



School-based Feeding Programs

A G O O D C H O I C E F O R C H I L D R E N ?



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School-based Feeding Programs

A GOOD CHOICE FOR CHILDREN?

A Key Informant Study and Literature Review

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Food security is not assured for all Canadians. For a number of reasons, many families are unable to adequately meet their food needs.

School-based nutrition and feeding programs (hereinafter referred to as *school food programs*) have been one response to this problem. Have school food programs been a sound response? What do we know about the delivery and outcomes of school food programs?

This paper offers an analytical assessment of school food programs as a sound policy response to food insecurity. The paper discusses the findings from interviews with key informants and from a review of relevant research literature. A concluding section with recommendations closes the paper.

FINDINGS

Research Question 1: *Are school-based nutrition programs a sound social policy response for children?*

The evidence available at this time does not clearly demonstrate that school-based nutrition programs are a sound social policy response for children. **More evidence is needed to adequately assess the contribution of these programs to alleviating hunger, enhancing nutrition and contributing to the healthy development of Canadian children and families.** It is possible that school food programs could be one of many elements in a comprehensive strategy to alleviate hunger and enhance nutrition. There are some indications, however, that school food programs can have unintended adverse consequences, such as dependency and stigmatization.



Research Question 2: *What role, if any, should the federal government assume in supporting these programs?*

Without adequate evidence of the impact of these programs, the federal government should not support further development of school food programs. Possible roles for the federal government related to food programs are discussed further below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The federal government should share with provincial and community stakeholders information and research conducted into school food programs. This would help to stimulate additional research with the goals of:

- ♦ Creating outcome targets and key indicators of levels of hunger, nutrition and food security for children and adults;

- ♦ Building appropriate evaluation frameworks, including outcome targets and key indicators, to evaluate and assess current programs;
- ♦ Identifying, documenting, and disseminating innovative approaches to improve food security.

2. The federal government can make a number of contributions on a broader scale to reduce hunger and enhance nutrition for Canadians. These contributions can be made within the already established federal program and policy frameworks listed below:

- ♦ Population Health
- ♦ Healthy Child Development
- ♦ Income Security
- ♦ Food Security
- ♦ Social Policy Leadership

Population Health and Healthy Child Development provide the context for priority policy directions in the



areas of Income Security and Food Security. Social Policy Leadership is important to demonstrate federal commitment to these policy directions.

Population Health

Strategies to reduce hunger and enhance nutrition among children and families need to be situated **within a guiding framework that establishes a common understanding of where we are and where we want to go.** The population health framework is supported by substantial national and international research, it is comprehensive and multi-sectoral, and it has already been adopted by governments. The population health framework recognizes the interdependence of the causes of ill health – individual characteristics and endowments, the physical environment, and social and economic factors. The population health framework could help to emphasize the need for school food

programs as a way to reduce hunger and enhance nutrition.

Healthy Child Development

The policy directions outlined in ***Building a National Strategy for Healthy Child Development***, supported by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, should be more fully developed and integrated with priority income security and food security initiatives (see below), then used as an implementation framework at the community level to ensure relevance to particular local needs.

Income Security

Adequate income security is the major contributing factor to the alleviation of hunger and the improvement of child and family nutrition. Recent policy research outlines comprehensive and sound income security proposals, and they should be fully assessed.

A commitment to the following elements of an income security policy is essential:

- ◆ adequate and equitable income to be defined and agreed upon by Canadians;
- ◆ a legislated commitment by government to ensure the provision of adequate and equitable income;
- ◆ adequate and equitable income levels for all families, whatever the source of family income;
- ◆ mutual accountability of governments and citizens to ensure adequate incomes.

Food Security

Building on *Nutrition for Health: An Agenda for Action*, and using the food security framework developed in *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security*, the federal government should make funds available for the development of local, regional and provincial food security policies. To develop these policies and strategies, all governments must work

together, taking into account current mechanisms such as the Social Union Framework Agreement and federal/provincial/territorial divisions of responsibilities. There are particular needs for the following:

- ◆ comprehensive food security assessments, including levels of hunger and nutrition;
- ◆ development of food security councils to ensure ongoing dialogue, activity, monitoring, and accountability;
- ◆ community economic development initiatives in the food sector, including food producers, distributors, marketers, retailers, educators, and promoters.

