

Chew on This! Materials for Organizers 2022

Thank you for joining us for *Chew on This!* 2022! This package is designed to support you in organizing your *Chew on This!* event, with suggested lists of materials, tips & how-to's, and a checklist for your big day. Please feel free to contact us with any other questions or comments about *Dignity for All* and the *Chew on This!* campaign.

With thanks and in solidarity,

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To-Do Checklists

Before your event:

- **Recruit volunteers and potential partner organizations** - Who else do you know in your community that is invested in social causes, community-building, or food security? A sample [informational leaflet](#) is appended in this kit to help you promote your event ahead of time. When you register as an organizer on the *Chew on This!* website, your event will show up on our cross-country map for others to see. You will be asked to provide contact details so others in your area can reach out and connect.
- **Choose an activity for your event** – *Chew on This!* events look different across the country. Choose an activity that best suits your community's needs and interests, your target audience, the number of volunteers and participants you expect, and your available resources (including materials, funds, space, and the time and talents of your volunteers). Consider whether you are planning to engage people passing by, or whether you will primarily try to recruit people ahead of time to come to your event.

Here are some examples (many of which can be in-person, virtual, or both):

- A march or protest – works well with a crowd in a high-traffic area or strategic location (e.g., outside an elected official's office, a popular landmark); be sure to check if you need a permit and/or to provide elected officials with advance notice.
 - A participatory activity – give people an opportunity to share their responses to the messages/information you're sharing; you could provide materials to write, draw/paint, record audio/video, dance, whatever! Be sure to ask for permission before sharing any responses publicly and/or ensure that the responses are anonymized.
 - Host speakers or performers at your event to help spread your message, share experiences, and recommend real rights-based solutions; a relevant film screening with discussion could also work!
 - Create an exhibit of previously prepared works of art.
 - Invite people to co-create a mural, tableau, call and response song, poetry, or other works of art.
 - Set up a table with information and letters/petitions to sign at a local place of worship, library, community centre, foodbank, or park.
 - Learning stations where people can engage with different materials/questions/activities to learn about the causes of, and solutions to, food insecurity and poverty in your community and across the country.
 - Host a candlelight vigil or other sacred ceremony calling for people's rights and dignity to be upheld; community members of various faiths and cultural traditions can be invited to participate.
- **Check out our webinar on September 29, 12pm-1pm EST** for ideas and inspiration about incorporating the arts into your advocacy. A recording will be posted afterward. Register at

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcudeihqD4tGdCeTutc_CaVGEddoEZTLd-T.

- **Decide on a location and obtain a permit, if necessary** – If you are hosting a public event, ensure the space you are using is either publicly owned, or that you have the permission of the property owner. For example, an event in a park would likely be publicly-owned, but may require a permit, whereas an event outside a grocery store, library, or place of worship is likely privately owned and would require permission from the property owner. If you are hosting an event outside an elected official’s office, it is good practice to notify them in advance.

- **Gather or create any required materials** for your event. Here are some examples you might consider:
 - Posters, signs, or banners
 - Sound system or megaphone
 - Materials for engaging participants in an optional art activity (Check out our [webinar](#) on September 29, 12pm-1pm EST for ideas and inspiration – a recording will be available afterwards.)
 - Social media prompts/photo aids for people to fill in and/or pose with – see examples in appendix ; consider white boards or chalk board to save on materials
 - Pens, pencils, markers
 - Contact/sign-up forms to keep in touch with new community members
 - Letters or petitions related to *Chew on This!* asks or related local community initiatives
 - Copies of the *Chew on This!* backgrounder
Please note that a digital copy is available to download and print, or you can request printed copies to be sent to you if ordered well in advance (a suggested donation will be welcome, but not required).

