



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

URGENT APPEAL FOR DONATIONS

12/11/18

OTTAWA, ON – With Christmas less than two weeks away, many of us are looking forward to gathering over a warm holiday meal with our loved ones. The excitement of the season is one we share with those closest to our hearts, but for those struggling to make ends meet, this can be an especially stressful time of year.

This year, close to 19,000 individuals in need have turned to [the Caring and Sharing Exchange's Christmas Exchange Program](#) for relief. This 103-year-old program provides much-needed food assistance in time for the holidays in the form of a voucher or a food hamper complete with all the fixings for a festive homemade meal.

"This program gives individuals and families the means for a special home-cooked meal to celebrate the holidays," said Executive Director Cindy Smith. "Our hampers include everything you'd need for a Christmas meal, like a turkey and stuffing. We also include some extras, like fresh fruit and vegetables—things we sometimes take for granted, but are not as accessible when budgets are tight."

For individuals and families that might have dietary restrictions, or that don't feel comfortable with someone delivering a hamper directly to their door, the Caring and Sharing Exchange offers vouchers in partnership with Giant Tiger. This offers recipients the opportunity to shop for themselves and put together a meal that is special for them and their loved ones.

While the Exchange can provide relief to about a third of their list so far, they currently have 2,081 households waiting for assistance. With the need the highest the Exchange has seen in recent years, they are working around the clock to provide assistance to as many households on their list as possible.

"We know the need is growing for programs like this across the city," said Cindy, "and with the support of our generous community here in Ottawa, we really hope to meet that need. There is no greater gift for us than knowing every person on our list gets the assistance they need for the holidays."

Those interested can donate online at [www.CaringandSharing.ca](#), or by calling 613-226-6434.

Get matched with a family & deliver Christmas directly to their door!

The Caring and Sharing Exchange's [Sponsor-a-Hamper program](#) provides another exciting opportunity for members of the community to help meet the need. By getting matched with a family on the Exchange's list, Sponsors create their own hamper and deliver it directly to a family in time for the holidays.

Those interested can learn more at [www.CaringandSharing.ca](#) under "Ways to Give."

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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*Christmas Exchange
Program*