

## **No money for food ... a reality for many in Simcoe County**

The Put Food in the Budget Campaign began in 2009 as a response to Premier McGuinty's Poverty Reduction Strategy which has done nothing to address the chronic hunger faced by thousands of people in Ontario every month.

### **The campaign has two demands:**

- An immediate increase of \$100 per month for every adult receiving social assistance as a first step towards addressing the inadequacy of current social assistance benefits
- A fair and transparent way of setting social assistance rates so that people can meet their basic needs and lead a healthy and dignified life.

Two main activities are part of an awareness raising strategy across the province. The "Do the Math" survey asks you to calculate how much it costs to live in your community including normal monthly expenses such as rent, telephone, transportation, food etc. More than 7000 people across the province have completed the survey, have you? If not please go to this web-site and **Do the Math!** <http://dothemath.thestop.org/dothemathchallenge.php>

Another activity in support of the campaign is the "**Do the Math Challenge**" which asks volunteer participants to rely on a diet that a person on social assistance might receive from a food bank for three days to a week.

### **The objectives of the Do the Math Challenge are:**

- Increase empathy with experience of people who rely on social assistance.
- Raise awareness that charity is not enough – that the experience of people on social assistance is systemic not individual – and that policy change and social investments are required of the Ontario government
- Translate public empathy into public action – for people to talk to their MPP's about supporting an immediate increase in social assistance of \$100 per month for every adult in Ontario on social assistance

If you accept this challenge you will be taking part in a public act of solidarity with people on social assistance. Your participation in this campaign can help raise awareness about this issue in your community and will also help us send a message to Premier McGuinty and his government to raise social assistance rates and to Put Food in the Budget.

For more information please visit [www.putfoodinthebudget.ca](http://www.putfoodinthebudget.ca)