



Feeding Change, Feeding Hope on World Food Day

Food Banks Canada releases Sharing our Stories: Food Banks Helping Canadians on World Food Day to tell the personal stories of Canadians in need

TORONTO-October 15, 2009- It is often difficult for individuals to understand the depth and breadth of the issue of hunger through hard facts alone. On October 16, World Food Day, Food Banks Canada is releasing *Sharing our Stories: Food Banks Helping Canadians*, providing a snapshot of the real life situations of Canadians who struggle with hunger and turn to food banks for assistance across the country.

One of the profiles is that of Monique* – a mother of four who unexpectedly lost her job during the economic recession and turned to the Mississauga Food Bank for assistance. The circumstances that brought Monique to the food bank also offered her a chance to develop a new career through an opportunity to join a subsidized job training program.

Monique's story is a frank and inspiring example of the challenges many Canadians face. It highlights the valuable services provided by food banks across the country. Food banks, work to distribute food and consumer products, and also offer employment training, language assistance and, for many, emotional support to help individuals get back on their feet.

"This past year has been an increasingly challenging time for individuals across the country and for food banks assisting them, given the current economic climate" says Katharine Schmidt, Executive Director, Food Banks Canada. "It is our hope that these stories will reveal the real people behind the statistics and will inspire individuals to give generously to support food banks in their communities."

March 2009 data on food bank usage, in comparison with March 2008, revealed that there has been a 15 to 20 per cent increase in the number of Canadians accessing food banks each month. "While food bank usage is on the rise, we are also seeing a

decrease in food and fund donations to food banks in some parts of the country”, notes Katharine. “If Canadians are in a position to support others, we ask that they make that commitment today”.

A more comprehensive report on food bank usage will be unveiled in November with the release of *HungerCount*, Food Banks Canada’s annual report of food bank use in Canada.

With the Thanksgiving season just behind us, Food Banks Canada would like to thank individuals and corporations who donated to food banks during this time. Every donation makes a difference in the lives of individuals and families in need.

Read more about Monique and other individuals across Canada in *Sharing our Stories: Food Banks Helping Canadians*, by visiting: www.foodbankscanada.ca.

* Name has been changed for privacy purposes.

About Food Banks Canada

Food Banks Canada is the national charitable organization representing the food bank community across Canada. Our members and their respective agencies serve approximately 85 per cent of people accessing emergency food programs nationwide. Our mission is to meet the short term need for food and find long-term solutions to reduce hunger. Visit www.foodbankscanada.ca for more information.

About World Food Day

Launched by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the goal of World Food Day is to raise awareness of those living with food insecurity around the world.

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