



SWPH School Health Newsletter

LOCAL FOOD AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the ability for many families to afford and access food. A May 2020 survey found that almost one in seven (14.6%) of Canadians reported household food insecurity in the previous 30 days. Canadians living in households with children were more likely to be food insecure (19.2%) and were more likely to be worried about food running out before there was money to buy more and having difficulty affording to eat balanced meals.

- Schools can help support students with access to food at school through their Student Nutrition Program (SNP). Most publicly funded schools in Oxford, Elgin and St. Thomas offer a SNP with the goal of ensuring that all students are well fed and ready to learn. SNP's are universal programs available to all students, regardless of perceived need, and should be adapted to the needs of students. For example, a school running an afternoon full school snack program may find that some students are hungry first thing in the morning and may start offering a supplementary breakfast program to address this need. You may find our [Safely Operating a SNP Resource](#) helpful to review to brainstorm ways the program can operate this year.
- Some families may also need support in accessing food outside of the school setting. The below resources outline food access programs that can provide temporary support to those experiencing food insecurity. You may find it helpful to share these resources with the school community to help raise awareness of supports available.
 - [Food Access Programs in Oxford County](#)
 - [Food Access Programs in Elgin St. Thomas](#)
- Please reach out to your local community development coordinator if you have questions about SNP's or need support:
 - Oxford County: Kelly Ferguson, RD – kferguson@swpublichealth.ca
 - Elgin St Thomas: Charlotte McDonald – eat2learn@gmail.com

[1] Statistics Canada. Food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic, May 2020. Released June 24, 2020. Available from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00039-eng.pdf?st=55QVserl>



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