



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Dec 17, 2024

URGENT APPEAL FOR DONATIONS

A record of almost 30,000 individuals from over 9,400 households turn to the Christmas Exchange for help!

OTTAWA, ON – This year, 9,419 families, consisting of 29,250 individuals turned to the Caring and Sharing Exchange for support. Due to this overwhelming increase in demand for assistance and significant delays in donations caused by the ongoing postal strike, the program is falling short and still has 234 families waiting to hear if they will receive assistance this year.

The 109-year-old Christmas Exchange program ensures individuals and families in need receive vital support during the holiday season so struggling families can enjoy a healthy and festive meal, leaving them with a sense of dignity and hope. Assistance is provided in the form of a redeemable gift voucher or a food hamper.

We have all faced challenges because of the dramatic increase in the cost of living, but it has been exceptionally hard on families who were already struggling to make ends meet. For families who have experienced job loss, illness or live in isolation, being able to shop for food or having money to purchase everything needed for a Christmas dinner is a privilege they just cannot afford.

"We are facing an unprecedented situation," said Cindy Smith, Executive Director of the Caring and Sharing Exchange. "Not only has the need increased dramatically, but the postal disruption has severely impacted our ability to receive much-needed donations. We are urgently calling on our community to help by donating online to ensure we can continue providing support to those who need it most."

"We know that every contribution makes a difference, and with your help, we can ensure that no family is left behind this holiday season," added Cindy. "Every dollar donated will go directly to helping a family in our community experience the joy and warmth of the holiday season."

ABOUT THE CARING AND SHARING EXCHANGE

The Caring and Sharing Exchange serves Ottawa families facing economic hardship through their holiday and back-to-school assistance programs. Through their unique Coordination Service, the Exchange works with hundreds of its local agency partners to cross-reference clients and eliminate duplicate applications for assistance. Funds saved by eliminating these duplicate applications are then redistributed into their programs. In 2023, 31,119 individuals living in Ottawa accessed their program.

Those interested in donating can do so by visiting www.CaringandSharing.ca.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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