Social Policy Leadership

It is imperative that the federal government:

- ◆ demonstrate a commitment and provide leadership in income security and food security;
- ◆ provide support for programs, research and information that



allows the public to be informed about and participate in policy development;

- ▶ provide meaningful opportunities for ongoing, broad-based citizen participation, discussion and decision-making;
- ▶ promote the democratization of social policy development, implementation, administration, assessment and accountability.

School-based Feeding Programs A GOOD CHOICE FOR CHILDREN?

Assessing the soundness of school food programs as a social policy response raises two important questions:

What is meant by 'sound'?

What problems are school food programs intended to address?

The soundness of school food programs is assessed in this paper through a discussion of the issues raised under the first research question posed by Health Canada (See Background, Appendix A). The discussion provides an overall context to the assessment. It is also

important, however, to list a more specific set of elements in order to identify the soundness of the food programs themselves. Generally, sound programs are those with the following characteristics:

- ◆ developed in response to clearly defined needs.
- ◆ designed to meet clearly articulated goals and objectives.
- ◆ managed efficiently and effectively.
- ◆ evaluated in terms of clear, direct and relevant program outcomes.

These elements are critical for an adequate assessment of the sound-



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ness of any school food program.¹ Unfortunately, most school food programs lack one or more of these elements, making proper assessments difficult.² In particular, the need for school food programs has not been adequately determined or demonstrated.³

School food programs have tended to be implemented in response to a fairly informal, and sometimes anecdotal, assessment of a school's or community's social and economic situation.⁴ Most school food programs have begun as a response to perceptions of hunger and inadequate nutrition among low-income children.⁵ Although the program goals are not always explicit, the implementation of school food programs is meant to reduce hunger and enhance nutrition among the particular population of children who are considered to be at risk of poor outcomes.⁶ However, the explicit goal statements of school

food programs usually refer to the delivery of the programs and not to enhancing health.

One example of a school food program with program delivery as the goal is in British Columbia, where the government operates a school meal program throughout the province.⁷ This program was initiated in 1992 because the BC government recognized that hunger was a potential consequence of child and family poverty, and that hunger hindered child development. The overall purpose of the program "is to provide meals to students who come to school hungry."⁸ The objectives of the program are to "provide ... meals to children in need, promote a healthy school environment ... [and] promote nutrition education."⁹

The program criteria, purpose and objectives contain no statements about reducing hunger or enhancing nutrition. Evaluations of programs

usually assess outcomes in relation to program objectives; therefore examining the contribution of school food programs to hunger reduction and nutrition enhancement may be inadvertently overlooked.¹⁰ **There is a real need to evaluate programs to assess their effectiveness in reducing hunger or enhancing nutrition.**

As school food programs have developed, their goals have shifted.¹¹ Programs that began simply to feed children now address multiple goals such as nutritional adequacy for all children, nutritional education, positive socialization, school attendance, family time-stress, community mobilization, partnerships and social support.¹² One suggested reason for this shift is that programs have been unable to demonstrate reductions in hunger and enhanced nutrition.¹³

Some experts view the multiple or shifting goals of school food programs positively, but others do not.¹⁴ One critic suggests that program designers, administrators and advocates need to remember the original purpose of school food programs—to reduce hunger and enhance nutrition among low-income children—and that this should serve as the primary and explicit objective of school food programs.



