



Red Door FAMILY SHELTER

*Ending family homelessness...
one family at a time*



Shelter News Fall 2011

In this Issue

- Many Still Hungry
- Donor Spotlight
- Summer Highlights
- Program Spotlight
- Meet Team Red Door



The 2011 STWM Charity Challenge is fast approaching and Team Red Door needs your help.

Help us reach our goal of raising \$25,000 to support outreach programming!

You can show your support for Team Red Door by making a pledge. Your support will make a difference for a family in need.

For more information, please visit:
www.reddoorshelter.ca/marathon

Many Still Hungry in the GTA

At the Red Door we are continuing to see higher than average occupancy rates and an increased use of outreach services like our food bank.

It is no surprise that the effects of the economic downturn are still being felt by the most vulnerable. The Toronto Daily Bread Food Bank's annual research report "Who's Hungry, a profile of hunger in the GTA" clearly illustrates this fact. Looking at food bank use statistics can provide both a good indicator of the economy, and an important window into social policy to determine where problems lie and what work needs to be done.

According to the report, while food bank use in the GTA has dropped by 9% from 2010, it is not an indication that trends are changing. The number of visits to a foodbank in the Greater Toronto Area in 2011 was still 14% higher than 2008 pre-recession levels and demands in suburban areas continue to grow. For 2011, the number of food bank visits in the total GTA approached 1.1 million.

The report shows that one of the major contributing factors to many families or individuals reaching out to food banks is the lack of safe, affordable housing and the prohibitively high cost of private market rent in the GTA. Unlike food, paying the rent every month is non-negotiable, and many families are having to go hungry or use a food bank to make ends meet. The average food bank user is paying more than 72% of their monthly income on rent and utilities, leaving them with a meager \$5.67 per person per day to spend on food, transportation and other living expenses.

As in previous years, the vast majority of food bank clients (67%) rely on one of Ontario's social assistance programs for their income. This demonstrates a clear flaw in the income security system, which provides insufficient levels of income (\$592/month for a single individual) that is not indexed to inflation, ostensibly deepening the problem year over year.

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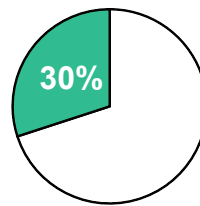
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But as this year's report shows, a growing number of employed households are also needing to access food banks more often to survive. The report identifies an ongoing shift in the labour market from full-time to part-time or irregular work hours for many, which means that having employment no longer guarantees income security or benefits.

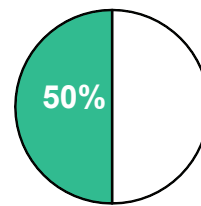
About 25% of food bank clients have at least one employed person in the household working more than 20 hours/week. More troubling is the fact that employed households are no better off affording housing than those receiving insufficient social assistance income – paying an average of 73% of their monthly income on rent and utilities.

Job losses and an inability to find work are driving more people with higher education to the food banks as well, with the percentage of food bank users with a university or postgraduate degree rising to 28% in 2011 from 21% in 2006. Of those, 63% were newcomers to Canada, speaking to the growing need to address barriers faced by newcomers in achieving meaningful employment.

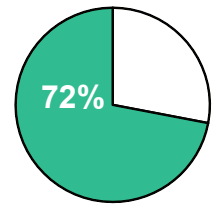
Income Spent on Rent/Mortgage Including Utilities



Average Affordable
Paying no more than 30% of household income is considered affordable



Risk of Homelessness
Spending more than 50% of household income puts one at severe risk of becoming homeless.



Food Bank Client
The average food bank client pays upwards of 72% of household income on housing



There is a clear indication that change is necessary if this downward trend is to be reversed. A growing body of research is indicating that the widening income gap and failure to make poverty reduction a priority is leading us to an unsustainable future, socially *and* economically. One step in the right direction is the province's current review of Ontario's social assistance programs, due to be released in June, 2012 – the first major review in 20 years.

