

Emergency Food Response Update

March 2, 2021 @ 9am

Hosted by: Thunder Bay & Area Food Strategy

Present (28 organizations)

- Courtney Strutt - TBAFS
- Karen Kerk - TBAFS
- Rachel Globensky – LU
- Albert Brule – United Way
- Allison Hill – TB Food Bank
- Anita Jean – NorWest CHC
- Brendan Carlin – RFDA
- Brice Morriseau – FWFN
- Carolyn Whipp – N1MD
- Chantal Petit - JHS
- Crystal Simeoni – TBDSSAB Housing
- Cynthia Gomez – Mushkiki
- Dan Hobbs – Red Cross
- Debbie Sault – NAN Crisis Response
- Erin Beagle – R2H
- Erin Waddington – Feed Ontario
- Farren Tropea – Matawa Health
- Gwen O’Reilly – NWOWC
- Ivan Ho – TBDHU
- Sarah Burnett - TBDHU
- Jason Arjune – CMHA
- June Gaw – Current River Food Bank
- Kaitlin Prezio – YIP
- Kim McGibbon – R2H
- Lee-Ann Chevrette – CTB
- Michael Hull – Shkoday
- Michael Quibell - DDI
- Michelle McGuire – ONWA
- Nathan Pyhtilla – JHS
- Sarah Kaukinen – OAHAS
- Sheena Campbell – TBIFC
- Sonya Cahais – The Gathering Place
- Tammy Boyd – Beendigen

Update Overview

- » Public Health Update
- » General Offers for Support
- » Isolation Food Supports
- » Updates by Type of Food Support
 - Food banks; meal + snack services; school nutrition; First Nation communities & organizations; community food support

Next Meeting is TUESDAY MARCH 16th @ 9:00am

See calendar link for Zoom address.

Public Health Update

- Currently at the Health Unit it is all hands on deck from staff to support vaccinations and the surge of COVID cases.
- Online booking of vaccination appointments has begun at the Health Unit

- Bookings will be happening on a week by week basis, with bookings for the following week opening up on Friday's
- 85+ has opened, beginning March 3rd. All appointment spots for this week were filled within a few hours.
- Next week's appointment booking for 85+ will open on Friday; they will be moving downwards in age from there.
- For more information, check out the [TBDHU website](#).

General Offers for Support

- Masks
 - United Way's Facing Forward campaign has a supply of reusable masks to distribute free of charge to orgs on the frontline! Contact Albert abrule@uwaytbay.ca or fill out a request form on their website <https://uwaytbay.ca/facingforward/>
 - Hand made masks for anyone who needs them. Contact NWOWC – Gwen O'Reilly ed@nwowc.org
- Direct food supports to community members to
 - Beendigen offering \$25 Metro cards for community members with delivery available. Contact Maya @ (807) 632 0721 for more information.
 - ONWA provides GoBags for all community members, in the areas of food, cleaning kits, family, PPE, Moon-Time (menstrual), and Traditional Bundles. ONWA offers delivery for those that have mobility issues. Those interested are asked to call 807.623.3442 <https://www.onwa.ca/gobags>
- Personal item supports
 - Requests for personal items or non-food items for people in isolation, esp. for NAN members – NAN – Debbie Sault dsault@nan.ca
 - Socks, disposable blue boot coverings available to donate – OAHAS – Sarah Kaukinen sarah@oahas.org
- NAN and Matawa First Nations have resources and capacity to support their members! If you are working with clients who are members and are not yet connected to these orgs, consider referring them.
 - See the updates under "*First Nations communities & organizations*" for more details and contact information
- Several organizations indicated they could support with requests for snacks and/or personal items (for isolation, PACE). Those organizations and a contact person are listed below:
 - NAN – Debbie Sault dsault@nan.ca
 - Mushkiki – Cynthia Gomez cgomez@mushkiki.com
 - CMHA – Jason Arjune jarjune@cmha-tb.on.ca
 - OAHAS – Sarah Kaukinen sarah@oahas.org
 - RFDA – Brendan Carlin Brendan.carlin@rfda.ca

Isolation Food Supports

- With the increase of COVID cases in the City of Thunder Bay, supporting people in isolation (both at the isolation shelter and in their homes) with accessing food has become an arising need.
- Delivery of hampers via the current TBDHU process:
 - Up until now, the Health Unit had the capacity to deliver food bags that were put together by the RFDA & R2H to families/people who needed to self isolate or quarantine for COVID related issues. The Health Unit did the deliveries in order to ensure privacy and confidentiality.
 - With Health Unit staff being redirected towards vaccines, they no longer have the capacity to do these deliveries (approx.. 20 – 40 hampers a week).
 - RFDA, R2H, and Red Cross have the capacity to support both the continued supply for food bags as well as delivering to those in need.
 - A separate linking email will be sent to these four organizations to coordinate how this will happen and determine one clear line that people can call if they are isolating and need food.
- Ensuring snacks/food for the isolation & overflow shelters:
 - At this point, DSSAB & St. Joseph's Care Group are providing the core funding for meals at the isolation and overflow shelter.
 - There have been requests from both overflow and isolation for snacks (and comfort food) in between meals, which have been happening piecemeal at this point, and largely through donations and support from organizations.
 - R2H has committed \$10,000 to support snacks for the overflow site, which should allow them to continue to offer this support for another 8 weeks, or until those funds run out.
 - For the isolation shelter, DSSAB reported that as of today, lots of snacks have been dropped off, even a delivery of comfort food.
 - If there is a future need for snacks at the isolation shelter, Lee-Ann Chevrette with the City can help to coordinate organization offers.
 - A number of organizations put their names forward as being able to support snacks and other requested personal items (ie. toothpaste, Tylenol, etc.):
 - NAN, Mushkiki, OAHAS, CMHA
 - A connecting email will be sent among all of these organizations so that as needs arise, there is a group that can be reached out to for support.