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RESEARCH CONTEXT

Canada's International Commitments

Among the multitude of Canada's international commitments, the following five are particularly relevant for the purposes of the discussion in this paper:¹⁵

- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966/1976)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989/1991)
- World Declaration on Nutrition/ Nutrition for Health: An Agenda for Action (1992/1996)
- World Food Summit Plan of Action/ Canada's Action Plan for Food Security (1996/1998)

Following World War II, politicians recognized the need for a mix of political, civil, social and economic rights as the foundation for human-

ity and a new world order.¹⁶ These rights were expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that was adopted by the United Nations in 1948. In 1966, the United Nations further specified these rights in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Canada ratified the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1976, giving the weight of international law to statements such as Article 11: "The State parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living ... including adequate food, clothing, and housing."¹⁷ Canada also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in which Article 27 stipulates that "every child has the right to an adequate standard of living," and it outlines the responsibility of government, if necessary, to "take appropriate measures to assist parents to ensure these rights are

met, specifically in terms of nutrition, clothing and housing.”¹⁸

In 1992, Canada was a signatory to the World Declaration on Nutrition, in which countries affirmed that “access to nutritionally adequate and safe food is a right of each individual,” and that nutritional well-being “must be at the centre of ... socio-economic development plans and strategies.”¹⁹ Further, by signing the Declaration, Canada was committed to “set measurable goals and timeframes for action on nutrition and food issues.”²⁰ Canada’s response to the World Food Summit of 1996, *Canada’s Action Plan for Food Security*, outlined a detailed set of actions to ensure that “food insecurity in Canada and abroad is reduced by half no later than the year 2015.”²¹ Canada’s commitments to food security are concisely summarized in *Canada’s Action Plan for Food Security*, which states:²²

“Canada has endorsed numerous international declarations and conventions which clearly recognize the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This right was recognized and reaffirmed in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action of 1996. Most recently, Canada co-sponsored a resolution affirming this right at the 1998 Commission of Human Rights.”

Given the number of commitments that Canada has made over the past 50 years and its level of wealth and development, it is surprising that food insecurity is a problem in this country.²³ Unfortunately, these commitments have not been sufficient to ensure food security for all Canadians.²⁴ Particular political agendas and economic imperatives are just some of the reasons ana-



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lysts have attributed to this gap between promises and outcomes.²⁵ These same analysts and others expect greater efforts from their governments to attain social and economic security, including food security. They believe that Canadians' social rights have been eroded as a result of the obvious lack of accountability of federal, provincial, and territorial governments to these international commitments.²⁶ On the positive side, however, one of Canada's obligations under these commitments is the periodic review and public reporting of its social policy mandate. These reviews, and others conducted outside of government, have been used by many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for education and advocacy.²⁷ Representatives from these NGOs have viewed the United Nations as a high-profile international forum that offers an opportunity for concerned citizens to report to sympathetic ears, creating, at the

very least, a bad media image for Canada and potentially, pressure for changes to improve food security. More favourably, periodic reviews by UN bodies require governments to examine their social policy mandates and to provide public documentation about their legislative commitments.

School Food Programs and Domestic Social Policy Commitments

In collaboration with provincial/territorial governments and Aboriginal communities, the federal government has developed a number of unilateral and shared (federal/provincial/territorial) strategies in health, social policy and income security related to the issues of hunger and nutrition, including the following:

Federal Initiatives

- ◆ Community Action Program for Children (1995)
- ◆ Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (1995)

- ◆ Nutrition for Health: An Agenda for Action (1996)
- ◆ Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being (1997)²⁸
- ◆ Canada's Action Plan for Food Security (1998)

Federal/Provincial/Territorial Initiatives

- ◆ Strategies for Population Health: Investing in the Health of Canadians (1994)
- ◆ Building a National Strategy for Healthy Child Development (1997)
- ◆ National Child Benefit (1997)
- ◆ National Children's Agenda (1997)²⁹

It is important to note the inclusion of the following program elements in these strategies: population health, children at risk, income security, nutrition, food security, and policy action. A brief discussion of these elements follows.

In 1994, the population health approach was endorsed by the

federal, provincial, and territorial Ministers of Health in the report, *Strategies for Population Health: Investing in the Health of Canadians*.³⁰

The report summarizes and discusses the determinants of health which are defined as the multiple factors that contribute to the health of populations.³¹ The population health approach serves as a framework to guide the development of policies and strategies to improve the health of the population.

