



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

One in Three Kids Start School Hungry: Food Security Fund Calls for Urgent Action This Back-to-School Season

Toronto, ON | September 3, 2025 – Back-to-school should be a time of excitement, new notebooks, packed lunches, and the promise of learning. But for too many families, especially in Toronto, it is also a time of stress: stretching grocery budgets, worrying about weekday breakfasts and lunches, and wondering how to cover after-school snacks.

According to the [Breakfast Club of Canada's August 20, 2025 update](#), “*at least one in three children arrive at school hungry almost every day*”, and demand for school breakfast programs is at a record high.

This crisis is not abstract. It’s happening right now in Ontario classrooms, where teachers are already seeing tired, distracted, and undernourished students on the very first days of school.

A Crisis That Demands Attention

- **1 in 3 Canadian children start the school day hungry** (Breakfast Club of Canada, 2025).
- In Toronto, student nutrition programs reached **643 schools in 2024–25**, but nearly **25% of schools remain uncovered**.
- Black families and children experience **disproportionately higher rates of food insecurity**, deepening the impact of this crisis.

Hunger doesn’t just affect what’s on a plate. It shapes a child’s ability to **focus, learn, and thrive**, with long-term effects on health, education, and opportunity.



National Progress, But Gaps Remain

The federal government's [National School Food Program \(NSFP\)](#) — a **\$1 billion investment over five years** is a historic step forward. Ontario's agreement alone is expected to reach **400,000 additional children**.

But as demand rises, children are still being left behind. Families and schools need extra support now, while national programs continue to expand.

Yet the need is still greater than the reach, leaving still nearly **25% of schools without consistent support**. As demand grows, these uncovered schools and the children who attend them are being left behind.

That is why **extra community support is essential**. Families and schools need help now, while national programs continue to scale.

Where the Food Security Fund Steps In

The **Food Security Fund (FSF)** was created to **complement** existing programs, not replace them. FSF works with community partners, food programs and school boards to:

- Connect local food providers to schools through strong **pipelines**.
- Ensure meals are **culturally relevant**, so children actually eat what's offered.
- Help schools with **infrastructure and volunteers** to expand nutrition programs quickly.

“We applaud the National School Food Program as a landmark step,” said **Anick Silencieux**, **Founder and Executive Director of Support Black Charities and Cause Leader of the Food Security Fund**. *“But the reality is that kids are still walking into classrooms hungry today. FSF exists to fill those gaps, especially in underserved communities where the need is greatest.”*



Call to Action for Media and the Public

The Food Security Fund is calling on journalists to shine a light on this urgent issue. Media can help by:

- Highlighting the lived reality behind the “1 in 3” statistic.
- Sharing stories of families facing hunger during back-to-school season.
- Amplifying community-led solutions, particularly in Black communities where food insecurity hits hardest.

We also invite the public to take part. Every donation, partnership, and act of advocacy helps strengthen local food programs, so no child is too hungry to learn.

Stay Connected & Get Involved

For the latest updates on food insecurity in Canada, with a focus on Ontario and Toronto, visit our **Media Page**: www.FoodSecurityFund.ca/media. There you’ll find press releases, fact sheets, and media coverage.

Follow us for real-time updates, stories from families, and ways to help:

- Instagram: [@foodsecurityfundhq](https://www.instagram.com/foodsecurityfundhq)
- LinkedIn: [Food Security Fund](https://www.linkedin.com/company/food-security-fund)

Individuals, businesses, and organizations can:

- **Donate** to power the plan
- **Partner** on education, food distribution, or infrastructure
- **Collaborate** to scale this work across Ontario and beyond

“This is not just about food,” said Anick Silencieux. “It’s about dignity, equity, and giving Black children, and all children, a real chance at life.”



About Support Black Charities (SBC)

Support Black Charities (SBC) is a federally registered Canadian nonprofit dedicated to uplifting Black-led, Black-serving, and Black-focused organizations across Canada and globally. Through its four pillars. Visibility, Capacity Building, Philanthropy, and Community Collaboration, SBC strengthens the Black nonprofit sector by increasing awareness, offering strategic support, and fostering meaningful partnerships.

The Food Security Fund reflects SBC's mission to address urgent challenges today while building long-term, systemic solutions that empower Black communities and benefit all children.

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