

HAMILTON TASTEBUDS

Impact Report 2021/2022



SPROUTING HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS WITH FOOD

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MESSAGES

Bhairavi Kumar

Program Manager, Hamilton Tastebuds

We are pleased to present our 2021-22 Impact Report. Like most, our priorities continued to be dominated by the global pandemic. While the work of Hamilton Tastebuds remained heavily focused on supporting student nutrition programs in schools we could not ignore the significant number of students who were still learning virtually.

We saw growth and expansion in new partnerships with other agencies that helped to address nutrition need in Hamilton. By working in unity, we can build a future that is healthier, more inclusive, and more sustainable. As we've proven time and again, our team at Hamilton Tastebuds have the talent, passion, and ingenuity to continue to support universal student nutrition programs at our existing 106 schools.

This report explores how we responded to this historic moment of transformation. Looking back on our accomplishments over the past year, I am both inspired and optimistic about our future.

Kim Martin

Executive Director, SPRC

This proved to be another remarkable year for the Tastebuds Student Nutrition Program with over 1.5 million snacks and meals served to Hamilton youth. The school year started off with a return to in-person classes and remote learning. As COVID restrictions eased and community vaccination rates increased, many schools were able to offer expanded options for their student nutrition program, with additional meal options.

We all know how important it is for children and youth to have access to nutritious food to support their learning and healthy development. The Tastebuds program goes further to provide shared opportunities for young people to come together around food and, as a universal program, it is accessible to all. This means that students can participate in the program without facing stigma.

Student nutrition programs, such as Tastebuds, are heavily reliant on volunteers to help prepare and serve food. This was significantly reduced due to COVID yet, despite these challenges, school staff continued to operate their programs and ensure these needs were met throughout the year.

We are grateful to our funders, community partners, volunteers, donors and food providers and hope as you read this report, you feel good knowing that your collective efforts are indeed working together to help students achieve their potential.

ABOUT TASTEBUDS

VISION

All students in Hamilton have universal access to healthy foods in schools and community environments to improve student success, support healthy growth, development, and lifelong eating habits.

OUR REACH

As of the 2021-22 school year, TASTEBUDS volunteers help serve over 21,200 children at 103 schools in the Hamilton area, each and every school day.

Staff

Bhairavi Kumar
Breanne LeMaitre*
Gayle Rohr
Janae Court*
Samantha Delaney

SPRC Support

Caroline Eyk
Alison Miller*

Steering Committee Members

Amber Aquin
Engagement Officer, HWDSB

Amy Leaming-Cote
*Executive Director, Hamilton
Foundation for Student Success*

Alison Miller*
*Community Outreach and Program
Administration, CAPC*

Bhairavi Kumar (Co-Chair)
Program Manager, Tastebuds

Breanne LeMaitre*
CDW, Tastebuds

Darlene Edmonds
*Regional Logistics & Community
Development Coordinator, HN-
REACH*

Donna Weldon (Co-Chair)
Community Volunteer

Elizabeth Smith
*Public Health Dietitian, City of
Hamilton*

Gayle Rohr
CDW, Tastebuds

Janae Court*
CDW, Tastebuds

Leah Janzen
Compass Community Health Centre

Manuela Trombetta
*Public Health Nurse, City of
Hamilton*

Mariko Bown-Kai
Compass Community Health Centre

Tyler Arsenault
*Supervisor, Regional Student
Nutrition Program, HN-REACH*

John Madalena
*Equal Opportunity Consultant,
HWCDSD*

Jona Ombao-Appadu*
Social Planner, CAPC Supervisor

Samantha Delaney
CDW, Tastebuds

Ted Hildebrandt
*Senior Social Planner, CAPC
Supervisor*

*Retired or resigned in the 2021-22 year.

STUDENT NUTRITION PROGRAM STRUCTURE



Ministry of
Children, Community &
Social Services

Provincial Government establishes provincial policy, standards and guidelines, distributes funding to lead agencies, collects program data, monitors and evaluates.



