



## **THE BROOKFIELD COMMUNITY FOOD CUPBOARD IS SEEKING YOUR GENEROSITY TO HELP FEED THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

### **Who We Are:**

The Brookfield Community Food Cupboard (BCFC) is a local food program whose mission is to provide access to short term food supplies for the communities of Riverside Park and Hunt Club and the students and families of Brookfield High School, respecting the dignity of those accessing the Cupboard.

Food insecurity is found in neighbourhoods all over our city. In the areas served by the BCFC, estimates of the food insecure/ low-income population are in the range of 3,800 persons, alternatively expressed as about 970 families. The Cupboard was launched in May 2024 to help meet their food needs.

The BCFC is unique - it was established as an innovative model, operating as a partnership between the community and the Ottawa Carleton District School Board. The Cupboard itself is physically located in Brookfield High School from which food is distributed once a week. Website: <https://www.brookfieldcfc.ca>

### **Accomplishments:**

A number of organizations are key to BCFC's success. Besides its school partners, BCFC has the support of: Riverside United Church, both Riverside Park and Hunt Club community associations, Councillor Riley Brockington, and food recovery agencies (e.g. Lionhearts Inc., Lifecentre Food Bank).

BCFC relies strictly on volunteers - approximately 25 students and 80 volunteers from among its neighbourhoods. Student engagement provides a rich learning experience which simultaneously results in helping the student population not go hungry.

The Cupboard, in its food drives, has collaborated with local organizations to create family-oriented neighbourhood events, like fun days, and a pumpkin 'festival' and food drop. This level of participation reflects the commitment of 'neighbours helping neighbours' with food security and the Cupboard has become the focal point for food insecurity initiatives in our neighbourhoods.

Since its inception, the Cupboard has provided weekly service to students and neighbours, having provided at least a day of meals over 800 times. These numbers represent a weekly average of over 30 families per week obtaining food, with which they fed an average of about 140 of their family members.

### **Our Current Financial Need:**

From June 2024 the Cupboard received a \$750 start-up grant and monthly average cash donations of about \$1,500, reflecting the importance placed on the BCFC by neighbourhood residents. About 7% of initial funds went to equip the Cupboard with food-safe shelving, storage and packaging. The remaining 93% of incoming money continues to go to the purchase of non-perishable foods for BCFC distribution.

As awareness of the BCFC grows, demand for BCFC food increases and thus, in order to keep up current food supply, the Cupboard needs to raise more funds to buy food. This is our primary ongoing need!

Also, to be more effective at collecting food donations, additional funds will improve the equipment needed for events such as food drives, or at community/neighbourhood events, e.g. a canopy tent, tables/chairs and promotional information banners. Another use for funds will be to increase the Cupboard's storage capacity, assuring the health and safety of more foods.

### **The Way Forward:**

To sustain food delivery Cupboard needs: food/money contributions; Hunt Club volunteers; and also initiatives to support BCFC, e.g. partnering with Get Growing. Please help feed your neighbours. Thank you.