



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024





Food4Kids Muskoka Annual Report — Presented by Sarah Thatcher, Executive Director



INTRODUCTION

In January 2023, I founded Food4Kids Muskoka in hopes of addressing the growing needs of children experiencing food insecurity in the local community. **Our mission is to ensure children aged 4-18 experience “Weekends Without Hunger” by providing nutritious food packs every week.** I am grateful that amazing community members quickly joined the mission and we built an incredible Board of Directors Team and began addressing the needs of kids across Muskoka.

OUR JOURNEY

Rising housing and food costs have made it increasingly difficult for families and year-round residents to make ends meet. Food4Kids Muskoka was established to address these needs and bring relief to vulnerable children in our community. We launched in September 2023, feeding 7 children during our first weekend. At the end of our first year, with the help of over 100 dedicated volunteers, **we packed 188 bags weekly, serving children in 16 schools across Muskoka.** This rapid growth is a testament to the community’s generosity and commitment.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Strong Partnerships:** Collaborations with Deerhurst Resort and The Cutter’s Edge have been pivotal in allowing us to launch our program. Deerhurst hosted our inaugural Breakfast Gala in November 2023, attended by 200 guests, raising funds and awareness. The Cutter’s Edge generously provided us with space on a \$1 two-year lease, enabling operational efficiency.
- **Innovative Food Sourcing:** By purchasing food wholesale, we maximize every dollar donated, effectively doubling or tripling our impact. Fresh fruits, vegetables, and special occasion items like buns from local bakeries enhance the nutritional value of our food packs.
- **Volunteer-Powered Efficiency:** Each Wednesday, volunteers pack 12-15 nutritious, shelf-stable items into food bags, including fresh produce. On

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Thursdays, drivers deliver these discreetly to schools, where staff ensure the bags reach children's backpacks seamlessly.

LOOKING AHEAD

Our goal is to continue growing the "Weekends Without Hunger" program. By fostering deeper collaborations with community stakeholders and corporate sponsors, we aim to feed even more children, **ensuring no child goes hungry on weekends.**

THANK YOU!

Your support has been instrumental in our success. Together, we are building a stronger, healthier Muskoka. Let's continue to work together to feed hope and fuel potential for our children.

Sarah Thatcher

Sarah Thatcher Founder & Executive Director





MISSION:

To provide healthy food for elementary and secondary school students with little or no access to food during the weekend and throughout the summer months.

MANDATE:

- **We believe** child and youth hunger is a community responsibility and by working together we can provide a solution-based program that addresses and responds to child hunger in our shared community.
- **We believe** that alleviating the effects of poverty and hunger strengthens our community, providing children with opportunities to grow, excel and thrive.
- **We believe** in facilitating programs in a non-stigmatizing, impactful and inclusive manner ensuring dignity of all participants.
- **We believe** in collaborative partnerships with volunteers, community members, schools, businesses and funders to collectively support children and families.
- **We believe** that by maintaining the highest standards, we can ensure positive outcomes for children and their families through leadership, transparency, accountability and diligent stewardship of community resources.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

PROVIDE packages of nutritious food for children with little or no access to food during weekend periods or during the summer months;

FOCUS on schools located in low-income and marginalized neighbourhoods with poverty rates in excess of 40% to reduce barriers for those most in-need;

CONDUCT public education and community-awareness initiatives designed to develop an understanding of child hunger;

PROVIDE leadership as the primary resource for weekend and summer food distribution for at-risk children engaging community partners;

MAINTAIN a high standard of service through best practices and annual evaluation methods;

DEVOTE extensive resources to recruit, train, retain and recognize volunteers to facilitate the program.



OUR PROGRAMS:

WEEKENDS WITHOUT HUNGER: This program provides packages of healthy food for elementary and secondary school children with limited or no access to food each weekend. Referrals are received from schools aware of children and families struggling with food security. Volunteers package food each Wednesday and our volunteer drivers deliver food to schools on Thursday mornings. At the school, the food package is discreetly tucked into the child's own backpack helping to shield the child from any stigma associated with hunger or receiving food assistance. Each child in the home receives their own food package. **The cost per healthy food bag is \$20 or \$1000 to feed a child for an entire school year.**

SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM: Hunger does not take a break in the summer and neither do we! Food4Kids Muskoka continues to support our kids in the summer months. The summer food program continues to evolve based on the number of students served and based on resources we have available during the summer months. **We are committed to supporting every child in need, all summer long.**



STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

REVENUES

Donations	539,090
Government grants and subsidies	10,386
Interest income	274
	\$549,750

EXPENSES

Program coordinators	90,304
Food purchases	74,110
Rent	3,616
	\$168,030

EXPENSES

Advertising and promotion	45,673
Wages expense	16,876
Professional fees	7,270
Fundraising expenses	6,216
Office Expenses	4,620
Food prep equipment	3,251
Travel	2,949
Amortization	2,213
Telephone and utilities	2,093
Insurance	2,044
Interest and bank charges	1,104
	\$94,309

Excess of revenue over expenses	\$287,411
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Year ending August 31

**BECAUSE OF YOU,
WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO MUCH.**

110
families
in the program



16
schools

\$500,000+
raised to support
"Weekends Without Hunger"
program

188
kids
enrolled in
the program

752 food bags delivered
each month from
March to June

115+
volunteers





OUR TEAM

(As of August 31, 2024)

2023-2024 Board of Directors:

Executive Committee:

Michelle Petterson, Board Chair

Rahim Premji, Vice Co-Chair

John Mesec, Vice Co-Chair

Michael Fox, Treasurer

Sophie Goutos, Secretary

Directors:

Stella Key

Martin Vuksinic

Shawn Donaldson

Our Staff:

Sarah Thatcher, Founder & Executive Director

Kristie Shaver, Communications Manager



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!



Food4Kids Muskoka is funded through donations or one-time grants. We are grateful for the unconditional giving of individuals, groups and businesses entrusting our agency with their donations, knowing the difference their support will make.

We would also like to thank Food4Kids Ontario who not only donates substantial funds but also supports through meetings, one on one consultations and keeping our team working together building and sharing resources.

To each and every donor, our thanks and assurance, your support fuels a collective effort ensuring no child goes hungry in our shared community. For a full list of our donors please go to our website.

FOUNDING PARTNER = \$15,000+

- Devonleigh Homes
- Deerhurst Resort
- The Cutter's Edge
- Stratton Homes
- Windermere House
- Harry Debes Family Foundation
- Food4Kids Ontario
- Muskoka Lumber
- Chevrolet Canada
- Hydro One
- Audrey Hellyer Charitable Foundation

INSPIRATION = \$10,000

- McGraw Family Foundation



ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM OUR FIRST YEAR

- Inaugural Breakfast Gala at Deerhurst Resort — November 2023
- Tim Hortons's Smile Holiday Cookie Campaign
- Hydro One Energizing Communities Award
- Not for Profit Impact Award — Bracebridge Chamber of Commerce
- Chevrolet Canada Good Deeds Cup 2024 Winners — \$100,000
- District of Muskoka Community Engagement Grant
- Windermere House Gala — \$100,000 Raised
- Town of Huntsville Community Recognition Award
- Starbucks Foundation Neighbourhood Grant

