

MAY 12, 2021

# ORANGEVILLE FOOD BANK

Caring for the community

## Most Needed Items

- Crackers
- Toothpaste
- Canned Tomatoes
- Toothbrush
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Potatoes

Your donations allow us to provide food to the following organizations and programs:

Food and Friends  
Seniors Markets  
Choices Youth Shelter  
Family Transition Place  
SHIP  
The Lighthouse  
Community Living  
Dufferin  
Salvation Army  
St. Mark's Church  
Grand Valley Food Bank  
Shelburne Food Bank  
East Wellington F.B.  
St. Vincent de Paul





# Kaylan and Lauren



Poverty is like  
punishment for  
a crime you  
didn't commit.

ELI KHAMAROV

Pictured here are Kaylan and Lauren standing behind 710 pounds of food that they delivered recently to OFB. This was a food drive that they (with the help of Mom and Dad) had initiated through their school. The outpouring of generosity was far more than they expected. When they came to drop it off, it filled their van.

Thank you for this thoughtful and much appreciated act of kindness.





## How to Live Successfully While on ODSP

I was born with a unique set of heart defects. I found myself growing up to be a bit of a struggle. I never was as strong or as fast as any of the other kids in school. I would grow into adulthood with the burden of an incorrect heart, but managed to keep a job. That is until I ran into a flu in the year 2000. This flu pushed my heart over the edge. What I could barely do, had become impossible. I found myself needing to go on ODSP.

The medical testing, the financial background checks, and the requirements that I had to go through to get on ODSP in late 2000 were quite extensive, and even painful. I understood this to be a very necessary part to receive the benefits. With a great sigh of relief, I qualified for the monthly stipend.

Even with ODSP, I struggled, and my family struggled. After paying rent and all the other bills that come with life, the amount we had for food was very little. We had to sacrifice so much just to be able to buy some groceries each month. We would dramatically cut back on heat and hydro and we did not have any cable TV. I wouldn't buy myself any new clothes because my growing children needed them more. Food was a bigger issue and making sure the children had something to eat was more of a priority than feeding myself.

Those early years of living on ODSP were hard. We had a roof over our heads and some food in the belly, but there was nothing left for anything else. It became quite depressing looking at the bills, choosing what should be paid each month and what could wait. Then there was the fact there was little left to do. The money only lasted six hours; that is the time it took to go to the bank and the grocery store. I was and am grateful to live in a country that supports those who cannot support themselves. Without this help, we would have been on the street, and I probably would not be alive today. But it was never enough money.

Back in 2000, the amount given was just almost enough to live off. The amount that people get on ODSP today has changed very little in those 20 years and with the cost of inflation, housing, food and hydro are all so much more. Now there is internet and those who do not have internet experience a new form of poverty. Receiving ODSP is a blessing that comes with some serious drawbacks. Unless a miracle happens, one can never escape the impoverished lifestyle of living on ODSP. For me, I had three miracles.

After years of waiting for rent-geared-to-income housing, I finally moved into a place. This one act did so much to improve our lifestyle. Instead of the biggest portion of our income going to rent, I was able to start buying the luxuries of life, like clothes, food that wasn't pasta everyday, increased the heat in the house and even splurged by taking the kids to McDonalds once a month. The kids would get a Happy Meal that included a toy, a playground and something different to eat. I still didn't have enough money for a meal for me; I would keep dipping the same fry in ketchup and that was my lunch.

My second miracle was a small job that allowed me to supplement the income. ODSP does allow its recipients the freedom to work. I found a job when the kids were in school and this income was greatly needed. ODSP, to be fair, does require a reporting of earnings and will take away a portion of what I made each month. The first \$200 I can keep. After that, half of what I made was clawed back. Being in RGI housing, I would also report my earnings to them as well. In the end, for every dollar I made at this job, 80 cents was taken from me, which I always felt was fair. Sadly, I did not keep this job for too long as the thing that put me on ODSP had a way making my life difficult. The job was not the miracle, but who I met was.



## How to Live Successfully While on ODSP

My wife, whom I met at work, is the one thing that has helped me so very much in the struggles with trying to live off of ODSP. With her, my kids and I would have never made it. This second miracle of love is one that is so hard to find for someone on ODSP. To be in love and on ODSP is a curse. ODSP takes this one very needed human interaction and uses it against the recipient. Any financial gifts received from loved ones are to be reported and that money is deducted dollar per dollar off the monthly benefit. If someone moves in with the recipient, there will be an interview/investigation and if it is determined to be romantic, then whatever the earnings the "spouse" makes, 50% is removed from the recipient. Add RGI housing that takes 30% of earning by increasing the rent next month, the person moving in can cause an 80% reduction of the spending power of the ODSP recipient. It can even mean the ODSP recipient can lose all funding if the "spouse" makes too much.