Both the reports *Nutrition for Health: An Agenda for Action* and *Building a National Strategy for Healthy Child Development* explicitly ground their policy directions in the population health framework.³²

These documents also place importance on ensuring adequate health opportunities for vulnerable or at-risk populations, especially children. Two of Health Canada's programs, the Community Action Program for



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Children (CAPC), and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP), are intended to address the needs of children who are at risk.³³

The National Child Benefit (NCB) is a federal/provincial/territorial income transfer program designed, in part, “to help prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty.”³⁴ Poverty is recognized as causing a “greater risk of suffering from inadequate nutrition ... [and] poor school achievement” for low-income children.³⁵

The National Children’s Agenda is another federal/provincial/territorial initiative that, when it comes to fruition, is intended to address the developmental needs of children across various areas of government responsibility, including health, social services, justice and education.³⁶ The government has listed policy initiatives like the NCB and programs such as CAPC and the CPNP as examples of foundational components of the emerging National

Children’s Agenda. The agenda is intended to serve “as a far-reaching, long-term action plan for coordinating and advancing actions in a wide range of children’s issues.”³⁷ One strength of these program and policy initiatives is their recognition of the need for sectoral integration of the determinants of health and well-being. This recognition creates opportunities for further integration and consolidation of strategies. This is important because at present, it is not completely clear how these initiatives are intended to complement, rather than contradict, each other.

Given their stated import, some weaknesses of these initiatives must be noted. For one, there is only modest involvement of the non-governmental social policy community in their development. As well, with the exception of the NCB, CAPC and CPNP, many of the action statements in the initiatives are, at best,

statements of goals with no mechanisms for implementation, monitoring or accountability.

It is also worth noting that while all of these programs and policy statements directly or indirectly mention the importance of food security, the alleviation of hunger, and nutritional enhancement, none suggest that a means to address these issues is through the delivery of food via school-based programs. Thus, while it is clear that Canada's domestic social policy commitments include a healthy food supply and a healthy population, there is not a commitment to food programs *per se*.

Government Spending On Social Programs

Over the last decade, there have been substantial and wide-ranging reductions in government spending on social programs corresponding with the demise of the Canada

Assistance Plan and Established Programs Financing, and the introduction of the Canada Health and Social Transfer.³⁸ Between 1993 and 1996, all provinces received approximately 20% less in health, education, and social services financing—a reduction of more than \$6 billion. This created many changes in the delivery of these services, in many instances reducing their availability, accessibility and adequacy. As a result, the public has come to view the social safety net as increasingly ineffective.³⁹

One consequence of these social program changes is that levels of poverty and inequality have increased.⁴⁰ Statistics Canada reported that “the total incomes of the poorest 20 per cent of Canadians had dropped dramatically because of a combination of lower earnings and cuts to cash transfers from governments.”⁴¹ Other observers note that prior to the early 1990s, a combina-





tion of federal and provincial income tax and cash transfer programs such as pensions and employment insurance contributed to the relative stability of income distribution among Canadians.⁴² Government programs helped to offset the increasing inequalities in income from employment and investments⁴³ and the general stagnation or decline of average family income since the late 1980s.⁴⁴

Because provincial governments have depended on the federal government for transfer payments to fund programs, their ability to maintain—let alone enhance—social programs has also decreased.⁴⁵ As a result, almost everyone, and particularly local, regional and provincial government staff, would like more program financing.⁴⁶ In some respects, however, this has always been the case. Professionals and bureaucrats have long argued that problems, social or

otherwise, can best be addressed by spending money on them, but there is not always a positive relationship between program spending and successful program outcomes.⁴⁷

HUNGER

Hunger has been defined narrowly as physiological discomfort as a result of a lack of food,⁴⁸ and defined more broadly as “the inability to obtain sufficient, nutritious, personally acceptable food through normal food channels or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so.”⁴⁹ If “the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain,” then a condition called food insecurity exists.⁵⁰

Hunger and food insecurity in Canada are primarily the result of family income insecurity. Family

income insecurity puts children and adults at risk of a large number of negative outcomes including ill health, stress, family violence, and illiteracy.⁵¹

From this review of school food programs, it would seem that programs are either an inappropriate response to hunger in children, or the programs are inadequate in their scope and design. There are a number of indications of this, including the following:⁵²

