



# School Champion Toolkit

# Thank you for raising your hand and making an impact

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Thank you for joining us in the fight to end hunger as a School Champion for Daily Bread Food Bank. Your efforts to raise food or funds have never been more important.

In 2024, there were over 3.75 million client visits at Daily Bread member food banks. **This was the highest number ever recorded in the city's history** and a staggering 4.5 times more than pre-pandemic levels.

More than one in ten people in Toronto are now relying on food banks. **And nearly 1 in 4 (23%) food bank clients are children.**

The need has never been greater. The staggering cost of living, stagnant wages and insufficient income supports are driving more people to turn to food charities to make ends meet. **By hosting a food drive or fundraiser, you will make an immediate difference for individuals and families experiencing hunger across Toronto.** Your leadership as a School Champion will help us put food on tables now as we advocate for the long-term policy solutions that will reduce poverty in the future and enable everyone to realize their right to food.

We are so grateful you've decided to take action. On behalf of all of us at Daily Bread Food Bank, thank you for your support and leadership in the fight to end hunger.

In partnership,

Neil Hetherington  
CEO, Daily Bread Food Bank

If you or anyone you know is in need of emergency food access, please visit [\*\*dailybread.ca/need-food\*\*](https://dailybread.ca/need-food)

# What's inside

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In this toolkit, you will find information and tips to help you launch a fun and impactful food drive and/or fundraiser within your school.

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# About Daily Bread Food Bank

Founded in 1983, Daily Bread Food Bank is one of Canada's largest food banks. Daily Bread distributes fresh and shelf-stable food and fresh-cooked meals to 205 food programs at 129 member agencies across Toronto, including food banks and drop-in meal programs.

We believe that access to food is a basic human right and that no one should go hungry or face barriers to accessing food. We work toward long-term solutions to end hunger and poverty and run innovative programs to support individuals living on low incomes and experiencing food insecurity.

We work closely with our member agencies to provide the support that will help meet the needs of each of the diverse communities they serve. Together, we facilitate dignified, low-barrier food access to adults, seniors and children facing food insecurity.

## Our network of programs include:

**Breakfast programs**, which serve a light breakfast.



**Food bank programs**, which distribute up to three days of fresh and self-stable grocery items. Clients may visit a food bank in the network once per week.



**Meal programs**, which serve a prepared meal to their community members.



**Pre-natal programs**, which distribute fresh and shelf-stable grocery items to expecting parents and those with children up to age 5 within their community.



**Snack programs**, which serve portable snack items that are quick and easy to eat (e.g. granola bars, cookies, etc.).



**Tenant programs**, which are tenant-led and distribute grocery items (mainly shelf-stable) to members within a specific community.



# Benefits of getting involved

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- 1 Help your neighbours experiencing hunger and food insecurity.
- 2 Demonstrate compassion and empathy.
- 3 Become a leader in your school.
- 4 Inspire friendly competition and creativity.
- 5 Learn to work as a team.
- 6 Increase school spirit.
- 7 Make a difference in your community.
- 8 Earn volunteer hours through our Take Action Project – **find out how.**



# Why your leadership is needed

**Toronto is in a food insecurity crisis.** The rising cost of living, stagnant incomes and insufficient supports are forcing more and more people to turn to food banks to feed themselves and their families.

The need has never been greater. Here are some of the reasons we need your leadership right now:

- In 2024, Daily Bread Food Bank served **over 3.75 million** client visits — that's a 26% increase over 2023 and more than 4.5 times pre-pandemic levels.
- Daily Bread distributed **41.1 million pounds** of food in 2024, nearly 10 million pounds more than the year prior.
- **More than 1 in 10** people in Toronto are now relying on food banks, up from 1 in 20 just two years prior.
- **Nearly half (49%)** of food bank clients in Toronto have someone in their household who is employed.
- After paying for rent and utilities, food bank clients have a median of **\$7.78** left per person per day to cover food, transportation and all other necessities.
- **Nearly 1 in 4 (23%)** food bank visits in Toronto are children and youth.





# Tips for success

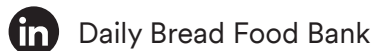
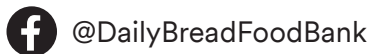
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Before getting started, here are a few tips you might want to consider when planning your food drive or fundraiser:

- **Set a start and end date.** We recommend running your drive for one to two weeks. Give students enough notice so that they can bring in their donations on time.
- **Set a plan and goal.** Goal-setting is a great way to predict the impact that you are going to have in the community. Set a goal for the school and develop a plan to achieve or even surpass it! Check on your progress regularly and update the school community along the way.
- **Get competitive!** Generate excitement through an intra-school challenge. Give each class a goal. Have classes or grades compete against each other for bragging rights or even an incentive prize.
- **Encourage empathy.** Holding a food drive or fundraiser at your school offers a teachable moment in empathy. Encourage students to imagine what it would be like to go a day without food. How would they feel going to bed hungry or having to focus in class on an empty stomach? Keep in mind that some students and families may be experiencing food insecurity themselves.
- **Give students a chance to lead.** Assign drive ambassadors in each class and help cultivate the next generation of social impact leaders.
- **Spread the word.** Demonstrate your school's leadership and inspire others to help end hunger in your community and keep the campaign top-of-mind. Spread the word during your school's morning announcements. Share a letter with parents. Share posters on your school's website and social media accounts.
- **Say thanks.** After your food drive is complete and we've shared your final weight, be sure to thank your school community and celebrate your collective efforts. You can post a "thank you" on social media and be sure to tag us so we can thank them, too!

