

Quick facts about hunger and homelessness

- More Canadians than ever before are turning to food banks to ward off hunger. In Ontario, 374,230 people visited a food bank in March 2009, up 19 per cent from 2008 (Source: Toronto Star, Nov. 18, 2009).
- Across Canada, nearly 800,000 people must depend on food banks for some of their food, an 18 per cent increase in the past year. Almost 300,000 of them are children.
- The average Canadian family spends \$7,035 a year on food, 10.4 percent of its total expenditures. But a family in the poorest 20 per cent of the population only spends \$3,870 on food, 16.9 percent of its expenditures. (Source: The Affordability Gap: Spending Differences between Canada's Rich and Poor, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives).
- It would cost about \$470 million annually to provide a \$100 per month Healthy Food Supplement to people living on social assistance in Ontario.
- About 200,000 to 300,000 people are homeless in Canada. Only about 10 per cent of them live in shelters or on the streets. The rest "couch-surf" with friends, or find other temporary accommodation.
- 25 percent of homeless men are employed, but can't find housing that they can afford.
- Homelessness costs Canadians \$6 billion per year in emergency shelters, social services, criminal justice and other costs. (Source: *The Globe and Mail*, Nov. 7, 2009)