A note for past Chew on This! organizers: We are not planning to distribute postcards, paper bags, magnets or buttons to all organizers this year, focusing on public education and engagement for local events, rather than signing and sending postcards. However, [paper bags, magnets, and buttons are available by request](#), with a recommended donation to offset the costs of shipping. Please allow sufficient time for materials to be sent via Canada Post or FedEx. An open letter with organizational endorsements will also be sent to key Cabinet Ministers on October 17. If you would like to read the open letter and consider having your organization sign on, please contact Emilly@cwp-csp.ca.

- **Take time for joy and self-care!** Food security and poverty are serious issues across Canada, with the real potential of triggering trauma. At the same time, we hope you will also find joy, strength, and perhaps even healing in connecting with other advocates. Be sure to set limits to protect your well-being and that of your community members. Develop protocols with your team to consider accessibility and well-being at your event, including dealing with any potentially harmful comments or actions, and supporting people who may be triggered by the issues being discussed. Ensure people know what supports are available and how to access them, as well as how to report any issues that arise. To our knowledge, we have not had any harmful incidents arise at previous *Chew on This!* events, but it is best to be prepared. A debrief

with your team after the event may also help to process the experience afterwards.

- **Talk it up on social media** and let people know about your upcoming event! Invite others to join you or to learn more about organizing their own event at chewonthis.ca. You are welcome to set up your own Eventbrite or Facebook events if it will help you with promotion and to gauge numbers. The *Chew on This!* website will also include a map for people to see where events are happening and how to contact local organizers.
- **Engage with local media** - One way to increase our impact is to engage the media in your community. Calling your local newspaper or TV station a couple days before, and the morning of October 17th (or whichever day your local event is on), will greatly increase your chances of making a big splash. Remember reporters have lots of interesting stories pitched to them every day, so the more energy you have when you talk to them, the more likely they are to show up.

To make it easier for you, we will send you an electronic [press release](#) (also appended to this kit) that you can update with your own information and then send to local media (you might need to do some research for contacts and how to “pitch” a story). Some reporters will want just the press release, but others will want to talk to you on the phone first. Don’t be nervous, you can do it! You are an amazing volunteer, and we have confidence in you! In this kit for organizers, we’ve also included some [media talking points](#) that you can use to keep your message with reporters clear, concise, and effective.

- **Engage your elected officials** – Invite federal MPs, provincial or territorial MLAs or MPPs, and municipal councillors to meet with their constituents at your *Chew on This!* event and hear about your concerns about poverty in your community and across the country. Share the *Chew on This!* backgrounder (included in this kit) with them along with any related local advocacy initiatives or resources.

Be sure to take and share photos on social media, as well as with any local media that are present (see previous item). Please remember that *Chew on This!* is a non-partisan campaign. As registered charities, Dignity for All co-leads must honour this to protect our charitable status.

Day of event:

- **Arrive early** at your location to set up. Bring some water and a snack.
- **Take pictures** of the event as it unfolds and **share them** with the Dignity for All team via Twitter (using @DignityForAllCA and the hashtags #ChewOnThis), Facebook, or email. Assign a member of your team the job of photographer for the day, and make sure they take photos of volunteers holding up personalized messages on the social media cards provided in your kit. If you can, get a group photo!
- If you **invite local media**, make sure that you have a designated location for them to film or interview you and your volunteers (if you’ve decided to use banners/signs, this is a great

opportunity to display them).

- **Try to engage as many people walking past as you can!** People may be wary of being handed materials, particularly if there is a lack of clear signage letting folks know who you are and what this event is about. Start by telling people that you're here to raise awareness about food insecurity and poverty in your community and across the country. Then ask if they'd like some more information (e.g. a backgrounder, pamphlet, or letter) or invite them to check out whatever activity or speakers you have planned.

Suggested greetings

- **“Hi! We’re raising awareness about food insecurity and poverty in our community and across the country. We have some free resources/activities you can check out.”**
- **“Hi! Are you interested in helping fight food insecurity? We’re raising awareness about poverty in our community and across Canada.”**

This quickly tells people what your event is about (poverty in Canada) and what you're asking of them. It's important for people to feel like they're not about to get roped into a lengthy discussion (unless they want to!) or be asked for money.