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## Connect with Daily Bread on social media:



Be sure to tag us in your fundraiser/food drive social media posts so we can engage with your campaign and thank your supporters!

# How to run a fundraiser

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## Step 1: Create a fundraising event and set your goal

- Our online donation page is a secure way to fundraise with your network. You can include a fun photo or logo and customize your message to share why you're raising funds. **Donations of \$10 or more will automatically receive an electronic tax receipt.**
- Set your fundraising goal based on what you'd like to achieve during your fundraising campaign! For every \$1 raised, Daily Bread provides one wholesome, nutritional meal to a neighbour experiencing hunger. If you raise \$5,000, that is 5,000 meals going to neighbours in need.

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## Step 2: Assign roles and responsibilities

- If you have a group of students looking to get involved, a student committee is a great way for leaders at your school to gain valuable experience working together to motivate their peers. Committee roles offer a variety of opportunities for students to strategize, organize, and execute their campaign!
- Roles could include **Awareness Ambassadors** to create handmade school campaign posters and **Classroom Ambassadors** to visit classes and promote the fundraiser, encourage classmates to participate and answer peers' questions.

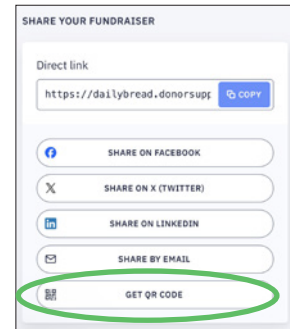




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## Step 3: Share your link and promote your fundraiser

- Send your fundraiser's custom link to school community members, inviting them to support your fundraising event. Post your link on social media to reach your wider network or send out emails explaining why families should get behind your cause. For inspiration, check out a [sample email on page 14](#).
- **Download a customizable fundraising poster** that you can use to announce and promote your drive (or have students create their own). Your fundraiser's page has an option for you to **get a QR code that people can scan to donate directly to your drive** from their phones, and our flyer has a spot where you can upload that QR code. Post your flyer in school common areas or send it out as an email attachment.



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## Step 4: Track your progress

- Keep track of your donations by logging into your fundraising page. You'll be able to see who donated and how close you are to achieving your goal. Inform your school community on your progress to encourage donations and maintain momentum!

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## Step 5: Wrap up and thank your donors

- Tally up your total raised and thank your donors! You can send them an email (we have a [sample email on page 15](#)) or thank them on social media. Be sure to tag us so we can say thank you, too.

# How to run a food drive

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## Step 1: Register your food drive, set a goal, and get any needed bins or bags

- Register your food drive with us and let us know if you'll need any paper bags or yellow, Daily Bread Food Bank cardboard bins for donation collection. Bags and bins can be picked up at Daily Bread's Welcome Centre, **191 New Toronto Street**, Etobicoke, Monday-Friday, from 9:00am – 4:30pm.
  - Set a goal to motivate your donors! One pound of donated food provides one nutritious meal to a neighbour experiencing hunger, so if you raise 100 lbs of food, you'll be providing 100 meals to those in need.
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## Step 2: Assign roles and responsibilities

- If you have a group of students looking to get involved, a student committee is a great way for leaders at your school to gain valuable experience working together to motivate their peers. Committee roles offer a variety of opportunities for students to strategize, organize, and execute their campaign.
  - Roles could include **Awareness Ambassadors** to create handmade school campaign posters; **Classroom Ambassadors** to visit classes and promote the fundraiser, encourage classmates to participate and answer peers' questions; and **Food Management Ambassadors** to set up donation bins, transport donations from classes to bins and document the number of items donated by each class.
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## Step 3: Spread the word and collect non-perishable food donations

- Let your school community know to donate only non-perishable, shelf-stable food items. These include canned, boxed, jarred, dried, or otherwise preserved items. Make the biggest impact by collecting our **most needed non-perishable food items**. You can check out this list on **page 13** to help focus your efforts.

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- **Download a customizable food drive poster** you can use to announce and promote your drive. Post it in school common areas or use it as a flyer to canvass your neighbourhood. Be sure to add instructions through the fillable text fields to tell donors how they can get food to you. You can input these instructions right into the PDF. **We also have versions of this flyer that include spaces for you to upload logos and QR codes if needed.**
- Promote your drive on social media to help you get your message out to the community. Tag us so we can thank and encourage your donors, too!