Administrator of SNPs in the Hamilton-Niagara area. Supports local partnerships (Tastebuds) through food and logistics coordination, support of program staff and activities, and liaising with external partners.



A provincial organization that provides a voice for all student nutrition programs, coordinates partnerships, shares best practices, streamlines resource distribution and supports lead agencies.



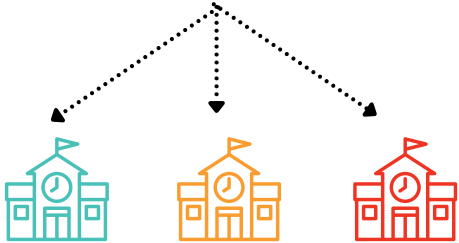
Tastebuds facilitates programs within local schools and community organization ensuring adherence to guidelines, distribution of funding and executing other community development initiatives to support local programs.



Host organization.



A committee of community partners committed to supporting student nutrition in Hamilton.



Individual schools and community organizations run Student Nutrition Programs.

2021-2022 OVERVIEW

Hamilton Tastebuds Student Nutrition Collaborative is a partnership of community agencies and community members that supports and facilitates local Student Nutrition Programs (SNPs) for children and youth in Hamilton.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted students and their ability to access healthy, nutritious food through regular SNPs.

Tastebuds Student Nutrition Programs operated throughout the school year, with one short disruption due to school closures, and was able to steadily work towards pre-pandemic levels of operation.

Tastebuds was able to provide support to students through three initiatives: Student Nutrition Programs, Grocery Gift Cards and the Buddy Box Initiative.

In-Person Learning Supports



Student Nutrition Programs

Alternative Supports for Virtual Learners



Grocery Gift Cards

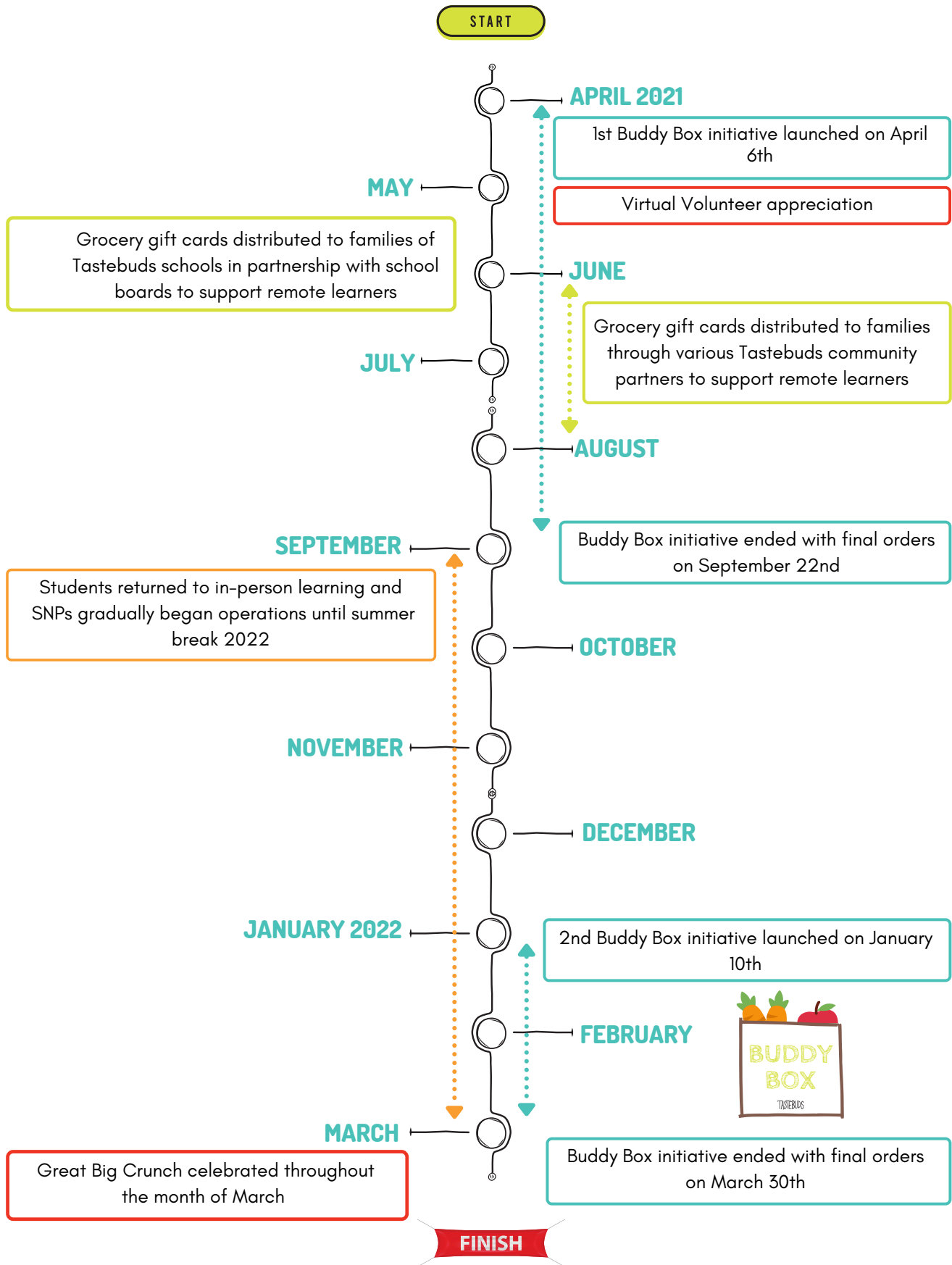
- Hamilton Tastebuds schools
- Community partners



