

The **Research** Shop

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COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRES CANADA'S "THE POD" KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE: PROGRAMMING

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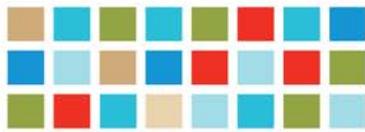


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INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH GOALS

This report will continue from the previous report titled: Synthesis of "The Pod" Knowledge Exchange Website. This report is focused specifically on the information that is provided on programming for community food centres.

BACKGROUND

This research report on the programming information provided through Community Food Centres Canada's (CFCC) The POD Knowledge Exchange is one component of the community-engaged research that has contributed to the development of The Seed Community Food Hub. Over the last three years there has been a collaboration with The Seed Community Food Hub Committee, The Guelph and Wellington Poverty Task Force, and The Research Shop/ICES.

Key Terms

Community Food Centres Canada (cfccanada.ca)

Mission Statement

Community Food Centres Canada provides resources and a proven approach to partner organizations across Canada to create Community Food Centres that bring people together to grow, cook, share, and advocate for good food. CFCC works with the broader food movement to build greater capacity for impact and to empower communities to work toward a healthy and fair food system

Vision

We envision a Canada where everyone has the means and knowledge necessary to access good, healthy food in a dignified way, and the ability and opportunity to be heard on the food issues that affect them. We envision a robust, diverse food economy that sustains farmers and the land, and a social consensus that food is a key determinant of health and a public good.



What is The POD Knowledge Exchange? (thepod.cfccanada.ca)

The Pod Knowledge Exchange is a project of CFCC. It's a place where we can share ideas, tools and resources with the community food sector at large. For ease of navigation we've structured this information in the form of learning modules which may contain videos, written resources and podcasts. By collecting this information in one place, we hope to create an engaging and practical virtual library that can help strengthen the vital work that is happening in this sector, from coast to coast.

METHODS

SOURCES

All information in this report was collected from CFCC's website and specifically the "the pod" knowledge exchange website.

- cfccanada.ca
- thepod.cfccanada.ca

RESULTS/FINDINGS

The following sections summarize the types of programs that are currently being implemented at The Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto. These types of programs are also the foundation of the Community Food Centre Model. Resources provided by CFCC which may be used for initiating programs and hiring staff are included in the appendices.

FOOD BANK

The Stop's Food Bank distributes approximately 2000 emergency food hampers each month to individuals and families living in the Davenport West neighborhood. Each hamper contains a 2 to 3 day supply of food and individuals are able to access the food bank once a month. To make the process of going to a food bank easier for program participants, the Stop has made their process as unobtrusive as possible. Members must demonstrate that they live the area The Stop Food Bank serves but no information regarding finances or immigration status is collected.



The Food Bank is frequently The Stop's first point of contact with community members. These community members usually face additional challenges related to marginalisation and poverty. These are issues that the Stop doesn't believe can be solved through a food hamper alone. At the Food Bank there are many opportunities to reach out to thousands of people each month. The Stop aims to introduce people to the Stop's healthy food philosophy, engage them in the other programs and connect them with additional supports if needed.

COMMUNITY KITCHENS

A community kitchen is a place where program participants can learn about nutrition, share culinary knowledge, and develop their skills in the kitchen. The Stop believes that when participants cook together and enjoy a meal together, social isolation is reduced and a community is built.

Some of these programs include:

- **Positive Parenting with Food** is a program designed for new moms and/or caregivers of young children. Childcare is offered and then participants can learn about healthy eating on a budget, the importance of family meals, and increasing intakes of fruits and vegetables.
- **Sabor Latino** is cooking group for Spanish speaking participants
- **Shovel and Spoon** is a cooking group focused on connecting food in the garden to food on our plates! This program combines community garden experiences with cooking skills.
- **Elder Community Kitchen Program** is a kitchen program designed with seniors' needs in mind.
- **Bake Oven** is a program where participants get to make homemade pizza in the summer months using an outdoor wood oven



- **Happy meals** is a cooking class that covers specific topics each week. This is a standard community kitchen program that covers the topics of nutrition, healthy eating, and cooking skills. Participants learn skills such as preserving and dehydrating techniques.

The Stop does an annual program survey and most recently they learned that 100% of community kitchen participants surveyed had tried a new food in the program, 92% had learned new things about choosing healthy foods, 92% had made friends with other participants, 100% felt they knew more about preparing healthy meals since attending community kitchens programs, 78% reported feeling more confident in the kitchen due to participating in the program.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens in a community food centre help supply the cooking programs and food bank section with fresh produce. A community garden also teaches individuals how to grow their own food, which is a valuable skill when combatting food insecurity. It's also a great location for participants to communicate with other people and make friends.

The Stop's community garden is run on a collective model, which means that everyone agrees to maintain the garden but with different levels of participation. This model allows for vulnerable community members who cannot commit to maintaining an individual plot to participate in the garden at a level of engagement that is more suitable. A collective model also allows for the inclusion of other organizations like schools, daycares, community groups etc. to become involved.