If they stop to chat

- Tell them you're a volunteer with the Dignity for All campaign for a poverty-free Canada and that we're raising awareness about causes and solutions for food insecurity and poverty in our communities and across the country.
- Invite them to engage with whatever activities you have planned (e.g., an art activity, listening to speakers, signing a letter or petition, signing up for updates/future activities, take a copy of the *Chew on This!* backgrounder, etc.)

If people want to know more

- Share that currently there are millions of people across Canada living in poverty, who cannot afford to put food on the table.
- Share the *Chew on This!* backgrounder (or link to find it online)
- Refer people to the *Chew on This!* website (chewonthis.ca) for more resources and information. Encourage them to follow us on social media, as well as local organizations represented at your event.

If people react negatively to the campaign

- Many of us know the frustration of being talked “at” or “sold to” by people pushing a product or cause, and some may have been burned in the past. If they stop long enough for you to respond, you can politely remind them that you are a non-partisan volunteer and are not selling anything or promoting any particular Party.

- If the reaction is personally targeted, seek support and follow your group's predetermined protocols (see "Take time for joy and self-care" in the "Before Your Event" checklist above).
- **Take and share even more pictures!**
- **Thank your volunteers** for their time and efforts to alleviate poverty in Canada! Consider ways you can keep in touch for future conversations and events.

After your event:

- **Share your photos and any great quotes or success stories on social media** using @DignityForAll and #ChewOnThis and check out those posted by other supporters! Feel free to tag MPs, federal Cabinet Ministers, and Party Leaders, too.
- **Provide the *Dignity for All* team with feedback about your event experience** – what worked well, what needs improvement and any suggestions you have for future events. A survey will be sent to you by email.
- **Follow-up with your elected Member of Parliament** after the election and ask how their government will demonstrate their commitment to ending poverty in Canada. Share any photos of in-person meetings or tag MPs with your questions or comments on social media along with @DignityForAll and #ChewOnThis!

We are here to help!

If you have questions before, after, or during October 17th don't be a stranger. We are here to help you be successful and to feel part of our community!

*Emilly, Canada Without Poverty, Tel: 613-789-0096, emilly@cwp-csp.ca
Natalie, Citizens for Public Justice, Tel: 613-232-0275 ext. 222, natalie@cpj.ca*

Thank you so much for all your hard work in making *Chew on This!* successful!

Together, we can end poverty in Canada!

Chew on This! 2022 Backgrounder: Food Insecurity in Canada

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: *Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.*

Canada has a duty to uphold the human rights of all people in this country and has signed on to multiple international human rights conventions, including the right to food. Reports from the federal government say they are on track to meet, or even exceed, the targets of their Poverty Reduction Strategy. But even with these improvements, millions are being left behind. At the same time, rates of food insecurity have continued to climb in Canada, **with a provincial average of 15.9% in 2021, and even higher rates in the territories.**

Food insecurity is not about a lack of food, it is about a lack of income and access. Social assistance rates (including welfare and disability supports) fall short of the poverty line in every province and territory¹ with 63.1% of recipients' households experiencing food insecurity.² 13.7% of households whose main source of income is employment are also food insecure.³ Inadequate wages and income supports are compounded with high costs of housing, childcare, medical needs, and other essentials, leaving millions of people sacrificing their food budgets when there isn't enough money to pay for rent and other "non-negotiable" expenses.

Food insecurity is felt disproportionately by people who are Black, Indigenous, disabled, and people with precarious immigration status. 28.9% of Black households and 28.2% of Indigenous households live with food insecurity, compared to just 11% of white households.⁴ Food insecurity rates intensify for people with intersecting forms of oppression, such for those who are 2SLGBTQ+, women, single mothers, as well as for seniors and young adults.

