

Media Release



Food Insecurity in Timiskaming - 2022

April 6, 2023 - For immediate release

Timiskaming Health Unit Raises Awareness about Household Food Insecurity

1 in 5 households¹ in Timiskaming struggles to afford food, a problem known as Household Food Insecurity (HFI). It is estimated that 15% of the Timiskaming population lives with low income. As such, addressing poverty is crucial to ending HFI. The Timiskaming Health Unit (THU) is shedding light on the issue of HFI and the importance of advocating for effective income-based solutions.

The 2022 Monitoring Food Affordability findings show that a family of four in Timiskaming spends \$1,152 monthly on food. HFI is more significant among low-income households, those on social assistance programs, lone female-led households, home renters, and minimum wage earners. After paying for rent and food, only \$228 is left monthly to cover other expenses such as medications, utilities, or childcare.

Tight budgets oblige families to make difficult decisions, such as choosing between food, rent, and other basic necessities. This leads to poor health outcomes among children, young people, and adults, such as an increased risk of diabetes, heart disease, asthma, depression, and suicidal thoughts. HFI seriously affects children's mental health, an impact that extends into adulthood.

Responses to HFI often focus on food charity and community food programs. However, these initiatives are band-aid solutions and fail to address poverty, the root cause of HFI. Income-based solutions such as a basic income guarantee for working-age adults, living wages and benefits, and adequate social assistance rates that reflect the true costs of living, are critical to addressing household food insecurity.

During the month of April, THU will disseminate the 2022 Monitoring Food Affordability results highlighting the true cost of eating well with a social media campaign, a [report](#), and an [infographic](#) to raise awareness about HFI in Timiskaming. THU will also continue to work with partners on activities that focus on increasing food literacy, improving food systems and promoting social well-being.

To learn more about HFI and how to help address this issue, visit:

<https://www.timiskaminghu.com/444/food-insecurity>

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Media Contact: <https://www.timiskaminghu.com/websites/timiskaminghu.com/files/CDP-Injury/Nutrition/2022%20NFB%20Infographic%20EN.pdf>

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¹ *Interpret with caution because the sample size was small.