Before she moved in, there was a lot of time spent over calculators and budgets just to see if being in love would be a financial disaster or not. In the end, I had someone who loved me enough to make the sacrifices necessary to live together. For many, there is the real struggle of making a relationship work while one of them is on ODSP. In the end, so many just cannot do this and this leads to depression and loneliness and sorrow.

My third miracle happened when they finally developed a surgery to fix my heart. With this surgery, I found myself feeling the best I have ever been and now have a full time job. I have ended my ODSP support and am very grateful to have had it.

I see so many who are trapped in the despair of living on ODSP. It was a means to keep people out of poverty, but has become a way to keep people trapped in the endless cycle of poverty. The money has not kept up with inflation and the rules of trying to get ahead are punishing. If you save up too much money, you lose your income. If you make "too much" money in a part time job, you lose the benefits of ODSP. If you have someone move in with you, even if it is not romantic, you can also lose your income.

Without RGI housing, without finding a partner and without the surgery, I would be very much destitute. ODSP is a true sign of the compassion of a society but it would be more compassionate to have the rules of it changed to one where someone isn't forced to be impoverished for the rest of their lives. Most people are not as lucky as I have been and to live on ODSP is not a life that many would want.

**Over half of those requiring assistance from Orangeville Food Bank are either receiving ODSP or OW. The rates for ODSP and OW have not kept up with inflation. In 25 years, the cost of food has nearly doubled, and rent has skyrocketed.**





## The Value of Cash Donations

Orangeville Food Bank services 700 people, giving out an average of 25,000 pounds of food per month and giving another 10,000 pounds per month to local agencies. Donations of non-perishables from people coming directly to OFB to drop off goods are a part of what we are able to give to our clients. Businesses like Dairy Queen donate bananas each week. Walmart, Zehrs, Sobeys, No Frills and Freshco all have collection bins in their locations for people to purchase food and give to OFB. Metro and Sobeys offer prepacked paper bags filled with the most needed items. These grocery stores also provide us with bread, meat and so much more. Restaurants like Club Link, Lavender Blue and The Café at the Centre provide us with frozen meals. All of this combined helps our neighbours in our community get some nutrition, but it is still never enough.

As we all know, some of the most important pieces of a healthy diet are fruits and vegetables. Canada's Food guide recommends 5 servings for children and 7-10 servings daily for adults. When surveyed, our clients consistently rank fresh fruits and vegetables at the top of the list of items they rely on from the food bank followed by dairy and meats.

With our community garden plots and donations from local gardeners we were able to bring in over 4,000 lbs or 2 tonnes of fresh produce last year alone. This influx of produce supports us during the months of June through October but for the rest of the year we purchase produce to ensure we have the product we need year-round.

Donors are often surprised to learn that we guarantee fresh fruits and vegetables, milk and eggs. We have consistently ensured that half of all the food we distribute is made up of fresh and perishable items. They are often the most expensive part of any person's or family's grocery bill.

Making a financial donation allows us to have the funds available to make purchases like these. We are fortunate to have donors who value the importance of healthy foods, dignity and choice. Thank you for making our work possible.

Please consider making a monetary donation by mailing a cheque to us or by going online to this site [HERE](#).

**Orangeville**  
**Food Bank**

**3 Commerce Rd**  
**Orangeville, ON**  
**L9W 3X5**  
**(519) 942-0638**





## Seniors' Market

The Orangeville Food Bank not only provides food items to those who come to visit our location at 3 Commerce Road, we also visit several of the County of Dufferin Rent-Geared-to-Income seniors' buildings.

We arrive with our van filled with milk, eggs, fruits, vegetables, frozen meals and other items to hand them out to the residents in those buildings. This is a service that is in great need.

Over the past decade, the number of seniors relying on Food Banks and similar services has gone up an astounding 1400%; those numbers only reflect those we know about.

By providing additional food items free of charge, we ensure that the residents of these building are provided the nutrition and dignity that everyone deserves.

We are grateful to have received financial support from Rotary Orangeville and New Horizons.

## Items Included at OFB:

**Milk**  
**Fresh Fruit/Veg**  
**Hygiene items**  
**Non-Perishables**  
**Frozen food**  
**Pet food**  
**Cleaning**





# FIDDLE FOOT



## FARM

Fiddle Foot Farm is a biodynamic farm that is committed to caring for the earth and maintaining the integrity of our land for future generations. Not only are they committed to the earth, but they also commit to their neighbours. Fiddle Foot Farm has been a supporter of OFB for many years. This partnership has been beneficial to all of our clients in the product and services that they provide.

Over the years, they have provided seedlings for our community gardens. We would grow them and give these to our clients. Fiddle Foot have also shared with us their produce after the Farmers' Market. Most importantly, Fiddle Foot offers the purchase of gift cards for the benefit of Orangeville Food Bank directly on their website.

We wish to thank Fiddle Foot for their continued support to the Food Bank and the community we serve.

796530 Third Line EHS, Mulmur. [Website](#)

**To donate to  
Orangeville  
Food Bank,  
please click**

**HERE**

