



Live Free Parent/Guardian Letter

Dear Hyland Heights Families,

Hyland Heights Elementary School and The Children's Foundation are working hard to meet the growing need in our community, and that includes fighting food insecurity through our Help Kids Live Free from Hunger campaign. 100% of the funds raised between January 13th and March 2nd will go towards providing healthy snacks to students through our Hyland Heights Food & Friends program. With your help, we can continue to provide healthy snacks for our school community.

This year, the need is greater than ever. 1 in 5 children may experience food insecurity, and with rising food prices a healthy Food & Friends meal can cost up to \$3.40.

Campaigns like [Live Free](#) help us continue to meet the growing need within our school community and ensure those most in need feel supported. Please refer to our **School cash online** to donate to our school's nutrition program. You can also [Click here to donate](#) to Live Free through the Children's Foundation, if you would like a tax receipt for donations of \$20 or more. Please remember to choose our school from the drop-down list so that your donation will be directed to our student nutrition program.

We hope you'll join us in bringing healthy food to hungry minds!

With gratitude,

Hyland Heights Elementary School

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Live Free Fact Sheet

The **Children's Foundation Food & Friends Program** currently supports 106 breakfast, morning meal, lunch and snack programs in Dufferin, Wellington and Guelph. Our mission is to empower children and youth by connecting families with opportunities to build hope for lifelong change.

Many children go to school unprepared to learn. They have not had enough nourishment, which makes it difficult to focus. Numerous studies have shown that children who are hungry do not perform as well as others in school. Our programs help children reach their potential.

Food & Friends, along with almost 1,300 volunteers, provides healthy meals to more than **87,000** children and youth.

Thursday, March 2nd is Help Kids Live Free from Hunger Day. Encourage your students to select one item/thing that they will live free from on **Thursday, March 2nd** to support children who live without. Once students have decided, provide them with a Believe Pledge Card to fill out. Please display the filled-out cards on your classroom door as it may serve as a reminder to the students as well as a way of initiating a discussion with students. If you wish you may include food insecurity facts (below) in your lesson plan to encourage discussions of the reason for the campaign.

Students who wish to donate may do so on **School Cash Online** or the **Live Free From** website by **March 2nd** in support of the Food & Friends program at Hyland Heights. **Every dollar raised by the Live Free Campaign will be used to support the student nutrition program run here at Hyland Heights Elementary.**

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Food Insecurity Fact Sheet

Pre-COVID 19, 1 in 5 Canadian Children were at risk of food insecurity with many at risk of trying to learn on an empty stomach.

A steady growth in low wage work, decades of cuts to our social safety net, and disinvestment in affordable housing put thousands of Ontario families in a precarious position.

According to the annual Feed Ontario Hunger Report 2022 there was a 64-per-cent increase in the number of first-time users at Ontario food banks since before the pandemic.

A healthy Food & Friends provided meal can cost up to \$3.40 compared to \$1.85 only a year ago.

In the 2022-23 school year Food & Friends Program is being accessed by over 18,000 students.

For some students, the meals they receive from Food & Friends programs are the only food they receive that day, making the program vital to their overall health, educational and nutritional needs.

Inclusivity, universal access and students' need food for a variety of reasons (growth spurts, early bus rides) is important to acknowledge.