Buddy Box Initiative

- Apr 2021 - Sep 2021
- Jan 2022 - Mar 2022

YEAR AT A GLANCE



IN-PERSON LEARNING SUPPORT



Student Nutrition Programs

Apr 2021 - Mar 2022



1,515,316

Total Meals Served



\$0.85 - \$1.75

Cost Per Meal



342

Average Number of Volunteers Per Month



872

Total Volunteer Hours

Despite challenges due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, 103 locations out of 106 locations across Hamilton were able to operate to their full capacity this year.

Modifications:

- increased use of pre-packaged food to decrease food preparation on site
- programs given flexibility to operate based on the resources and need at their schools
- limited number of volunteers permitted onsite
- in-person grocery shop reduced
- adhering to safety protocols including physical distancing and enhanced cleaning and sanitizing procedures

FirstOntario Credit Union **\$20,000 Donation**

FirstOntario Credit Union's generous donation supported 3 schools to enhance their meal program and also supported the 2022 Great Big Crunch.


Kiwanis **\$10,000 Donation** KIWANIS CLUB OF HAMILTON EAST INC.

Kiwanis Club of Hamilton East's generous donation kickstarted two NEW student nutrition programs: Viola Desmond Elementary School & Ancaster Meadow Elementary School.

“ “ Our nutrition program is vital to the wellbeing and success of our student population. Students and educators build relationships through our programs. Students are supported nutritionally, making it possible to improve readiness to learn across all grade levels.