In Nunavut, nearly half the population is food insecure. Shipping expenses result in the highest food prices in the country, while rising fuel prices and the impacts of climate change make it harder to hunt and gather traditional food sources. The hunger and mental distress brought on by food insecurity and poverty in the north has led to family violence and increased rates of suicide. Inuit communities in Canada suffer from the highest rates of suicide in the world.⁵

Many migrant workers and undocumented residents work in Canadian farms, factories, food production plants, restaurants, grocery stores, and in the food delivery gig economy. They are vital to our food systems and to our society, but currently do not have access to fair wages, worker protections, healthcare, and many other government benefits and programs, leaving those who sustain our food systems ironically food insecure themselves.

Food charity is not the solution. Food banks offer some emergency relief, but do not address the underlying causes of food insecurity. It is estimated that there are between 3 to 7 times as many food insecure people

¹ Maytree Foundation, Welfare in Canada (2021). Retrieved from <https://maytree.com/welfare-in-canada/canada/>

² Tarasuk V, Li T, Fafard St-Germain AA. (2022) Household food insecurity in Canada, 2021. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved from <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>

³ Same as above.

⁴ Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), 2017-2018

⁵ Affleck W, Chachamovich E, Chawky N, Beauchamp G, Turecki G, Séguin M. (2020). Suicide amongst the Inuit of Nunavut: An Exploration of Life Trajectories.

compared to actual food bank users.⁶ Food banks can also have access barriers, such as inaccessible buildings and lack of affordable and accessible transportation, and the common practice of requiring government-issued ID. Additionally, many food bank users report receiving a lack of nutritious or culturally appropriate options.

Food security leads to community wellbeing, health, and dignity, but requires the governments to uphold human rights and build sustainable food systems that ensure safe working conditions for all. Food security requires income security and affordable housing. It requires empowering community-led food systems where everyone can access the foods they want and need with dignity.

Upholding our human rights means ending food insecurity and eradicating poverty. All policy actions must recognize and overturn the systems of oppression that disproportionately strip certain groups of their fundamental rights and work to close the gaps in our health and socio-economic outcomes.

RECOMMENDED POLICY ACTIONS

- ❖ **Increase income security:** Increase federal income benefits, including Employment Insurance, the Canada Worker's Benefit, Canada Disability Benefit, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Canada Housing Benefit, and the Canada Child Benefit, to reflect current gaps and inadequacies. Expand eligibility to ensure all people living in Canada are automatically enrolled for benefits
- ❖ **Status for All:** Give everyone living in Canada permanent resident status to ensure that they have access to fair wages, worker protections, healthcare, EI, government benefits and programs.
- ❖ **Subsidise Food Shipping Costs to the North:** While this recommendation will not address all forms of food insecurity in northern communities, increasing government subsidies for food shipping expenses will make food costs immediately more affordable for residents.
- ❖ **Support Community-led Programs & Food Sovereignty:** Provide stable, adequate funding to community-run and non-profit food programs (particularly for Indigenous and Black-led organizations), recognizing community members with lived experience of food insecurity as experts in what services and food options are needed.

⁶ <https://proof.utoronto.ca/resource/relationship-between-food-banks-and-food-insecurity-in-canada/>

[City] Activists Call for Real Solutions to Food Insecurity in Canada

Volunteers for [organization or group name] take to the streets to call for an end to poverty in Canada.

For Immediate Release

City, Prov, October 17, 2022— [Organization or group name] has added their voices to a country-wide call for an end to poverty and food insecurity in Canada. On October 17th, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, volunteers in [city] joined communities across Canada for the *Chew on This!* campaign. Together, they hope to raise awareness about the realities of food insecurity and poverty in our community and call for real solutions.

Reports from the federal government say they are on track to meet, or even exceed, the targets of their Poverty Reduction Strategy. At the same time, rates of food insecurity have continued to climb in Canada, with a provincial average of 15.9% estimated in 2021, and even higher rates in the territories.

In [city/area], [local statistic on poverty or food insecurity].

