

A profile of Hamiltonians experiencing food insecurity.

Working towards a hunger-free community, Hamilton Food Share has been our city's food acquisition and distribution hub for Hamilton's Emergency Food Network for 29 years. With our warehouse and fleet of trucks we ship and receive over 3.3 million pounds annually to 12 emergency food banks and 7 hot meal programs across the city. Hamilton Food Share is committed to feeding people now while using evidence-based data to change social policy. The information and statistics in this report use data collected directly from food bank visitors accessing our frontline emergency food programs in the month of March 2019.

All household visits across Hamilton

In the month of March 2019, almost **23,000 visits** were logged across the city, the highest on record. While the increase in households accessing a food bank rose by 5%, the alarming reveal this year is that the number of children lining up to a food bank grew by 10% in Hamilton. Children make up 40% of people who go hungry in Hamilton.

Food Bank Access Comparison

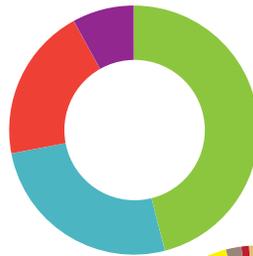


Public Meal Programs
Meals Served in March 2019: 12,796

Never let the thought of 9,000 visits from children every month be a routine statistic. Never believe child hunger is a condition beyond our control. Without healthy food, children are at risk for cognitive impairments affecting their ability to learn. This should bring every policy maker to the table with a focused political will for change.

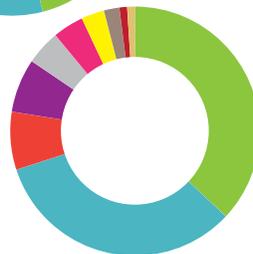
Joanne Santucci, Executive Director
 Hamilton Food Share

40% of food bank visits are made by children



Family Composition

- Singles (46%)
- Two Parent Families (26%)
- Single Parents (20%)
- Couples (8%)



Primary Source of Income

- *Disability (37%)
 - Ontario Works (33%)
 - Employed (7.5%)
 - Child Tax Benefit (7%)
 - Other (4.5%)
 - Old Age Security (4%)
 - CPP - Retirement (3%)
 - No Income (2%)
 - Immigration Related (1%)
 - EI (1%)
- *(ODSP, CPP Disability, Private Disability)

Children's Ages

Babies (0-2)
Preschoolers (3-5)
School-Aged (6-11)
Teenagers (12-18)

Number of Children

1,304
 1,463
 3,212
 3,146

% of Total Children

15%
 16%
 35%
 34%

Hunger – a health risk for children

Children in our city are going hungry. Access to nutritious food is essential for children to support healthy cognitive, motor, physical, emotional and behavioural development, and to ensure that children can learn. Food insecurity is associated with a range of poor health outcomes among children.¹ Studies have shown that inadequate nutrition, even mildly below target nutritional goals, stunts growth and development. Infants and toddlers from food-insecure families are 90% more likely to be in fair or poor health.²

On a typical day in Hamilton
304 food bank visits are made by children

Unique visits across Hamilton

On a typical day in Hamilton
Food distributed by the Network is equal to 9,551 meals.

**Food Bank Access
March 2019**
Unique Households

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Adults | 8,378 |
| Children | 4,914 |
| Total People | 13,292 |
| Total Households | 5,437 |

"The bigger the gap is between the rich and poor, the more damaging it is. Hamilton has some of the biggest gaps in the world."³

Code Red: 10 Years Later

Defining the Hunger Gap

The hunger gap refers to how many of days' worth of food a household needs to receive from a food bank in order to meet their nutritional requirements for the month. At each food bank visit, a household will receive between 3-5 days' worth of food." Sixty-one percent (61%) of people using a food bank visit only once per month. The intensity of this deficit continues to grow for households who need multiple emergency food visits to meet that basic need.

Housing Crisis

One of the primary drivers of food bank use is the lack of affordable housing options for Hamiltonians with low incomes. **In Hamilton, households who access a food bank spend, on average, more than 50% of their income on housing, increasing the risk of displacement or homelessness.**

| Income Spent On Rent | % Of Households | Top 3 Primary Income Sources in Category | % of Households in Category |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Less than 30% | 11% | ODSP OW Child Tax | 36% 23% 12% |
| 30-49% | 33% | ODSP OW Child Tax | 42% 23% 7% |
| More than 50% | 56% | OW ODSP P/T Employment | 44% 31% 4% |

OW=Ontario Works (Social Assistance), ODSP=Ontario Disability Support Program

The table above reflects the 72.3% of unique households who pay market rent, and the percentage of income they pay towards rent and utilities. Paying 30% to 49% puts households at high risk of homelessness. Paying 50% or more of household income puts households at extreme risk of homelessness.⁴

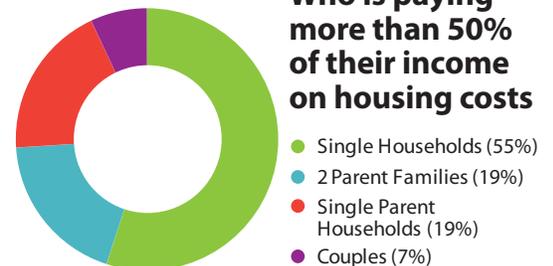
Over 2,000 households, representing 4,385 people, pay 50% or more of household income on their rent and utilities. Of those individuals, a shocking 400 people pay 100% or more of their total income for rent and utilities.

The Hunger Gap

| Days Worth of Food Needed | Number of Unique People |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 3-5 | 8,048 |
| 6-10 | 2,774 |
| 11-15 | 1,168 |
| 16-20 | 779 |
| 20+ | 523 |
| Total | 13,292 |

On a typical day in Hamilton
39 visits to food banks are made by seniors asking for help with food

Who is paying more than 50% of their income on housing costs



¹Kirkpatrick, S.; McIntyre, L.; Potestio, M. (2010) Child Hunger and the Long-Term Adverse Consequence for Health. The Journal of the American Medical Association 164(8):754-762. doi:10.1001/archpediatrics.2010.117.
²Cook, J.; Frank, D. "Food Security, Poverty, and Human Development in the United States." Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 1136 (2008), doi:10.1196/annals.1425.001. ³Buist, S. (2019, February 28) Code Red: 10 Years Later. The Hamilton Spectator. Retrieved from <http://www.thespec.com> ⁴Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2016, March 23). "What Is Core Housing Need?", Housing Observer Online.

Emergency Food Programs Taking Part in the Survey

Ancaster Community Services / Good Shepherd Centres / Living Rock Ministries/ Mission Services of Hamilton
The Native Women's Centre / Neighbour to Neighbour Centre / St. Matthew's House (2 Locations) / Salvation Army Hamilton
Salvation Army, Dundas / Stoney Creek Community Food Bank / Wesley Urban Ministries / Welcome Inn Community Centre



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