

**Presentation to  
City of Barrie**

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**Taking Action on Food  
Insecurity:  
Roles for Municipalities**

# What is household food insecurity?



- Insecure or inadequate access to food **due to financial constraints**
- Requires income responses



Is food  
insecurity a  
problem in  
Simcoe  
Muskoka?

**1 in 8**

# Food insecurity takes a toll on health

## Children

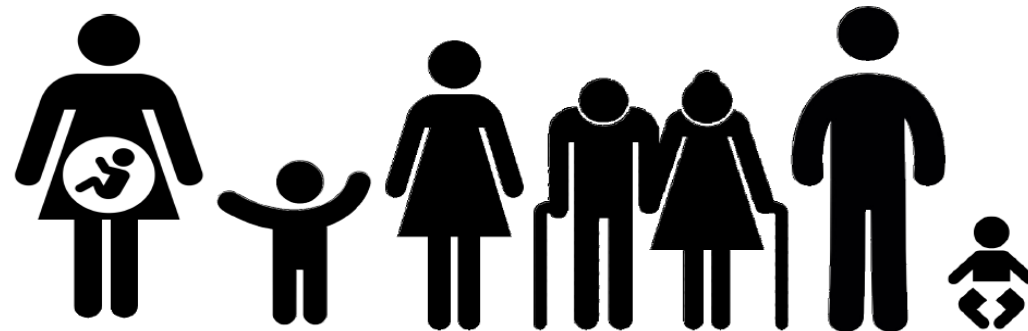
- More risk of asthma, depression

## Youth

- Social anxiety, suicide, depression

## Adults

- Higher rates of diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, depression



# Impacts health care use & costs

- **The more food insecure ...**
  - the greater the use of health services
  - health care costs also higher
- **Food insecurity - a strong predictor of high cost health care use**



# Reducing food insecurity benefits municipal governments and communities

- 🍴 ↓ health care costs
- 🍴 ↓ demand on health services
- 🍴 Benefits the municipal budget
- 🍴 Creates more equitable communities
- 🍴 ↓ social isolation
- 🍴 Improves community connectedness
- 🍴 Supports learning, building human potential
- 🍴 Supports economic development











# The challenge

- 🍴 It takes more than food to solve hunger
- 🍴 Poverty is the root cause
- 🍴 Income solutions are needed



# Municipalities are already taking actions that help

-  Affordable housing
-  Living wage
-  Policies to attract quality jobs
-  Support for entrepreneurship
-  Leadership/support for coalition-building
-  Advocacy





# Our ask: Consider an advocacy role

- 🍴 Advocate for provincial policies that mean more money for food, such as ....
  - Social assistance rates that match real living costs, indexed to inflation
  - Keeping Ontario's Basic Income Pilot a priority
  - Creating policies that encourage good jobs with regular hours and benefits



# Consider local policy options

- 🍴 Monitor poverty annually
- 🍴 Consider policy decisions that mean more income for people struggling with food insecurity ....
  - Take poverty into consideration in local planning
  - Support for affordable housing
  - Support for a living wage
  - Create climate for entrepreneurship
  - Attract employers that provide higher paying jobs
  - Leadership / support for community coalition-building to address food insecurity



One more  
thing ....

Learn more about food insecurity  
and what can be done about it .....

How can we help?

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# Final food for thought

[Food insecurity video](#)