## Step 4: Drop the food off

- There are a **few different ways to get your food donations to us:**
  1. Drop off your food donations in the yellow Daily Bread bins in **any fire hall across the city**. They are open 24/7.
  2. Bring your donations directly to the Daily Bread warehouse. We're located at 191 New Toronto St., and **the entrance at Gate 2** is open for donation drop-offs Monday through Friday from 10:00am to 3:30pm. You'll see a bin for donations right next to the truck bays. **Tip: Would you like us to weigh your total donation when you drop it off?** Please email [fundraise@dailybread.ca](mailto:fundraise@dailybread.ca) one or two business days in advance of your arrival and let us know when you're here. Be sure to notify us via email after you've dropped off your donation to receive your total weight.
  3. You can request a pickup of your donations by completing **this form**. There is no minimum weight requirement for donation pickup from K-12 schools, but please complete the form at least a week in advance of your requested pickup date whenever possible.
- **Tip:** Before you drop your food off, take a photo to show your donors what they achieved together!

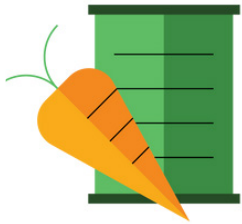
## Step 5: Wrap up and thank your donors

- We're able to thank and recognize donors who give funds online, but we have no way to do that for your food donors. Please thank each and every one of your donors on our behalf. We are so grateful for their generosity, and for yours. Show them a bit of love on social media. Publicly acknowledging them also provides another way for you to talk about your initiative! Tag us and we will thank them, too.

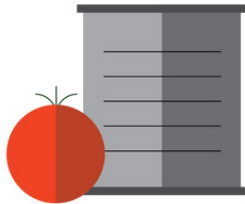


# Our most needed items

If you're not sure what sort of non-perishable food items to donate, you can focus on this list. These six are what our food bank clients need most:



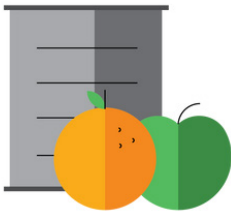
Canned vegetables



Canned tomatoes  
(whole, diced, crushed)



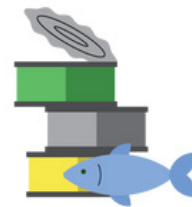
Oatmeal



Canned fruit



Nut butter  
(almond, peanut)



Canned fish  
(tuna, salmon, sardines)



# Sample emails

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## Sample email to request fundraising support:

Dear parents and caregivers,

Did you know nearly 1 in 4 (23%) of food bank clients are children?

When children experience hunger, they're at higher risk of developing severe health conditions, behavioural issues, cognitive and physical impairments, and poor grades. Without enough food, children simply do not have the nutrients or energy they need to learn and grow.

That's why our school is running a fundraiser in support of Daily Bread Food Bank.

### **[Details of your fundraiser goal]**

For every dollar raised, Daily Bread provides one wholesome, nutritious meal for someone experiencing hunger in our city. If you are able to, please make a donation here [**← insert the hyperlink to your online fundraiser**].

We are counting on the entire school community to come together. We hope you will join us. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

Sincerely,

**[Your name]**

P.S. To learn more about Daily Bread Food Bank, visit [dailybread.ca](https://dailybread.ca). If you or anyone you know needs emergency food services, please visit [dailybread.ca/need-food](https://dailybread.ca/need-food).

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## Sample email to request food drive support:

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That's why our school is running a food drive in support of Daily Bread Food Bank.

To participate, please bring non-perishable food donations to **[insert instructions on your food drive date and location]**.

Most needed items include:

- Canned fish/fruit/veggies/tomatoes
- Oatmeal
- Nut and seed butter (peanut, almond, sunflower, etc.)

We also invite you to consider donating non-perishable items that are allergy-friendly, such as gluten-free, dairy-free, or nut-free foods.

We are counting on the entire school community to come together. We hope you will join us. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

Sincerely,

**[Your name]**

P.S. To learn more about Daily Bread Food Bank, visit [dailybread.ca](https://dailybread.ca). If you or anyone you know needs emergency food services, please visit [dailybread.ca/need-food](https://dailybread.ca/need-food).

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## Sample thank you email:

Dear students and parents/caregivers,

I am very proud to announce that we raised **[XXX lbs of food / \$XXX]** in support of Daily Bread Food Bank. That is enough to provide food for **XXX [where 1 lb or \$1 = 1 meal]** meals for families and individuals who are experiencing hunger in Toronto.

To those who have donated, thank you so much. Your support is so greatly appreciated — especially now, when the need for food in our city is greater than ever. It is inspiring what we can accomplish when we come together.

Thank you again for your outstanding support in helping eliminate food insecurity in our community.

Sincerely,

**[Your name]**

P.S. To learn more about Daily Bread Food Bank, visit [dailybread.ca](https://dailybread.ca). If you or anyone you know needs emergency food services, please visit [dailybread.ca/need-food](https://dailybread.ca/need-food).

# Thank you for your leadership

Together, we can ensure that everyone has access to the nutritious food they need



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