- ◆ Programs can only address a symptom—hunger—of one or more underlying problems.
- ◆ Hungry children and their families often use other means to alleviate hunger—such as food banks, relatives, neighbours—before using school food programs.
- ◆ Lack of data makes it very difficult to know, other than through specific anecdotes, what percentage of children at risk of hunger in any given school area participate in programs.⁵³

- ◆ The nutritional value of programs and of the food that is served may be inadequate. A lack of documentation means that there is insufficient evidence to measure the nutritional value.
- ◆ From a developmental perspective, hunger and undernourishment can have the most severe effects on preschool-aged children, rather than school-aged children. From this point of view, children not yet in school should probably be priority recipients of the delivery of food programs.
- ◆ Most programs are elementary school-based, thus disregarding youth.
- ◆ Most programs are based in schools rather than in other community facilities, so the food is available for only about half the year.

All informants stated that they believed the government's number one priority should be to strengthen the ability of families to provide for their own children. This capacity building for families requires many elements, including job and income





supports, work and time-stress supports (most importantly, adequate child care), nutrition education, affordable and accessible nutritious food, and neighbourhood and community services (such as pregnancy support and outreach, home visiting, early childhood education, and the like). Within this response, school food programs could be one element in an overall strategy to alleviate hunger. They could be particularly useful as interventions with high-risk, poor children and communities.⁵⁴

Many informants for this review felt strongly that hunger—and to some extent, nutritional adequacy—can be addressed only with additional monies for low-income families with children. One source estimated this can be achieved at a cost of approximately \$5,000 per hungry family.⁵⁵ Increased employment opportunities and higher minimum wages could contribute to families'

increased incomes, but in some cases, for example when parents or children are ill or the family is led by one parent,⁵⁶ increases in income support programs would also be required.⁵⁷

NUTRITION

Some informants believe that there is a current or emerging “crisis” in nutrition (and therefore, a crisis in health) for a variety of reasons, including poverty, low education, lack of appropriate food choices, food insecurity, a lack of time, and gender issues (such as body image).⁵⁸ Although research is lacking on the prevalence of hunger and inadequate nutrition, some informants see school food programs as part of an appropriate response to these conditions. They note that the fast food industry can create problems for families who have little time to shop and cook, and the choices available do not usually

offer a balanced and nutritional diet. School food programs can allow families to bypass the fast food market.⁵⁹

For these observers, after the family, schools are considered the location of choice for delivering a food program because many of the social conditions that children face elsewhere are minimized or equalized in schools. Schools can provide a positive environment in which children can learn about appropriate nutrition and eat a nutritious meal. For these informants, in addition to alleviating hunger, school food programs can introduce children to foods that they might otherwise never have eaten, and the programs can provide the children with a general education about food security and their place in the food system. Again, we do not have adequate information from evaluations or from other research in order to determine how, or even if, these outcomes are achieved.

OTHER ISSUES

Dependency/Institutionalization/Professionalization

The literature indicates that some school food programs appear to have created various forms of dependency.⁶⁰ In some cases, programs have become an institutionalized response to a lack of money, time and, to a lesser extent, knowledge among families about how to prepare and deliver nutritious meals.

This institutionalization of food delivery can also serve to depoliticize responses to community food issues, for example by encouraging people to concentrate on continuing a food program rather than tackling the underlying issues of food and income production and distribution.⁶¹

Some of the research on school food programs has argued that the professionalization of school food programs—evident in the hiring





of staff, increased management and administrative activity, and fundraising—may indicate that a program is focussing more on its continued existence and less on program objectives like hunger reduction or nutrition enhancement.⁶² These researchers have concluded that, over time, program delivery objectives gain prominence over hunger reduction and nutrition-enhancement objectives. As mentioned earlier in this paper, it may be erroneous to equate the continued existence of a program with success, without an examination of the program outcomes.

Sustainability

Most school food programs depend on voluntary support for their existence. Because of this, programs vary widely, particularly in regard to food quality and safety. To ensure sustainability, program operators request more money or they concentrate some of their time on

fundraising. An adequate and assured funding base, along with plans for the maintenance and succession of staff or volunteers, are central to a program's sustainability.

