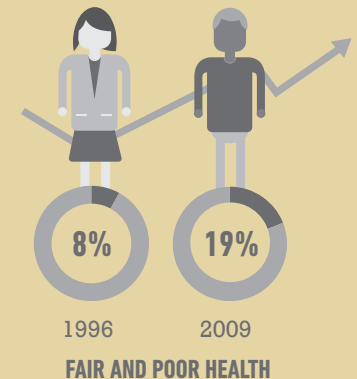
Without effective and thoughtful policy changes, the growth in the number of individuals working in poverty will continue to increase, while their health correspondingly declines.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION



To access this year's full length report online visit:
www.oafb.ca/hungerreport2014 (pg. 14-19)

DETERIORATING HEALTH OF WORKING POOR ONTARIO 1996 - 2009



TOP 5 TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT OF THE WORKING POOR

- Sales & service
- Clerical & secretarial
- Retail sales person
- Management
- Food Services

* Stapleton, John, Murphy, Brian, and Xing, Yue. "The 'Working Poor' in the Toronto Region: Who they are, where they live, and how trends are changing." Metcalf Foundation. 2012

DID YOU KNOW?

The Ontario Association of Food Banks believes that all individuals deserve the right to eat healthy foods. This year, for the first time ever, over 50% of all food acquired and distributed by the OAFB to our member food banks was either fresh or frozen.



The OAFB distributes fresh and frozen food direct to all

**125 MEMBER
FOOD BANKS**



Dry product is distributed to remote areas in Ontario through partnerships with

15 FOOD BANKS



144,000 DOZEN

eggs delivered to our members this year by Egg Farmers of Ontario



33,500 SERVINGS

of lean ground turkey to be delivered to our food banks this year funded by Turkey Farmers of Ontario



1,000,000 LITRES

of fresh milk donated yearly by Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Dairy Council and Ontario Milk Transport Association



30,100 SERVINGS

of pork provided to our members this year funded by Ontario Pork

As the cost of food, tuition, gas and hydro go up, more Ontarians are choosing between staying nourished or paying their bills.

Give them another choice. Donate today.



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555 RICHMOND STREET WEST, SUITE 501
P.O. BOX 1108
TORONTO, ON
M5V 3B1

WWW.OAFB.CA
416-656-4100