Community gardens are also a great location for educational workshops. The Stop's Green Barn workshop topics include: Jam Preserves, Organic Pest and Weed Control, Seed Saving, Tea and Herbs, Everything You Need to Know About Tomatoes, Tomato preserves, Soap Making, Worm Composting in Small Spaces, Raising Backyard Chickens, Planning Your Organic Vegetable Garden, Seed Starting Indoors, Vegetable Gardening 101, Container Gardening, Seed Saving, Growing International Food in Canada, Food Gardening in the Shade, Understanding Mental Health for Community Garden Coordinators, Composting Basics, Urban Beekeeping, and Making Salves, Lip Balms and Creams.

There is also the *Yes in My Backyard Program*, which allows for the creation of backyard gardens across the City of Toronto.



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

The Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto has offered garden-based education programs for local elementary schools and then they started the Green Barn. The Green Barn is a facility that enables the organization to expand the number and scope of the programs to include cooking, nutrition, and social justice content. In general these programs strive to increase the food skills and shape food related attitudes of the children participating.

These programs include:

- **After-school programming** and spring/summer break camps for children coming from low-income families. These programs offer hands-on cooking and gardening opportunities as well as accessible ways to engage with social justice and food system issues.
- **Workshops** on sustainable food systems for grade three and grade five classes. These workshops meet curriculum objectives and introduce key issues relating to food and poverty
- **Food Leadership for Youth (FLY)** is a weekly program specifically for high school-aged girls. The aim of this program is to help girls develop healthy food skills, behavior and knowledge.

DROP-IN PROGRAM

The Drop-in program is the main source of emergency food for participants and is run similarly to a soup kitchen. The model is different however because there are no line-ups. Participants are served a wholesome balanced meal with types of food that they don't receive as often in their food hampers. The drop-in also provides a safe and free space for people to socialize with others.

The Drop-In Program has a large dependence on volunteers. There are a minimum of three volunteers present at each meal. A staff member is always present (i.e. the drop-in coordinator, the chef, etc.).



COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS

The purpose of the Community Action program is to empower community members who are experiencing poverty and marginalization. Participants are empowered to challenge chronic income and food insecurity by facilitating stronger community support networks, raising political consciousness, and taking direct action.

The Stop's program's core components include:

- Community Action Training is a 10-12 week course that helps members of the community learn about the root causes of poverty and inequality and ways to fight it.
- Community Advocacy Office is a peer support project where community members team up with their neighbours to fight for basic entitlements such as food and safe and affordable housing. Participants also learn ways to defend their rights.
- Bread & Bricks is a local group that brings together community members and agency partners to take action on issues of poverty and other social, political, environmental and economic injustices. Bread & Bricks builds the capacity of community members to become effective change-makers through individual coaching and group workshops on group facilitation, critical media skills, direct action and public speaking.
- Campaigns. The Stop has participated in several campaigns, including Do The Math, Put Food in the Budget, the Fare Fair Coalition, and more.



APPENDIX

FOOD BANK RESOURCES

Health Food Bank Infographic

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Healthy%20Food%20Bank%20Infographic.pdf

Healthy Food Philosophy

thepod.cfccanada.ca/document/healthy-food-philosophy

Food Bank Membership Form

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Food%20Bank%20Membership%20Form.pdf

COMMUNITY KITCHEN RESOURCES

Community Kitchen Models

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Community%20Kitchen%20Models.pdf

Community Kitchen Infographic

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Community%20Kitchens%20Infographic.pdf

Growing Food Skills In Community Kitchens

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Growing%20Food%20Skills%20in%20Community%20Kitchens%20-%20Joshna%20Maharaj.pdf

Nutrition Education in Emergency Food Programs- Why Hunger

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Nutrition%20Education%20in%20Emergency%20Food%20Programs%20-%20Why%20Hunger.pdf



COMMUNITY GARDEN RESOURCES

Community Garden Infographic

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Community%20Gardens%20Infographic.pdf

Community Gardens Overview

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Community%20Gardens%20Overview.pdf

Let's Grow - gardening and mental health resource manual CTCHC

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/LetsGrow%20-%20Gardening%20and%20Mental%20Health%20Resource%20Manual%20CTCHC.pdf

Yard Sharing Considerations

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Yard%20Sharing%20Considerations.pdf

Sample Garden Sharing Arrangement

thepod.cfccanada.ca/document/sample-garden-sharing-arrangement

Garden Education Worker Job Description

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Garden%20Education%20Worker%20-%20Sample%20Job%20Description.pdf

Kids Dig It After School Program Report

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Kids%20Dig%20It%21%20After%20School%20Program%20Report%202011.pdf

DROP-IN RESOURCES

Drop-in Meals Infographic

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Drop-In%20Meals%20Program%20Infographic.pdf

Ten Tips for Running a Drop-in Meal Program

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/10%20Tips%20for%20running%20a%20drop-in%20meal%20kitchen.pdf



COMMUNITY ACTION RESOURCES

Community Action Infographic

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Community%20Action%20Program%20Infographic.pdf

Principles for the Community Action Program

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Principles%20for%20the%20Community%20Action%20Program.pdf

Community Action Training Overview

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Community%20Action%20Training%20Overview.pdf

Community Advocacy Worker Job Description

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Community%20Advocacy%20Worker%20Job%20Description%20-%20The%20Stop%20August%202013.pdf

Bread and Bricks Social Justice Group

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Bread%20%26%20Bricks%20Social%20Justice%20Group.pdf

Do The Math Campaign

thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/Do%20The%20Math%20Campaign.pdf