- Coordinator
HWDSB

21,046



Students Accessing SNPs per Day*

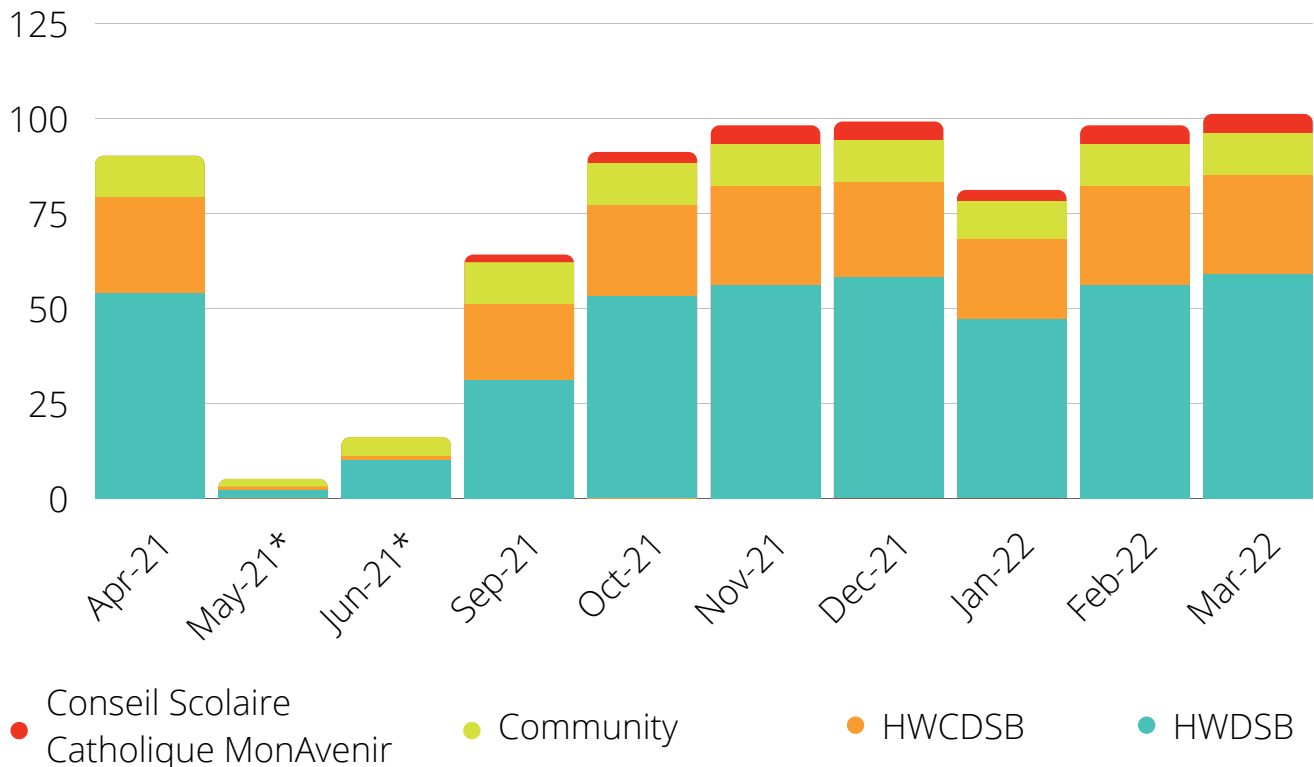
*The months taken from the graph below that were used to calculate the average number of students accessing SNPs everyday

\$1,420,400



Funds Allocated

Total Programs Operating by Month



*Schools were closed

SNP BREAKDOWN BY BOARD

Hamilton Wentworth District School Board



62*

Programs



949,028

Meals served



\$989,982

Funds allocated

Elementary Schools

- A.M. Cunningham School
- Adelaide Hoodless Elementary School
- Ancaster Meadow Elementary School
- Bellmoore Public School
- Bennetto Elementary School
- Buchanan Park Elementary School
- Cathy Wever Elementary School
- Cecil B. Stirling Elementary School
- Central Elementary School
- Chedoke Elementary School
- Collegiate Elementary School
- Cootes Paradise Elementary School
- Dalewood Middle School
- Dr. Edgar Davey Elementary School
- Dundas Central Elementary School
- Earl Kitchener Junior Public School
- Franklin Road Elementary School
- George L. Armstrong Elementary School
- Gordon Price Elementary School
- Helen Detwiler Elementary School
- Hess Street Elementary School
- Highview Elementary School
- Hillcrest Elementary School
- Holbrook Elementary School
- James MacDonald Public School
- Lake Avenue Elementary School
- Lawfield Elementary School
- Lincoln Alexander PS
- Lisgar Elementary School
- Memorial Elementary School
- Mount Albion Elementary School
- Mountview School
- Parkdale Elementary School
- Pauline Johnson Elementary School
- Prince of Wales Elementary School
- Queen Mary Elementary School
- Queen Victoria Elementary School
- Queensdale School
- R.A. Riddell Elementary School
- Richard Beasley Elementary School
- Ridgemount Elementary School
- Rockton Elementary School
- Ryerson Elementary School
- Sir Isaac Brock Elementary School
- Sir Wilfrid Laurier Elementary School
- Strathcona Elementary School
- Templemead Elementary School
- Viola Desmonds Elementary School
- Viscount Montgomery Elementary School
- W.H. Ballard Elementary School
- Westview Elementary School
- Westwood Elementary School