Advocates say food charity, such as food banks are not the solution. They are calling for federal policies and investments that use Canada’s human rights obligations as a minimum standard. Including the perspectives and participation of people living with food insecurity is also critical, advocates say, to ensure solutions address the many invisible barriers people face.

[Optional quote about what your community needs to address food insecurity – this could include local solutions with support from federal policies and investments, or federal policy recommendations.]

Chew on This! is an annual non-partisan campaign that calls attention to the shocking rate of poverty and food insecurity in Canada. The campaign is organized by *Dignity for All*, co-led by *Canada Without Poverty*, *Citizens for Public Justice*, and *Campaign 2000*, all registered charities. Previous years of the campaign have engaged over 100 communities in every province and territory calling for effective and equitable solutions to poverty and food insecurity in Canada.

Media Availability:

Where: [Location]

Who: [Groups or leaders]

When: October 17th, 2019 [time]

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[Dignity for All: the campaign for a poverty-free Canada](#), co-led by Canada Without Poverty, Citizens for Public Justice, and Campaign 2000 is a multi-year, non-partisan campaign supported by over 11,000 individuals and 700 local and national organizations calling for comprehensive, rights-based federal policies to eliminate poverty and reduce inequity.

[ChewOnThis!](#) is a national campaign to raise awareness of food insecurity and poverty in Canada, and to call for rights-based federal policies and investments to end poverty effectively and equitably.

[Organization background and information]

Website: chewonthis.ca

Twitter: @DignityForAllCA & #ChewOnThis

Contact:

[your contact info]

We need national leadership on poverty because...

#ChewOnThis



We need to end poverty in Canada because...

#ChewOnThis



Food insecurity means...

#ChewOnThis



Food security looks like...

#ChewOnThis



Tips for Talking to Local Media about your Chew Event

Elevator pitch // On October 17th, we're joining organizers across the country for the *Chew on This!* campaign. Together, we're calling on the Government of Canada to uphold their human rights obligations and work towards an end to poverty and food insecurity in Canada.

Along with our political rights, every person in this country has social, cultural, and economic rights. This includes the right to food and the right to housing, for example. Poverty and food insecurity are a violation of these rights. And although we all share the same inherent human rights, certain groups have disproportionately high rates of food insecurity and poverty.

Food charity won't solve this. We're calling for federal policy decisions to be based in human rights and in people's actual experiences of food insecurity so we can effectively and equitably close the gaps between our rights and our lived realities.

Why October 17? // October 17th is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, and it's an opportunity for people around the country – activists, advocates, students, people of faith, and others passionate about human rights – to take part in a nation-wide campaign while being part of a global day of action to end poverty.

Is hunger really a problem in Canada? // Yes. Reliance on food banks and other emergency services are the highest they have ever been, and more households are struggling to make ends meet. Food insecurity disproportionately impacts certain groups, highlighting underlying inequities.

- It is estimated that there are between 3 to 7 times as many food insecure people compared to actual food bank users.⁷
- Provincial data from 2021 suggest that 5.8 million people, including almost 1.4 million children under the age of 18, were living in food-insecure households.⁸
- While similar data was not available for the territories or for people living on reserves, estimates of food insecurity are disproportionately high in these areas. Data from 2008-2018 suggests over half of all households on First Nations reserves were food insecure.⁹ In 2019, Nunavut had the highest rate of food insecurity in Canada at 46.1%.¹⁰
- Food insecurity is felt disproportionately by people who are Black, Indigenous, disabled, and people with precarious immigration status. 28.9% of Black households and 28.2% of Indigenous households live with food insecurity, compared to just 11% of white households.¹¹
- Social assistance rates (including welfare and disability supports) fall short of the poverty line in every province and territory with 63.1% of recipients' households experiencing food insecurity. 13.7% of households whose main source of income is employment are also food insecure.¹²