Charity

Charitable groups believe that they are contributing to community capacity by delivering programs to meet community needs.⁶³ Many governments, community groups and the private sector also hold this view of charities. For a number of reasons, however, many informants said they are uncomfortable with charitable responses to social problems. Primarily, they view charitable responses as a sign that government priorities have shifted away from serving the broad public interest through the delivery of a basic necessity of life. Thus while filling an apparent void in public services, charitable programs tend to view vulnerable populations as being unable to help themselves. As a

result, some informants suggest that charities contribute to the promotion of values that are the antithesis of equity, perpetuating a social system that fails to make more systemic, structural changes that would equalize opportunities for all citizens.

Other informants feel that the time, energy, and resources generated by private charities should not be dismissed. These informants were concerned that in an era of decreased public sector initiatives and a focus by governments on sectoral partnerships, charities have filled a void in services by providing vital support. These informants believe that there can be dynamic and creative roles for charities as long as appropriate criteria were in place to guide their actions. Two criteria most frequently mentioned were transparency and accountability.

There is also evidence that charities

are unable to respond adequately to the large problem of food insecurity in Canada, with the result being that many Canadians are still going hungry.⁶⁴

Food Security/Food Policy


According to some commentators, ad hoc, band-aid attempts to alleviate hunger and enhance nutrition have been insufficient because they have been based on a food charity system that “does not have the capacity to address any of the deeper, structural issues that have created the conditions of poverty and hunger.”⁶⁵

In some jurisdictions, community/government partnerships are addressing broader issues of food security and food policy. Many informants feel that dialogue and action at this level would greatly benefit family and community health and that this is the most appropriate forum in which to assess the need for school food programs.⁶⁶



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POTENTIAL ROLES FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT



A few of the informants interviewed for this study, particularly the provincial government representatives, gave a one-word answer when asked what role the federal government should have in the area of school food programs: none. Provincial officials recommended that the federal government restore federal transfer payments delivered through the CHST to their pre-1995 or earlier levels. They did not feel that designating any part of the CHST funding for food programs was workable, given the ongoing social union discussions and other federal/provincial/territorial initiatives.

On the other hand, community and local or regional government representatives would like stronger federal involvement in this area. They believe that federal dollars are more

readily available—at least currently—and potentially more sustainable than provincial government funding sources. These informants also believe that the federal government should take on the role of providing national leadership by setting standards for healthy child development, family food security, and school food programs, and by promoting ongoing collaboration with the provinces. Some informants would support the direct delivery of a broad-based food or nutrition program by Health Canada. These potential roles are explored in more detail in the following section of this paper.

Recommendations

This paper summarizes the findings from interviews with key informants and from a review of relevant research literature to address the following questions:

1. Are school-based nutrition programs a sound social policy response for children?

While there doesn't seem to be a clear answer to this question, the short answer appears to be "No." Overall, the available evidence does not clearly demonstrate that school-based nutrition programs are a sound social policy response for children. More evidence is required to adequately assess the contribution these programs can make to alleviate hunger, enhance nutrition, and contribute to healthy child development, without creating any adverse consequences such as dependency or stigmatization.

2. What role, if any, should the federal government assume in supporting these programs?

As a response to social program funding cuts, communities across Canada are examining school food programs as a potential solution to issues of hunger and inadequate nutrition. However, without adequate evidence, the federal government should not support further development of school food programs.

The federal government should share with provincial and community stakeholders information and research conducted into school food programs. This could contribute to the development of additional research, with the following goals:

- ▶ Creating outcome targets and key indicators to better assess levels





of hunger, nutrition, and food security among Canadians generally and for children in particular.

- ◆ Building appropriate evaluation frameworks—including outcome targets and key indicators—to evaluate and assess current programs.
- ◆ Identifying, documenting and disseminating innovative approaches to food security.