Secondary Schools

- Bernie Custis Secondary School
- Glendale Secondary School
- Nora Frances Henderson Secondary School
- Orchard Park Secondary School
- Saltfleet Secondary School
- Sherwood Secondary School
- Sir Allan MacNab Secondary School
- Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School - Breakfast
- STRIVE Alt. (Dundas Valley Secondary School)*
- Westdale Secondary School
- Westmount Secondary School



“Tastebuds continues to be a foundational support for HWDSB students and families in the Hamilton community. Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is incredibly grateful for the forward-thinking and flexibility of the Tastebuds team, and their strong commitment to collaboration. We know the area of nutrition is one that strongly affects student achievement and well-being. On behalf of families and students at HWDSB, thank you to Tastebuds for the time and effort put into addressing the nutritional needs in our community.

- Amber Aquin
Engagement Officer, HWDSB

*Programs did not operate 2021-22 school year.

SNP BREAKDOWN BY BOARD

Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board



29*

Programs



473,412

Meals served



\$338,666

Funds allocated

Elementary Schools

- Canadian Martyrs Catholic Elementary School
- Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Elementary School
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- Regina Mundi Catholic Elementary School*
- Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Elementary School
- St. Agnes Catholic Elementary School
- St. Ann Catholic Elementary School
- St. Anthony Daniel Elementary School
- St. David Catholic Elementary School
- St. Eugene Catholic Elementary School
- St. Francis Xavier Catholic Elementary School
- St. James the Apostle Catholic Elementary School
- St. John Paul II Catholic Elementary School
- St. John the Baptist Catholic Elementary School
- St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School*
- St. Kateri Tekakwitha
- St. Lawrence Catholic Elementary School - Morning Meal
- St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
- St. Marguerite d'Youville Elementary School
- St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
- St. Patrick Catholic Elementary School

Secondary Schools

- Bishop Ryan Catholic Secondary School
- St. Jean de Brebeuf Catholic Secondary School
- St. John Henry Newman Catholic Secondary School
- St. Martin's Manor
- St. Mary Catholic Secondary School
- St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School
- Wilma's Place c/o Cathedral Secondary School



Hamilton-Wentworth
Catholic District School Board

Believing, Achieving, Serving



Tastebuds continues to be an essential and committed partner with HWCDSB. As schools return to normal, after 2 years of pandemic disruption, it is essential that we maintain healthy snack and breakfast options for all students. With the expertise of Tastebuds case workers, schools are supported with strategies and plans to make nutrition programs work. Students excel when their nutritional needs are taken care of.

- John Madalena

Equal Opportunities Consultant, HWCDSB

*Programs did not operate 2021-22 school year.

SNP BREAKDOWN BY BOARD

Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir & Conseil Scolaire Viamonde



6

Programs



29,750

Meals served



\$37,418

Funds allocated

Elementary Schools

- Ecole elementaire catholique Monseigneur-de-Laval
- Ecole elementaire catholique Notre-Dame
- École secondaire Georges-P.-Vanier
- Ecole elementaire Pavillon de la jeunesse



Secondary Schools

- Ecole Secondaire Academie Catholique
- Mere-Teresa (ACMT)



“ Our student nutrition program has become an extremely important part of the culture of well-being at Westdale. The increase has allowed for conditions of safety to provide food security to a high volume of students in a universal model. This is directly related to the increase in funding to the program and the cooperation of Hamilton Tastebuds.”