Updates by Types of Support

Food Banks

- RFDA is continuing with the 211 registration system. Numbers have remained steady.
- Current River Churches Food Cupboard – They have changed their access day to every second Saturday, starting March 6th, from 8:30 – 11:30am.
 - o People will continue to register through 211.
 - o They now also have a driver available who can do deliveries.
- Thunder Bay Food bank – remains open in the new format they adopted in the fall.
 - o They have lost a lot of volunteers due to COVID concerns and are wondering if their volunteers will be considered in the vaccinations for frontline workers.
 - o Ivan @ TBDHU will check in about vaccinations for frontline workers and get back to the group.
- FEED Ontario now has a staff person for Northern Ontario based out of Thunder Bay. Erin Waddington will be reaching out to the food banks and other partners to get a sense of need.
 - o Anyone who wants to reach out to Erin for more information can do so through her email – erin@feedontario.ca

Meal & Snack Services

- PACE is in need of grab-n-go snacks for the warming site. They don't have the capacity to cook for or to safely divide items into individual packaging. Currently managing the need for snacks through donations.
 - o There is a request for any organizations that can help with offering more snacks.
 - o PACE will get linked into the email with the above organizations who offered support for snacks/personal items to the isolation shelter.
- Dew Drop Inn – Operations are running smoothly, still offering take home lunches and take home hot meals. Biggest challenge has been to keep everyone physically distanced.
 - o Currently focused on ensuring that everyone has masks and educating people on proper mask use, making sure that everyone has a good supply of disposable or reusable.

School Nutrition

- R2H and Red Cross have been supporting families with students doing online school in getting access to school nutrition programs.
- As all schools have now gone offline, R2H has increased their weekly supply of bags by 150; Red Cross will be pivoting as well.
- Northern Fruit & Vegetable Program (NFVP) would normally be provided in schools; they have gotten on board with supporting to go school food bags by next week.

- School food bag pick-ups will be on Thursdays from 3:00 – 4:30pm at various locations – See R2H Facebook page for full information - <https://www.facebook.com/rootstoharvest/>
 - o No need for registration, Roots just needs to know what school board your child goes to and how many kids in your family ☺

First Nation Communities & Organizations

- Matawa First Nations – Farren Tropea ftropea@matawa.on.ca, 627 1960
 - o There are nine Matawa First Nation communities - Nibinamik, Eabametoong, Constance Lake, Webequie, Marten Falls, Neskantaga, Long Lake #58, Ginoogaming, Aroland
 - o Any one who is a band member Matawa can support with things like hotel rooms, consistent food, phones during isolation, etc.
 - o Attached in the follow-up email is the external referral form for Matawa if you have someone that you want to get connected with Matawa services (ex. housing, counselling, etc.)
 - o Matawa’s vaccination clinics for Elders and those 60+ begins this week; see their Facebook for more information.
 - o Matawa also offers testing for COVID-19 to members.
- Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) – Debbie Sault, Manager for Crisis Response, dsault@nan.ca
 - o NAN’s crisis response team is there to support NAN communities facing social crisis with any number of things, including food. They have flexible funding that can support food and cold weather items for members.
 - o NAN has been getting referrals for families who are at home in isolation need help with groceries. They have been dropping off groceries/meals and additional personal health supports depending on the requests.
 - o NAN has put forward an offer to support special requests (ie. personal items, Tylenol, thermometers, etc.) for NAN members. If you receive requests from NAN members, can send those over to Debbie.
 - o NAN has a Hope Line that offers phone or online mental health supports that are open to anyone in the province who is looking for counselling or mental health support.
- Fort William First Nation (FWFN)
 - o FWFN has an isolation response team who are providing food kits to those in isolation in the community.
 - o The community completed their first round of vaccinations last week, with a second round coming soon.

Community Food Supports

- Good Food Box (organized by the Northwestern Ontario Women’s Centre) – Sherry Scott gfb@nwowc.org
 - o GFB is operating beyond capacity, doing close to 500 boxes this month

- If you would like to refer someone to the GFB program, check out the website --
<https://goodfoodboxtb.org/boxes/>
- Due to increased cases, they will be going back to packing boxes over 2 – 3 days, primarily with staff and a few volunteers.
- They have been doing lots of outreach, as well as cooking demos with Metis Nation.
- If you have a program or a call line you would like to advertise, the GFB is happy to put that kind of information in the boxes
- Community Food Market (hosted by Roots to Harvest)
 - Food market continues on Tuesdays @ Limbrick from 1 – 4pm
 - Reach out to Kim for more info kim@rootstoharvest.org
- Roots to Harvest Community Food Support
 - Providing hot meals to DDI once a week
 - Making sandwiches for Wiindo Debwe Mosewin twice a week
 - Providing hampers to TBIFC Elders once a month (Mar. 11th)
 - Providing grab-n-go hampers to Elizabeth Fry once a month (Mar. 17th)
 - Offering Arabic cultural food hampers once a month (Mar. 11th)
 - If you know of any families that could be connected to this, get in touch with Kim!