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REPORT BY TORONTO FOOD BANKS REVEALS LONG-TERM TREND OF RISING FOOD BANK USE:

Annual Who's Hungry Report Illustrates Data On A Decade of Food Insecurity

Toronto, ON – At the end of 2008 when the economic crisis hit Toronto, food banks saw a dramatic jump in use by nearly 10%. A recent report shows that despite Toronto's growth in prosperity, there still continues to be a steady and severe rise in food insecurity levels.

Who's Hungry is an annual report released by **Daily Bread Food Bank** and **North York Harvest** based on client visit numbers and an in-person survey of 1,400 food bank clients. This year's report reveals a snapshot on a decade of increasing hunger:

- Total food bank visits between April 2008 and March 2018 have increased overall by 14%
- There were **914,470** food bank client visits over the past year
- Food bank visits have remained near the **1 million mark** for the past five years
- The area of the city experiencing the highest increase since 2008 is Etobicoke (170%)
- A majority of food bank clients (37%) are working age adults/seniors (45+); the majority a decade ago were 19 – 44 year olds
- Since 2008, there has been a 13% increase in food bank use by people who have lived in Canada for 10+ years

"There is a real need in Toronto to find solutions for increasing hunger and food insecurity. The people that are struggling to feed their families are your own neighbours, members of your community, people you pass on the sidewalk every day," said Neil Hetherington, CEO of the Daily Bread Food Bank. "Tackling poverty requires a comprehensive plan, with long-term goals at the forefront. I'm hopeful that the people of Toronto and all levels of government will take action to ensure that their policies reflect our shared goal in eradicating hunger," Hetherington added.

The report also shows that food insecurity is growing in the inner suburbs, increasing by 61% in the last decade alone. Etobicoke is not alone in seeing an increase in food bank use. Scarborough and North York have seen a rise in client visits by 86% and 9%, respectively.

"The face of hunger is changing," says Ryan Noble, Executive Director of North York Harvest. "We're seeing more seniors turning to us for help. And while food banks are doing what they can to service those who need them, the fact of the matter is it's still hard for those clients to keep up with the rising cost of living."

A cornerstone in advocacy work for over a decade, the Who's Hungry report provides quantitative and qualitative data about the experience of hunger and poverty in Toronto.

With over 30 food banks in Toronto and North York participating in research efforts, Who's Hungry illustrates a united front towards tackling food insecurity in the region.

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