More broadly, the federal government can make a number of contributions to reduce hunger and enhance nutrition for Canadians within the five existing elements of its mandate:

- ◆ Population Health
- ◆ Healthy Child Development
- ◆ Income Security
- ◆ Food Security
- ◆ Social Policy Leadership

Population health and healthy child development provide the context

and basis for priority policy directions in income security and food security. Social policy leadership is important to demonstrate federal commitment to these policy directions.

Population Health

Strategies to reduce hunger and enhance nutrition among children and families need to be situated within a guiding framework that establishes a common understanding of where we are and where we want to go.⁶⁷ The population health framework is legitimated by substantial national and international research, it is comprehensive and multi-sectoral, and it has already been adopted by governments. The population health framework recognizes the interdependence of the causes of ill health—individual characteristics and endowments, the physical environment, and social and economic factors. The population health framework could help to

emphasize the need for school food programs as a way to reduce hunger and enhance nutrition.

Healthy Child Development

The policy directions outlined in *Building a National Strategy for Healthy Child Development* should be more fully developed and should be integrated with priority income security and food security initiatives (see below). They can then be used as an implementation framework at the community level to ensure that they are relevant to particular local needs.

Two policy and program initiatives, grounded in the population health framework, would contribute most to hunger and nutrition strategies. These are income security and food security.

Income Security

This paper has discussed the importance of adequate income security

as the major contributor to the alleviation of hunger and the improvement of nutritional outcomes. Recent policy research has outlined comprehensive income security proposals containing a number of sound proposals, and they should be fully assessed.

Notwithstanding these proposals, a commitment is essential to the following elements of an income security policy:

- ◆ adequate and equitable income, to be defined and agreed upon by Canadians.
- ◆ a legislated commitment by government to ensure the provision of adequate and equitable income.
- ◆ adequate and equitable income levels for all families, whatever the source of family income.
- ◆ mutual accountability of governments and citizens to ensuring adequate incomes.





Food Security

Building on *Nutrition for Health: An Agenda for Action*, and using the food security framework developed in *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security*, the federal government should make funds available for the development of local, regional and provincial food security policies. To develop these policies and strategies, all governments must work together, taking into account current mechanisms such as the Social Union Framework Agreement and federal/provincial/territorial divisions of responsibilities.⁶⁸ There are particular needs for the following:

- ◆ comprehensive food security assessments, including assessments of levels of hunger and nutrition.
- ◆ development of food security councils to ensure ongoing dialogue, activity, monitoring and accountability.⁶⁹
- ◆ community economic development initiatives in the food sector.⁷⁰

Social Policy Leadership

It is imperative that the federal government do the following:

- ◆ provide leadership in all of these areas (population health, healthy child development, income security, food security).
- ◆ articulate the values underlying social policies.
- ◆ demonstrate a commitment to income security and food security.
- ◆ provide support for programs and research, particularly adequate and accessible information that allows the public to be informed and participate in policy development.
- ◆ provide meaningful opportunities for ongoing, broadly based citizen participation, discussion and decision-making.
- ◆ promote the democratization of social policy development, implementation, administration, assessment and accountability.

While it is imperative that the federal government provide leader-

ship, responses to hunger and inadequate nutrition in Canadian children and families will need to engage and involve many actors—parents and children, governments, community organizations, schools, private business, charitable organizations, and so on—in collaborative action to ensure success.

