

SEPTEMBER 2020

NEIGHBOURS

An exclusive magazine for the residents
of Southeast Oakville and Old Oakville

of Olde Oakville

FOOD4KIDS:
BECAUSE NO CHILD
SHOULD GO HUNGRY

SHARE YOUR PET PHOTOS
LITTLE FREE LIBRARY
FOOD AND SUCCESS





Resident Feature

Gayle Kabbash, Executive Director, and Julie Gladu, Program Coordinator, with Food4Kids Halton.

Food4Kids: Because No Child Should Go Hungry

By Deborah Everest-Hill | Photos by Marcus Armstrong

Gayle Kabbash, Executive Director of Food4Kids Halton, says many Halton families face an agonizing decision each month. “When people struggle financially, the discretionary fund is always food as you must pay your fixed expenses to keep the roof over your head,” she says. “Food is purchased with whatever is left at month’s end.”

According to Gayle, food insecurity is an issue in many communities and with the pandemic, the situation has, of course, worsened. “We were seeing the number of children we support increase even before COVID-19 hit and now we are feeding more than 100 more children,” she says. “I suspect this trend will continue as people may not be called back to work and prices for healthy food continues to go up... It will take at least a year or longer to recoup.”

Gayle says parents who lack sufficient income will go without needed medication or utilities so that their kids have enough food to eat. “Parents are often ashamed to admit that they are not able to provide adequate food for their children and too embarrassed to utilize food banks,” she notes. Of those who are eligible to visit a food bank, she says only 4 out of 10 actually do.

While community food banks and school nutrition programs are vital in keeping families well-fed, Gayle explains that some people don’t have a

in Mississauga, Niagara and Guelph. Teachers and other school staff look for signs of hunger in their students and make referrals on a family’s behalf to Food4Kids. Gayle says the process is discreet and she and her colleagues work closely with school boards and schools to ensure no child goes hungry. Every dollar raised has a profound impact on the organization’s ability to help impoverished children. Funding comes from grants, the business community and individual donations.

Typically, the food program during the summer is offered to families in the most need that are recommended by the schools. “We usually have to cap the number of families we support,” Gayle adds. But this year due to the pandemic, she says the decision was made to continue the level of support to all children throughout the summer by continuing the grocery gift card program instead of the bins of healthy foods being delivered.

COVID-19 has meant something different to everyone and for children involved with Food4Kids, Gayle says it meant fear and uncertainty about whether they would receive food support. “We wanted to ensure all children in our program would continue to receive support throughout the summer months,” she says.

Unemployment, low wages, health problems, mental health issues and separation are just some of the reasons parents end up turning to Food4Kids for help. “It’s not that parents do not want to feed their kids, they don’t have the resources to do so,” Gayle says.

Not surprisingly, the need for food has increased with the pandemic and the associated loss of employment that has taken place and Gayle predicts a minimum increase of 30 per cent in the next several months for their services.

After receiving a gift card in the mail, one parent of six kids wrote the charity to express her thanks. “At a point in my life working two jobs then going on maternity, a lot happened that turned my life upside down but then God sent some amazing people in my life; Food4Kids was one. Each week I know I will have enough to put a

meal together for my kids ... I can’t thank you all enough and for the people that donate this is truly an amazing program. You all are truly angels sent at the right time.”

Another caregiver raising a ten-year-old grandson with autism indicated that the grocery cards have helped her purchase healthy foods for the two of them and another parent says the help has eased the financial burden.

Julie Gladu, a Program Coordinator with Food4Kids Halton, says it’s overwhelming to hear stories like these and feel the appreciation from families. “Knowing that they have people who care about them and will support them in any way possible makes a huge difference.”

One of the things Gayle loves most about her job is building relationships and engaging the community to ensure no child goes hungry. “Making an impact on the life of a child with a community of individuals that cares so much for our children is so heart-warming,” she says. “I am grateful for such a giving community as we couldn’t do this great work without the amazing individuals we have in Halton; I am so proud of our community.”

Chronic hunger, impacts children physically, mentally, academically and socially. In contrast, children with an adequate healthy diet are given a world of opportunity. “Hunger is not just about food, it’s about confidence, resiliency and the ability to grow and thrive,” she says.

For more information about Food4Kids Halton, to get involved or to read testimonials from parents and educators, visit www.food4kidsHalton.ca. Gayle Kabbash can be contacted at gayle@food4kidsHalton.ca. Additional information can be found at www.canadahelps.org. Connect, engage and spread awareness with the following social media channels:

Facebook: @Food4KidsHalton, Twitter: @Food4KidsHalton
Instagram: @food4kidsHalton

Continued on page 10

**REAL PETS.
REAL FOOD.
REAL HEALTHY.**

the Bone & Biscuit Co.

905-337-2525 **OAKVILLE**
Unit 9 - 487 Cornwall Road

@boneandbiscuitoakville
BONE&BISCUIT.CO

Follow US ONLINE TODAY!

The Connection Between Food and Success

By Deborah Everest-Hill | Photo by Marcus Armstrong

According to Proof, a research program, food insecurity is insufficient or insecure access to food because of financial constraints. In Canada, household food insecurity is measured by Statistics Canada using the Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM). Based on data from 2012, one in eight households in Canada is food insecure. This means that more than 4 million Canadians, including 1.15 million children, struggle with finding enough to eat.

In 2005, 1.53 million Ontario residents were living in poverty or 12.9 per cent. A decade later, that number rose to 1.89 million residents or 14.4 per cent. While Halton's poverty rates are significantly lower than the national and provincial percentages in the same period, the magnitude of the increase over time is considerable, says Gayle Kabbash, Executive Director for Food4Kids Halton.