- Westdale Secondary School
HWDSB

SNP BREAKDOWN

Community Programs



11*

Programs



33,749

Meals served



\$54,334

Funds allocated

- Banyan-Bridge Program (Dawn Patrol)
- Compass Community Health Centre (North Hamilton CHC)
- Eva Rothwell Centre - Breakfast Program
- Gateway Safe Schools (King William)
- Gateway Safe Schools (Vincent Massey)
- Grace Haven
- James St. Alter-Ed
- Living Rock Ministries
- N-Gage (King William)
- NIWASA AHS
- SHAE (Strengthening Hamilton Aboriginal Education)



Eva Rothwell Centre

“ We have had families/households moved to tears when they realize that additional healthy food is being given for their children. They are so thankful that while we are a food bank, we believe in the investment of our youth.

- Community Food Bank Coordinator

VIRTUAL LEARNER SUPPORT

HAMILTON TASTEBUDS SCHOOLS (School Year and Over Summer)



Grocery Gift Cards

With schools returning to remote learning following the spring break, Tastebuds distributed grocery giftcards to families and students beginning in May, 2021. Staff were able to identify the student and family recipients while Tastebuds relied on the Hamilton-Wentworth School Board, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic School Board, École Élémentaire Catholique Notre-Dame, École Secondaire Catholique Mère-Teresa and community programs for distribution.

This project was funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and the Breakfast Club of Canada.



\$132,250

Dollar Value



1,487

Families Supported



2,732

Students Impacted

“ Thank you, all of you who are involved in helping families like mine. Since they have been home all year round since COVID first started, it seems they are all growing even faster and love to eat even more. Many times I would sit here crying, wondering how am I going to get food. I would check my mail to find your gift cards and be okay for the rest of the week. Having a big family costs me a lot more than I can afford at the moment for sure so your help has been the one thing I have to count on. You people are great and amazing, as I said a true blessing and we appreciate you more than you know.”

- The G Family

VIRTUAL LEARNER SUPPORT

COMMUNITY PARTNERS (Over Summer)



Grocery Gift Cards

\$205,750
Dollar Value



4,612
Families Supported



7,459
Children Impacted



Additional funding provided by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services's Safe Return to Class funds allowed Tastebuds to expand it's outreach over summer months. By partnering with other community organizations that work directly with school aged children Tastebuds oversaw the distribution of grocery gift cards through out the summer months (June - August 2021).

Because Tastebuds was able to join forces with community organizations, we were able to grocery gift cards to the students at those agencies.

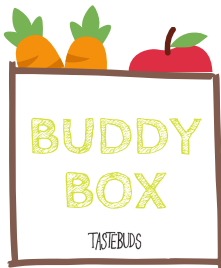


The Children's Aid Society
OF HAMILTON
La Société d'aide à l'enfance
DE HAMILTON

VIRTUAL LEARNER SUPPORT



Buddy Box Initiative



Apr to Sep 2021



\$517,693
Cost of Food
Donated to Food
Banks



8,628
Total Families
Supported



15,808
Total Students
Impacted

Tastebuds launched the Buddy Box initiative in response to school closures in April, 2021 until the end of September, 2021. Additional funding allowed us to re-launch The Buddy Box initiative in January to March 2022.

Through partnering with food banks and local vendors, nutritious food was made available to students and their families adversely impacted by the pandemic. MZ Foods, a longstanding vendor to SNPs, assisted by packaging Buddy Boxes and delivering food and resources weekly. Food banks and food service providers received either pre-made Buddy Boxes or In-Bulk food orders for distribution.



Small Buddy Box (\$25):
Mix of non-perishable food items



Large Buddy Box (\$50):
Mix of perishable and non-perishable food items

The Buddy Box Project was made possible with funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) - Special Funding.



