



1 Cleadon Road
Scarborough ON
M1V 1L8

October 6, 2022

Dear Students' Council representative, Vice Principal, Principal,

Schools Supporting Toronto Residents (SSTR) is an initiative by the Rising Sun Food Drive Foundation (RSFDF) in support of food banks across Toronto. Your school is invited to participate in this ongoing initiative (October 2022 – June 2023) by hosting an in-school food drive to help alleviate chronic food insecurity¹.

Between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021, food banks in Toronto saw the highest number of visits ever recorded, with 1.45 million visits. Given the current inflationary effect on food pricing, housing, and ongoing systemic challenges, it is projected that food bank usage across Toronto, will, in the current year, vastly exceed 1.45 million visits².

Whereas food drives will not bring an end to poverty, they help to alleviate hunger and some of the additional consequences that come from ongoing hunger. Unfortunately, in spite of decades-old talk of eliminating child poverty across Canada, child poverty and the number of children using food banks remain stubbornly high.³

Schools have a profound understanding of the role that hunger plays in a child's life. Hungry children face greater challenges with attendance, learning, self-regulation, and social integration. However, schools are not passive and insensitive to these concerns. In addition to the growing number of schools that deliver breakfast, lunch, and snack programs to students, and in addition to the countless teachers, principals, and Office Assistants across our education systems who secretly keep healthy snacks in their classrooms and offices – snacks that they lovingly set aside for the kids that they know are secretly in need – 29% of food bank clients range from prenatal to age 18 years⁴.

To support your school's in-school food drive, RSFDF will provide educational posters that communicate the **reasons for hunger and poverty, current data regarding hunger and poverty, and the most needed food donation items.**

To all of the caring adults in your school, thank you for all that you do to support children. RSFDF looks forward to working with your school community, and I look forward to receiving word from you regarding the commencement of this year's food drive.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Courtney Fisher".

Courtney Fisher (pronouns: he/him/his)

Chair, Rising Sun Food Drive Foundation

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Charitable BN 75756 5676 RR 0001

Notes

¹ In 2021, RSFDF worked with schools to support the planning and execution of in-school food drives. RSFDF is responsible for collecting donated food items from participating schools and for delivering food to local food banks. Further to this, RSFDF provides participating schools with the total pounds of food procured during its in-school food drive. This number provides schools with baseline data against which future in-school food drives can set targets.

^{2,4} All data, Daily Bread Food Bank, *Who's Hungry*, dailybread.ca

³ Those who are food insecure are more likely to suffer from mental health challenges, heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, or asthma.... Nutrient deficiencies can impair immune functions. Being food insecure can worsen health conditions, locking people in a cycle of illness, poverty, and food insecurity. Health costs among severely food-insecure households are 121% higher than those who were food secure, *Who's Hungry*, dailybread.ca