



HUNGER COUNT: MARCH 2016

A Snapshot of Poverty in Hamilton

The Emergency Food Network: Hamilton Food Share is the distribution hub of the Emergency Food Network. The Network is made up of 103 programs offered across the city. Forty-six programs (46) deal with emergency groceries, hot meals and Holiday Hamper programs, and fifty-seven (57) offer other poverty support programs such as clothing, community referrals, seniors' programs, trusteeship, weekend feeding programs for kids, pregnant moms' support groups, etc.

Emergency Food Access: Total Visits

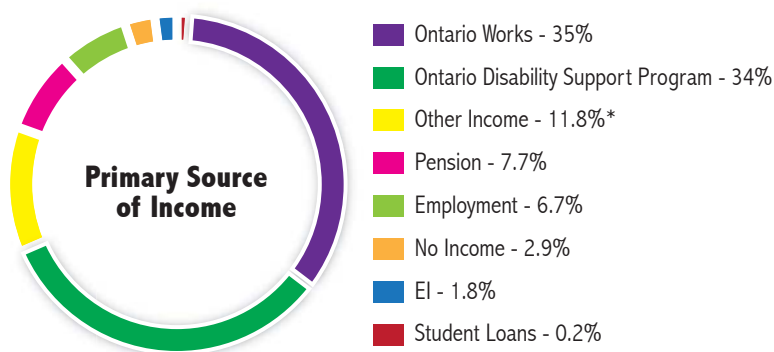
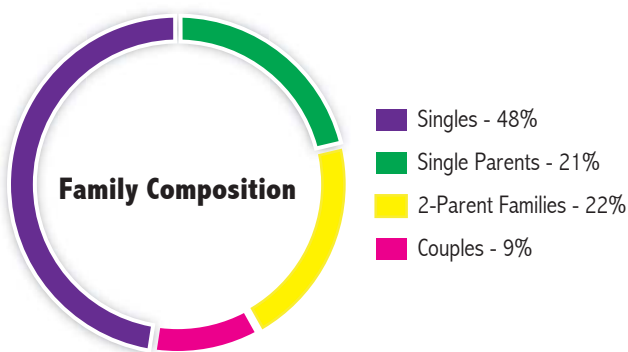
Nearly 20,000 people were assisted in the month of March 2016. The percentage of adults decreased slightly to 63%, while the percentage of children increased to 37%.

Babies (0-2)	1,243	17%
Preschoolers (3-5)	1,373	18.5%
School-Aged (6-18)	4,795	65%

Food Bank Access Comparison All Household Visits Across the Community

	March 2016	March 2015
Adults	12,479	13,171
Children	7,411	7,148
Total People	19,890	20,319
Total Households	7,928	8,556

Numbers presented reflect a minor change in the counting method for the comparative year.



*Other government assistance, child and spousal supports, minor and one time income sources, etc.

On the front lines:

- Volunteers devoted more than 10,462 hours of their time in one month.
- Staff hours allocated to the front line by agencies totaled 9,036.
- 581 households visited a food bank for the first time in March 2016.
- 5,207 parents struggled to feed their children.

Hot Meal Program Comparison

	March 2016	March 2015
Number of Hot Meals Served	15,390	15,588

“Going hungry in Hamilton is about more than missing a few meals. It’s a violation of basic human rights; the right to be healthy, the right to have safe and affordable housing and the right to good food. These are the three basic rights every family holds dear – the very rights that are stolen from families living in poverty”.

Joanne Santucci, Executive Director.

Poverty in Hamilton

1 in 7 (or 4.9 million) people in Canada live in poverty. **In Hamilton** it is 1 in 5.

Food bank usage across Canada is 26% higher than it was in 2008. **In Hamilton** it is 28% higher.

Precarious employment has increased by nearly 50% over the past two decades. In the Hamilton and Toronto area the portion of people in the least secure type of work, dubbed “precarious,” grew to 28.5% last year from 25.9% three years earlier.

Food insufficient households were 80% more likely to report having diabetes. Currently **in Hamilton** 10% of households visiting the food bank report having a household member with diabetes.

Canada’s population grew 30% over the last 25 years and yet the national investment in housing has decreased by 46%. Almost half of the people using a food bank cannot afford their housing and are at extreme risk of homelessness. **In Hamilton** 5,700 people are on the waiting list for affordable housing.

All Visits vs. Unique Households

For people living in poverty, many must use a food bank once a month to survive when their household income has depleted.

65% of people using the food bank visit once a month.

Food Bank Access March 2016

Unique Households

Adults	7,903
Children	4,348
Total People	12,251
Total Households	5,118

Households at Risk of Homelessness

For 35% of households more than one visit to the network is required to put food on the table throughout the month. The chart below illustrates the percentage and types of households most at risk of constant hunger and potential homelessness.



■ Singles - 61% ■ 2-Parent Families - 12%
■ Single Parents - 19% ■ Couples - 8%

Choosing Between Food and Rent

Seventy-five percent (75%) of all households accessing the emergency food network pay market rent which rose by almost 5% in 2015 in Hamilton. Almost half (48%) are at extreme risk of homelessness. These are households that would reach out more than once a month for groceries and a hot meal. Households paying 50% or more on rent are experiencing severe rental affordability issues. The proportion of household budget paid on rent is so high compared to household income that they cannot pay other expenses. Over the 36 year period food banks have been in existence, hunger relief agencies have seen low income households move from “difficulty in meeting their basic needs” a few days a month to feeling an “absolute despair” of becoming homeless. See the table below.

% Of Income Spent on Rent	% of Households	Top 3 Income Sources	% of Households
Less than 30%	11.5%	ODSP	33.3%
		OW	28.9%
		CTB	13.2%
30% - 49%	37.2%	ODSP	44.1%
		OW	24.0%
		CTB	5.9%
50% - 99%	48.1%	OW	35.7%
		ODSP	33.2%
		CPP	5.1%

Depth of Hunger in Hamilton

Number of People	Days' Worth of Food Needed
7,717	3 - 5
2,383	6 - 10
1,258	11 - 15
568	16 - 20
325	20 +
12,251	

The Hunger Gap Widens

The hunger gap is the difference between the level of income needed to provide the basic needs for the entire household and the household’s actual income. The gap is certainly widening. Local food banks give out a minimum of 3 to 5 days’ worth of emergency food for each monthly visit. The hunger gap is deeper than that for over 1,765 households representing approximately 4,534 people. The hunger gap for these households is between 6 and 20+ days’ worth of food needed to make ends meet.

Emergency Food Programs participating in the survey:

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



339 Barton St., Stoney Creek, ON L8E 2L2
Tel: (905) 664-9065 | Fax: (905) 664-2108

f Follow us on Twitter @HFShare
t Like us on Facebook at Hamilton Food Share

www.hamiltonfoodshare.org