Raising awareness around the realities of hunger and poverty is also critically important. We encourage you to learn more by reading the Daily Bread's full report (dailybread.ca) and to share this valuable information with your friends, family and neighbours.

You can also get involved by volunteering at the Red Door's weekly food bank, visit: reddoorshelter.ca/volunteer

reprinted in part with permission, Daily Bread Food Bank

Donor Spotlight

Members of the Mississauga House of Praise surprised Red Door Staff on July 21st with a cheque for \$10,000 dollars!

The donation came from their Night of Gratitude fundraising event held on July 1st. More than 900 members were in attendance to celebrate in the spirit of giving back. The Red Door was selected by the membership as 1 of 4 charities to receive the proceeds from the event.

We are very grateful to have been selected and thrilled by their amazing generosity! The money is being used towards critical outreach programs like our Food bank.



Red Door ED Bernnitta Hawkins and thrilled staff receive the donation from Femi Olamijulo and House of Praise Members.

Summer Highlights!

Our resident children and teens have headed back to school already but they've brought some lasting summer memories with them. They were treated to many great outings including a week-long outdoor adventure at Troop Camp, and the chance to watch a Blue Jays game in style from box seats with all the perks. Thanks to the generous support of many donors who helped make these events possible.



The Troop Campers salute!



Proud parents enjoy the Jays game

In-Kind Donor Spotlight



WOMENAIDE

We greatly appreciate the support of regular in-kind donors like WomenAide who provide toiletries and essentials to the women and children at our shelters.

We are currently seeking donations of winter clothing, jackets and toiletries.

Contact:
inkind@reddoorshelter.ca

Program Spotlight: Moving Program

Since 2005, the Moving Program has been a vital service of the Red Door Family Shelter, helping almost 150 families move out of the shelter every year. By collecting gently used furniture and household items from donors and distributing them to families moving back into the community, the Moving Program provides important transitional support.

Many of the families who come to the Red Door have little or no possessions because they had to flee situations of abuse or suffered significant financial hardship. When they are ready to move out of the shelter, the Moving Program reduces their moving costs and provides much needed furniture and household items at no cost.

Providing this service not only aids families financially, but also helps to reduce their stress after living through a period of crisis. For many families, it means the difference between moving into a cold empty apartment and moving into a home, with a renewed sense of security and independence.

For more information about this program and a list of our high priority items, please visit:

www.reddoorshelter.ca/moving-program



The Moving Program in action

Thank you to our Moving Program funders:
Catherine Donnelly Foundation, Newman's Own Foundation, F.K. Morrow Foundation, Mitchell and Kathryn Baran Foundation, Brumara Foundation

Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon 2011

Meet Team Red Door

We caught up with one of the Team Red Door runners for this years' Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge to ask what drives and inspires him.

Ben Pham - Volunteer Treasurer, Board of Directors of the Red Door Shelter



What made you decide to run for the Red Door?

I began running for personal reasons about 4 years ago and to cross off one of the "I've done that" items on my life list. Since becoming a member of the Red Door's Board of Directors, my running goal now is to help conquer family homelessness.

What do you look forward to most on October 16th?

The enthusiasm and competitive spirit of fellow marathoners who have dedicated at least the last half year training for this special day. Also, what amazes me the most is the strength and determination of other fellow marathoners; I've seen runners of every age and size compete and even finish ahead of me.

What message do you have for the families at the Red Door?

The best changes often start with simple thoughts. Always think big, and discover how to make your dreams a reality. I took that simple, single step a few years ago at the start of my running career and today every step I take, every run I do, I try to make a significant difference in other lives. I encourage all to join in on the fun on October 16 - all of us can make a difference with that first step!

For more information on how you can join or support Team Red Door visit: www.reddoorshelter.ca/marathon

We're on Facebook and Twitter!

The Red Door has gone social! Connect with us on Facebook and Twitter to join in the conversation and keep up to date with our latest news and activities. We love hearing from you!



facebook.com/reddoorfamilyshelter



[@RedDoorFamilySh](https://twitter.com/RedDoorFamilySh)



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