



Winter Newsletter



So Long 2022, Hello 2023 ...

As the new year begins, it's a wonderful time to reflect on the huge achievements at Food4Kids Waterloo Region, and the positive impact we are making in the lives of vulnerable children. It's incredibly inspiring and empowering to know that at this time last year, we were serving 888 children and at the end of 2022 we have grown to support 1,030 children.

The holiday campaign's \$50,000 goal was almost tripled, and with this we will be expanding our program to 1,100 children. This may not seem significant, but it costs over \$1,000 in food alone to support a child for one year. We will continue to grow to serve more at-risk kids, together with you, our supporters, in the fight against childhood hunger.

The children we support count on you for food and hope, to help feed their dreams of a better future. Thank you everyone – donors, funders, volunteers and advocates – for caring about vulnerable kids in our community.

Our mission to ensure that every child has access to food that they need to grow and succeed can't be done without you, our noble hunger heroes, fighting hunger, feeding hope and building healthy futures.



Visit <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CmeoBVgP2no> to watch a video recap of our winter break program.

The social determinants of health tell us that positive, early intervention in a child's development leads to positive outcomes later in life. Together we can take comfort in knowing that we are helping children to grow healthy - mentally, physically and socially.

I wholeheartedly believe that healthy communities start with healthy children.

Reference: Community Food Centres, "Beyond Hunger". <https://cfccanada.ca/CFCC/media/Beyond-Hunger/Beyond-Hunger.pdf>



A New Years Message from Mike, Father of 3 Girls

I wanted to let you know that you went above and beyond the call of duty to help my daughters and I. Just know the impact you have left on our lives will never be forgotten.

For the past 3 years, Food4Kids Waterloo Region has been supporting a father and his 3 girls – off and on when times get tough, which has been frequent through COVID. Sadly, Mom passed away in 2020, leaving behind young twin girls and an older daughter, with Dad as their sole provider and caregiver.

This past fall, the family was evicted by their landlord for upgrades to increase rent and Dad lost his long-term job because the company closed. The family moved into a dismal, windowless one-room motel for several months, provided through the Region's homelessness program. Things were desperate, but Dad persevered, and we provided healthy food and encouragement along the way.

In mid-December, things started looking up. The family moved into a 2-bedroom townhouse in a good neighbourhood, with an extra den for a bedroom. It took months to save up and find a place, the most affordable at \$1,800 per month. The family slept on the floor at first when they moved in, but it was still way better than the motel room. Now they have a house full of donated furniture and housewares. It's a real home now. Dad got a good job in construction at \$23 per hour, but it's not enough for rent, food and other necessities. Due to Dad's long work hours, he is unable to go to food programs offered in the Region because they are closed when he gets home. The Food4Kids Waterloo Region family is always there to help along the way.

We first shared this story on our Facebook page. Chloe, a long-time supporter of Food4Kids Waterloo Region reached out to ask how she could help this family, and connected with Dad. For years, he had been doing laundry by hand or taking it to other homes to do. Chloe found a used washer and dryer, and with the help from friends delivered it to the family just after Christmas. Chloe also bought the girls warm clothes.

Thank you, Chloe, donors, volunteers and supporters, for helping so many children and families.

As Mike said, it's never forgotten the impact you make everyday.



Meet the New Board of Directors

From left to right:

Faez Al-hendi, Corina Chang, Colin Woodworth (Treasurer), Cali Dubois (Staff), Martin Mahlstedt, Lorri Detta (Staff), Carla Waites (President), Josh Bruce, Cameron Redmond (Vice President), John van Dijk, Chris White (Staff) Front row: Jessica Nurse and Kim Mervyn (Staff)



What's All This New Stuff at Food4Kids Waterloo Region?

Over the last year, we have been able to brighten up our look and location with many things including a new website, signage, marketing, accessibility, equipment, technology and so much more...all thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation Ontario Resiliency Fund and the Capital Fund received in 2021 and 2022.

We are incredibly grateful for the extra funds for our makeover and helping us create a stronger foundation to support our mission. We always ensure your donations and fundraising go directly to our mission, supporting vulnerable children in our community.



LAST CALL for KW Kiwanis Calendars!

The KW Kiwanis Calendar is only \$20 and includes daily cash prize draws during the 2023 calendar year, totalling \$10,000!

With only 2,000 printed, there is an EXCELLENT chance to win!

If you belong to a church, sports organization, business, club or association, please consider selling calendars to your members, friends, family and colleagues.

For each calendar sold, \$10 goes to feeding kids living with severe food insecurity. That is a lottery itself.

To order, contact Chris at 519.576.3443

Why Should You Purchase a KW Kiwanis Cash Calendar?



- ✓ Remembering important date and birthdays
- ✓ Chance to win daily cash draws
- ✓ Supporting kids living with chronic hunger

Holiday Facts!

Our caring community of individuals, families, schools, churches, service clubs, businesses, sports clubs and more came together like never before to support Food4Kids Waterloo Region. It was a RECORD YEAR!

December 2022 Food Drives raised \$30,000 + of non-perishable food items.

- 7626 apples were assembled into 682 bags
- 1030 children within 470 families received food
- 5590 lbs of produce assembled into bags
- 8118 grocery items
- Number of kids supported in September 2022: 888
- Number of kids at the end of December 2022: 1,030
- Number of schools: 65 up from 49 in June 2022
- **16,208 Volunteer Hours in 2022!**



Holiday Food Drives

We had our first ever holiday food drive campaign and the Season of Giving was a hit! We had food EVERYWHERE! We couldn't keep up. We tiptoed around boxes and bags, filled offices, stockroom and everywhere else. People of all ages and backgrounds, churches, teams and neighbours came together at a time of need. Thank you everyone for your INCREDIBLE support.



Our Donors

As we reflect on the impact of 2022 and look to the new year, we would like to take a moment to recognize the tremendous support of our donors in making Food4Kids Waterloo Region a success.

While we note our largest below, we would like to extend our gratitude to ALL donors, big or small, who have contributed to our mission of ensuring no child goes hungry. Your contributions of time, money, food and resources have made a significant impact in the lives of children and families we serve.

Your generosity throughout the year has helped us provide essential food and resources to children and families in need. With your help, we reached over 1,000 at-risk and vulnerable children, who have been able to grow healthy and focus on their education to reach their full potential.

Your unwavering dedication and kindness have been a shining light in a challenging year. We are deeply grateful and wish you all a happy and healthy new year!

Our Donors

Breakfast Club of Canada
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Ozery's Pita Break Inc.
Home Depot Canada Foundation
Bosch Community Foundation
Tides Foundation
Fidus Systems Inc.
Google
John Hamilton
Community Food Centres
St. Matthews Lutheran Church
United Way Waterloo Region Communities
Fibernetics Corporation
FreschCo Community Action Fund
Waterloo Education Foundation Inc. (WEFI)
Reid's Heritage Homes Ltd.
Xterra Construction Inc.
Gordon & Ruth Gooder Charitable Foundation
TD Bank Group
Snyder's Family Farm Ltd.
Texada
Emtek Processed Alloys Inc.
Walmart Canada Corporation
P&P Optica
Don's Produce
Kingsbury Hospitality Group Inc.

The Kiwanis Club of K-W
Civitan Kitchener-Waterloo
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Cameron Redmond
Great Ontario Beer Festival
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Propel Leadership Coaching & Training
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