

Why do we need a food bank in Orléans-Cumberland?

Unless you have spoken to people who visit the food bank or visit our Centre, or have had conversations with our staff, it is difficult to imagine why the Orléans-Cumberland needs a food bank. Unfortunately, the need and the demands continue to increase.

Like elsewhere in Canada, the ORLÉANS-CUMBERLAND'S FOOD BANK is essential and provides emergency food support to more than 554 individuals on a monthly basis, 42% of them children.

For many people, going to a food bank is a last resort after having exhausted all their resources. A request for emergency food support can often be months if not years after losing a job, a home or go through a life-changing experience.

One major cause for concern is the gap between the so-called affluent and everyone else. A situation that is further compounded by the fact that higher incomes translate into higher house prices, which means that those less fortunate have a real struggle to make ends meet.

In fact, the real problem is this opposition, relative to the reality of life of many people who have a difficult time making ends meet. Research has shown that these types of disparities give rise to undesirable trends, as indicated in the report "**Bridging the Gap**"

"Housing affordability is an issue for one in five families. One in five Ottawa families spend 30% or more of their household income on housing related expenses, calculated by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation as the threshold to measure housing affordability. The neighbourhoods with the greatest proportion of households exceeding the affordability threshold are Orleans Industrial (68.9%), Bayshore (39.7%), and Ledbury – Heron Gate – Ridgemont – Elmwood (38.3%)." (Report "Bridging the Gap")

Every year, the food bank participates in a Canadian survey called "Hunger Count" that allows us to gather information regarding the profiles of people who visit food banks. Following this nationwide survey, a report is published to inform and raise awareness among the public and governmental agencies. The report "Food Banks and the Dependence Myth" is available online at www.foodbanksCanada.ca.

Financial Support

The ORLÉANS-CUMBERLAND FOOD BANK receives financial support from fundraising activities (42%), from the City of Ottawa (56%), and other sources (2%).

Our precious volunteers

Our food bank, like many others, rely heavily on the involvement of volunteers. We have 80 volunteers who generously give hundreds of hours of their time to the food bank during the year. Besides their additional support throughout the year, our volunteers help in preparing and delivering food items during our Christmas Program (87 volunteers/738 hours in 2014). Thanks to our volunteers, of all ages, we are able to achieve our mission.

Our donors and community commitment

Many organizations support the Centre in its mission through monetary donations, by offering their time or by organizing food drives.

We wish to sincerely thank everyone who has supported and continues to support our cause.