

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 15, 2011

## ***Ontarians need a housing benefit***

**TORONTO** – Despite an improving economy, people visiting food banks in the Greater Toronto Area are still struggling. The Hunger Snapshot report, released today, shows that food bank clients spend 72 per cent of their income on housing costs. When families are struggling to make ends meet and have to make a choice between paying the rent and putting food on the table, it is usually food that is sacrificed.

“Families can eat less food when money is tight, but they can’t pay less rent. A Housing Benefit would be a monthly benefit that would help support people on low incomes,” says Gail Nyberg, Executive Director at Daily Bread Food Bank. “Everyone deserves a roof over their heads and food on the table and a Housing Benefit will help both of those things happen.”

A recently released report by the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association shows that the number of people who are on the waiting list for social housing continues to increase as people struggle to find affordable housing. According to Richard Matern, Acting Director of Research at Daily Bread Food Bank, the amount left over per person per day after housing costs are paid is \$5.67 – that’s less than the amount a person would need for two cash fare trips on the TTC in Toronto.

The full report on the results of the annual survey will be released on September 21, 2011, at the beginning of Daily Bread Food Bank’s Fall Drive. Some early results can be found in the Hunger Snapshot, available online at [www.dailybread.ca](http://www.dailybread.ca). You can also visit [www.dailybread.ca/learning-centre/housing-benefit](http://www.dailybread.ca/learning-centre/housing-benefit) to find out more on a proposed Ontario Housing Benefit and how you can help make it a reality.

Other statistical highlights in the Hunger Snapshot include:

- Median monthly income of a food bank client: \$925
- Percentage of food bank clients who are children: 36%
- Percentage of adults who go hungry at least once a week: 40%
- Percentage of food bank clients who are receiving social assistance: 67%
- Percentage of food bank clients who have a disability: 46%

Daily Bread Food Bank is an independent, non-profit, charitable organization that is fighting to end hunger in our communities. As Canada’s largest food bank, Daily Bread serves people through neighbourhood food banks and meal programs in almost 170 member agencies across Toronto. We know feeding hungry people won’t solve poverty; that’s why Daily Bread does more. We work to support people by providing job training; researching and educating people on issues of poverty and moving forward with innovative and realistic solutions that will help people break away from poverty.

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