What do hunger, food security, and poverty have to do with each other? // Food insecurity results from a household's inability to afford or access the food they need; income and food insecurity go hand-in-hand. Canada's lack of good-quality jobs that pay a decent wage and our patchwork of insufficient income security programs (for those who can't find a job or are simply unable to work) trap people in persistent

⁷ <https://proof.utoronto.ca/resource/relationship-between-food-banks-and-food-insecurity-in-canada/>

⁸ Tarasuk V, Li T, Fafard St-Germain AA. (2022) Household food insecurity in Canada, 2021. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved from <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>

⁹ Batal, M., Chan, H.M., Fediuk, K. *et al.* First Nations households living on-reserve experience food insecurity: prevalence and predictors among ninety-two First Nations communities across Canada. *Can J Public Health* 112 (Suppl 1), 52–63 (2021).

<https://doi.org/10.17269/s41997-021-00491-x>

¹⁰ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-637-x/2022001/article/00002-eng.htm>

¹¹ Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), 2017-2018

¹² Tarasuk V, Li T, Fafard St-Germain AA. (2022) Household food insecurity in Canada, 2021. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved from <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>

poverty. For Indigenous people in the North or living on reserve, these problems are compounded by forced relocation and other colonial policies that restrict their ability to access traditional food sources.

Why do we need federal action? // Services like food banks, soup kitchens, and other frontline services meet critical emergency needs for people in Canada but aren't sustainable long-term solutions to address the root causes of poverty. All-party committees of the House of Commons¹³, Senate¹⁴, and the United Nations have repeatedly called on the federal government to implement a national poverty action plan.

In 2018, the government released *Opportunity for All*, the first national poverty reduction strategy in Canada. While this strategy serves as a positive framework and foundation, much more immediate and definitive action is needed. That's why we are calling for policies and decision-making processes that address the systemic root causes of poverty and food insecurity, that live up to our human rights obligations, and that reflect the voices of people with a lived experience of poverty. Governments must use all policy levers at their disposal (and sufficient resources) to create the conditions in which everyone's rights (including social, cultural, and economic rights) are realized.

Who organizes *Chew on This!* // *Chew on This!* is organized by Dignity for All, a non-partisan coalition supported by over 11,000 individuals and 700 local and national organizations, co-led by [Canada Without Poverty](#), [Citizens for Public Justice](#), and [Campaign 2000](#), all registered charitable organizations.

What are we asking people to do? // People can get involved in a number of ways:

- Organize or attend a local *Chew on This!* event in your community (learn more and register at chewonthis.ca) to raise awareness and call for action.
- Use the hashtag **#ChewOnThis** on social media to spread the word about the campaign.
- Learn more about the realities of poverty and how we can address it by reading the [Chew on This! backgrounder](#), [joining our mailing list](#), and attending events to learn from people with lived experience.

¹³ *Federal Poverty Reduction Plan: Working in Partnership towards Reducing Poverty in Canada*, House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (2010). <http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=4770921>

¹⁴ *In From the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness*, Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology's Subcommittee on Cities (2009). http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/402/citi/subsite-dec09/Report_Home-e.htm

CHEW! ON THIS!



Did you know: over 5.8 million people in Canada live in food insecure households?

As a coalition of community organizations, faith communities, academics, and other advocates, the ***Chew on This!*** campaign calls on the Government of Canada to uphold their human rights obligations, including social, cultural, and economic rights. This includes the right to food!

Each year on **October 17th**, the **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**, people across the country come together to raise awareness about poverty and food insecurity in their communities and across the country.

Together, we acknowledge that food insecurity is not simply a lack of food. It is about a lack of income and access. Food charity is not the solution.

We can do better – We can END poverty and food insecurity in Canada!

Join the 2022 *Chew on This!* campaign to call for action!

Chew on This! is coming to your community!

[insert details for your event here]

chewonthis.ca

dignité pour toutes
la campagne pour un
canada sans pauvreté



dignity for all
the campaign for a
poverty-free canada