In ten years, she says the number of people in Halton living in poverty grew by 53 per cent compared to a 25 per cent increase for the overall population. In 2015, more than 44,500 Halton residents were living in poverty compared to 29,000 people in 2005.

Gayle goes on to say that in Ontario there are more than 430,000 working poor individuals. They represent 6.7 percent of the population (18-64 years of age). In Halton, there are 12,490 individuals or 4.7 per cent of the population in the same age group.

What happens when children do not have enough to eat? Gayle says that if a child is hungry, he or she develops more slowly and is subject to increased anxiety, hyperactivity, irritability and aggression.

Food4Kids Halton is a school food referral program that delivers 31,200 food packages to Halton schools each year and currently distributes more than \$31,000 in grocery gift cards each month to 780 children aged 4 to 17 whose families struggle to purchase sufficient food.

In terms of physical health, the cost of purchasing adequate food is low in comparison to the cost of health-care-related problems resulting from



ongoing hunger. Valerie Tarasuk, a professor at the University of Toronto's Department of Nutritional Sciences, reports that in the one year "severely food-insecure" adults burn up more than double the health care dollars of the rest of us."

Mental health is also impacted when a child does not have enough to eat. Children who do not get enough to eat are more likely to be withdrawn and inattentive and they also exhibit disruptive behaviours and disciplinary disorders which require counselling and other mental health service. "Hunger is not just about food. It's about personal confidence, resiliency and the ability to grow healthy and thrive emotionally," Gayle notes.

A child who does not have enough to eat also has difficulty in school. Hunger is linked to decreased attendance, resiliency, confidence, risk-taking and participation. Even short-term nutritional deficiencies like going without sufficient food for the weekend can result in developmental damage that prevents children from performing at their full potential. Research indicates that it takes two days for a child to recover from going a weekend without food.

In contrast, children with an adequate healthy diet are given a world of opportunity. School attendance and grades improve; they are more energetic, perform better and are more social. "One of the most effective ways to prevent poverty is through a good education," Gayle adds.

At Neighbours, we believe everyone has a story to tell. Get in touch to share yours or nominate a person, family or charity for a feature article by emailing deveresthill@bestversionmedia.com.



Oakville's original bespoke physiotherapy clinic, all private treatment rooms, all treatment provided by our advanced manual physiotherapists. Offering a wide range of physiotherapy treatment options.

Proudly serving our neighbourhood for 17 years

45-1545 Cornwall Rd. Oakville • 905-842-8100

www.pinnacle-physio.com

Finding Treasures During the Pandemic

By John F. Probert



Due to COVID-19, many, many things have changed. Coin shows which I always participate in, have been cancelled for the foreseeable future. Many dealers have resorted to conducting business over the internet which is fine, but it lacks the personal touch you get from dealing with people, sharing stories and basically enjoying a day out.

COVID-19 has brought out some positive things that we can not ignore. The need to clean. Many people talk to are finding some very interesting items while decluttering their homes. A lady recently came upon three boxes of stamps that were actually in the house when she moved into it in the 1960s. I consulted with her on the stamps and as it turned out many were beautifully displayed in old albums from England and Canada. We made a mutually beneficial deal for the stamps and she said she would never have found them had it not been for her COVID declutter.

Upon thinking on this for a while, I started mentioning to people what to look for while doing their COVID cleaning. There are many types of collectors and no end of opinions on collections but allow me to mention a few items to keep your eyes out for while cleaning. Older coins are obviously valuable, especially pre 1966 Canadian coins as they contain 80 per cent silver and are clearly worth more than face value. Common silver dollars are worth about 15 dollars each today. Watches are one of my favourite items especially pocket watches as they always get tossed in a drawer and forgotten about. Pocketwatches almost always never work and are crazy expensive to repair but can be very valuable even in their broken state. Leftover holiday money is something I get calls on all the time. Just because there are far fewer currencies today than 20 years ago does not mean those old banknotes are worthless. In fact, last year one of my estate clearance friends found a duffle bag of old Belgian banknotes. Thought to be worthless, they were not. Many were in superb shape and the owner of the estate was thrilled with the resulting sale. Military medals are always very highly prized and I always urge the family to pass them down. Although, on occasion, I am called to advise on medals in an estate. Medals are truly fascinating. You can learn a great deal about a person's history and what they were awarded the medal for. I recently bought a collection of medals, one of which was awarded to a Canadian nurse serving on the front lines during WW1 in France. I made an exhaustive search to find any relatives to send the medal to but to no avail. The last and most debatable



item to watch for while cleaning is broken jewelry. Gold today is at \$2,450 Canadian per oz. so even a broken 10k chain will be worth a heck of a buck. Silver is cheaper now than it was in 1980, it has not been a superb investment while others may argue.

COVID...this too shall pass (as my wife's wise old aunt would say). For amusement, while we are locked down and staying far away from one another why not go on a treasure hunt in old desks, basements, attics, shoe boxes, and see what you can find. For free advice, you can reach me at jfprobert@gmail.com.



RICIES
APPRAISALS & CONSULT

Estate Management / Appraisals
Sales Consultation



Specializing in the identification, valuation and sale of antiques and luxury items

www.riciesappraisals.com
905-467-0063

HEALING. RECOVERY. GROWTH.

Is there hope?

If your heart is beating, healing is absolutely possible. We come alongside and help you find hope for you and your marriage.



Meristem
Counselling Services
603 Argus Road
Suite 209, Oakville
www.meristemcounselling.ca

Isabel Thorman
Registered Psychotherapist, RP

416-436-3470 • isabel@meristemcounselling.ca