Because of the support of 'Tastebuds' in partnership with MZ Foods, we are able to consistently provide fresh fruit, vegetables and yogurt to families that we serve through our food bank programs at Hamilton and Dundas Community & Family Services (CFS)."

- Program Manager

The Salvation Army Hamilton

\$517,693
Donated to Food Banks

Pre-Made Boxes

Bulk Food Orders

\$41,700

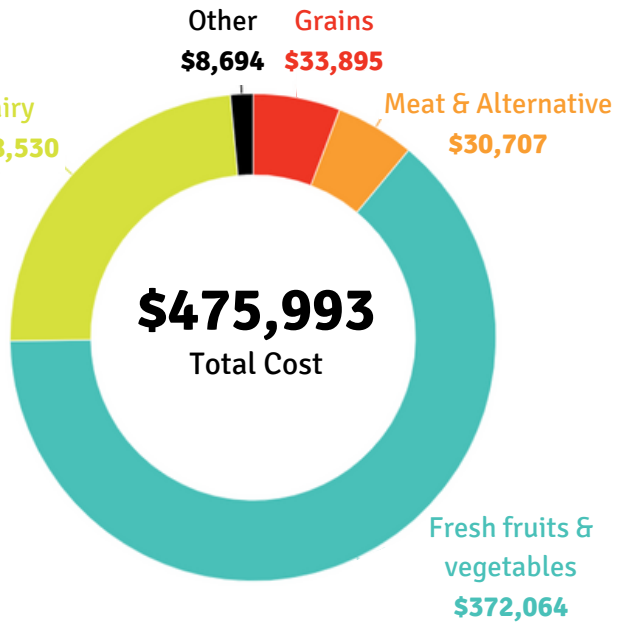
Total Cost

750

*Large Buddy Boxes
Distributed - Stoney Creek
Food Bank

168

**Small Buddy Boxes
Distributed - Eva Rothwell
Centre



Participating Food Bank Locations



- Ancaster Community Services*
- CityKidz*
- Eva Rothwell Centre
- Living Rock Youth Resources*
- Mission Services of Hamilton
- Neighbour to Neighbour Centre
- Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg
- Stoney Creek Community Food Bank
- The Salvation Army Dundas
- The Salvation Army Hamilton
- Welcome Inn Community Centre*

*Programs were new in 2021-22.

EVENTS



Great Big Crunch

The Great Big Crunch is now a national movement and an annual moment of anti-silence in which students, school staff, parents, and others create a Canada-wide “CRUNCH” to make noise for healthy school food. The “crunching” used to be coordinated across time zones, but this year’s event occurred at the convenience of each site.



29,177
Apples
Crunched



59
Schools
Participated

Throughout the month of March, Tastebuds encouraged participants to share photos and videos of their online or in person crunches. Everyone from students, teachers, principals, mayor, community volunteers celebrated this year’s Great Big Crunch.

#GreatBigCrunch

Tastebuds Schools received free apples through out the month of March to create some noise for healthy school food. This was made possible by a generous donation from FirstOntario Credit Union and the Ontario Produce Marketing Association.

Volunteer Appreciation Week



175 volunteers were recognized for their dedication and hard work.

Tastebuds volunteers are the most important part of student nutrition programs. With over 100 student nutrition program locations in Hamilton these volunteers help thousands of students access healthy, nutritious food every day.

Without the amazing support and dedication of volunteers, we would not be able to serve over 20,000 students in a day. We invited all our volunteers to submit their names and email addresses to receive Starbucks e-card.

We cannot say THANK YOU enough for all that you have done, and continue to do, to help our students sprout healthy relationships with food!

DONATIONS

Grocery Foundation Gift Cards

Toonies for Tummies campaign

Grocery foundation's annual Toonies for Tummies campaign was organized from January 13 and ends on March 31. Participating stores are: Metro, Food Basics, Sobeys, Freshco and Longos. Shoppers donate a toonie at the point of sale (100% of donations benefit local student nutrition programs in their communities). Tastebuds receives these funds in the form of grocery gift cards. These gift cards were distributed to the schools to support in-person learning.

Funding to the schools was determined by the following:

- Proximity of the schools to the grocery store
- Whether volunteers can shop in-person.



\$89,200
Dollar Value



54
Schools
Benefitted



Egg Farmers of Canada Coupons

Eggs are a nutritious staple in many Student Nutrition Programs across Hamilton. With a value of one carton of eggs, Egg Farmers of Canada donates egg coupons every year. Tastebuds distributes the egg coupons to school and community SNPs to use throughout the school year. Come June, any leftover egg coupons are distributed to the students and their families.



“Many children in our school come to school hungry. Because of your funding, we are able to provide them with breakfast and lunch to fill their bellies so they are ready to learn. It helps children behave and focus when they are fed healthy nutrient dense food.”




- Program Coordinator
HWDSB

Breakfast Club of Canada

Donated product from Breakfast Club of Canada were delivered to student nutrition programs. Participating locations received yogurt, applesauce and/or hard-boiled eggs on a regular basis to serve in their SNP.

Donated products were redirected to local food banks in January and March 2021 as a result of school closures.

The locations which received these donated products include Mission Services of Hamilton, Neighbour to Neighbour Centre, Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg, Salvation Army of Hamilton and Living Rock.

SNPs		Food Banks
\$1,603		\$588
\$7,530		\$2,541
\$2,536		



Mount Albion Elementary School has operated a student nutrition program for the past 5 years. It has become an integral part of their daily routine with the support of their school community. Thanks to the generosity of Touchwood Public Relations, Tastebuds was able to provide the program with 60 tickets for the Clifford movie screening at Cineplex for their school community to enjoy!

“The program has allowed us to always have nutritional items on hand when students come to the office needing more food than they brought or even if they didn't bring anything at all throughout the day. We have a varied demographic, and many families with high needs and often have students who require extra food during nutrition breaks. It's a true blessing!”

- Program Coordinator

HWDSB

PARTNERS, FUNDERS AND DONORS

- Brant Food for Thought
-  Breakfast Club of Canada
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton
- Burnbrae Farms
- Child Nutrition Network of Haldimand and Norfolk
- Children's Aid Society
- Catholic Childrens Aid society
-  Community Action Program for Children
-  Dairy Farmers of Ontario
- Drummond Farms
-  Egg Farmers of Canada
-  Egg Farmers of Ontario
- Empowerment Squared
- Eva Rothwell Centre
-  FirstOntario Credit Union
- Food4Kids Hamilton
-  The Grocery Foundation
- Haldimand Norfolk -REACH
-  Hamilton Community Foundation
- Hamilton Foundation for Student Success
- Hamilton Public Library
- Hamilton-Wentworth Principals' Council
- Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board
- Hamilton Wentworth District School Board
-  Kiwanis Club of Hamilton
-  Kiwanis Club of Hamilton East Inc.
- Lococo's
-  Mackenzie Investments
- McMaster University
-  Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- Mission Services of Hamilton
- Mohawk College
- MZ Foods/Zarky's Fine Foods
- Neighbour to Neighbour Centre
- Niagara Nutrition Partners
- Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg
-  Ontario Produce Marketing Association
- Ontario Student Nutrition Services
- Pepsico
- President's Choice Children's Charity
- Public Health, City of Hamilton
- Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton
- Student Nutrition Ontario
- The Good Shepherd Venture Centre
- The Salvation Army Dundas
- The Salvation Army Hamilton
- The Stoney Creek Food Bank
- Touchwood Public Relations



@HamiltonTastebuds



@TastebudsSNC



@tastebudshamilton



Haldimand-Norfolk
REACH

Tastebuds Hamilton is a program of the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton. The Student Nutrition Program is a provincial initiative funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) and administered regionally by Haldimand-Norfolk R.E.A.C.H.