End Notes

1. These elements are relevant for assessing virtually any policy, program, or service. See W.R. Shadish, T.D. Cook, and L.C. Leviton, *Foundations of Program Evaluation*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991.
2. Specific program criteria, such as nutritional adequacy, accessibility, affordability, sustainability (especially funding), qualified staff, and the like are also obviously important in assessing school food programs. This paper does not assess school food programs in all of this detail, however.
3. Aurelia T. Shaw, Yvonne Racine, Dan R. Offord. *The Effects of Breakfast on Children's Mood, Behaviour and Ability to Learn*. Hamilton: Canadian Centre for Studies of Children at Risk, 1998, p. C-1, unpublished.
4. For example, although the British Columbia government assesses "Statistics Canada indicators relating to family income and relevant information about the school and community" as part of the criteria for deciding on allocations of school meal program funding, this is not a formal process, nor are data on sites or potential program participants directly measured (also see note 9). See, British Columbia: Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, *Investing In All Our Children: A Handbook of Social Equity Programs*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1996, pp.1-2.
5. *Perceptions* is a key word here. School food programs have been initiated with little or no formal needs assessments. Informal needs assessments (usually anecdotal) concentrate on *indicators* of hunger, rather than direct measures. These indicators are correlated with, and sometimes also known to be causal of, hunger. Common indicators are incidence of low income/poverty, food bank use, and the like (also see note 8).
6. *Scan of Canadian School Nutrition Programs 1998*. Ottawa: Health Canada, Childhood and Youth Division, 1998, unpublished; British Columbia: Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, *Investing in All Our Children*.
7. BC: Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, *Investing in All Our Children*, p.7.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. Although there are very few formal evaluations of school food programs. See Shaw, Racine, and Offord, *The Effects of Breakfast on Children's Mood...*; *Scan of Canadian School Nutrition Programs 1998*.
11. Lynn McIntyre, Kim Travers, and Jutta Dayle. *Children's Feeding Programs in Atlantic*





- Canada: Reducing Inequities?* Halifax: Dalhousie University, 1997.
12. Toronto Community Partners for Child Nutrition. *Child Nutrition Programs in the New City of Toronto*. Toronto: TCPCN, 1998.
 13. Lynn McIntyre, personal communications, December 19, 1998.
 14. See McIntyre, Travers, and Dayle. *Children's Feeding Programs in Atlantic Canada*. One key informant consulted for this review described the shifting goals of school food programs as a consequence of "a program in search of a problem." Also see, National Institute of Nutrition, cited in Shaw, Racine, and Offord, *The Effects of Breakfast on Children's Mood*....
 15. The first year in brackets represents the year of adoption by the UN. The second year is the year of ratification by Canada. In the case of the World Food Summit, it is the year of Canada's response.
 16. Edward Broadbent. *The Rise and Fall of Economic and Social Rights – Thoughts on Citizenship in the Welfare State in the North Atlantic World*. Oxford: Oxford University, 1997.
 17. Cited in Graham Riches, "Canada: Abandoning the right to food," in Graham Riches (ed.), *First World Hunger: Food Security and Welfare Politics*. London: Macmillan Press, pp.47-77, 1997.
 18. *Ibid.*, p.61. For discussion of the application of the Convention in Canada, see David I. Hay and Tom Walker, *Children's Rights and the Municipal Role: A literature review and annotated bibliography*. Vancouver: Social Planning and Research Council of BC, 1992.
 19. Cited in Joint Steering Committee, National Nutrition Plan for Canada, *Nutrition and Health: An Agenda for Action*. Ottawa: Health Canada, 1996, p.25.
 20. *Ibid.*
 21. Joint Consultative Group, A Response to the World Food Summit. *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security*. Ottawa: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 1998, p.47.
 22. *Ibid.*, p.46.
 23. Riches. *First World Hunger*; Valerie Tarasuk and Barbara Davis. "Responses to Food Insecurity in the Changing Canadian Welfare State," in the *Journal of Nutrition Education*, 28(2):71-75, 1996.
 24. Riches. *First World Hunger*; Tarasuk and Davis. *Responses to Food Insecurity ...*; McIntyre, Travers, and Dayle. *Children's Feeding Programs in Atlantic Canada*; Valerie Tarasuk and Randi Reynolds. "A Qualitative Study of Community Kitchens as a Response to Income-Related Food Insecurity," in the *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*, 60: 11-16, 1999; Lynn McIntyre, Sarah Connor, and James Warren. *A Glimpse of Child Hunger in Canada*. Ottawa: Human Resources Development Canada, Applied Research Branch, No. W-98-26E, 1998.
 25. A discussion that is well developed elsewhere. For a discussion focussed on food security, see Riches, *First World Hunger*; and Debbie Field, "Putting Food First: Women's Role in Creating a Grass-Roots Food System Outside the Marketplace," in Deborah Barndt, *Women Working the NAFTA Food Chain: Women, Food and Globalization*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 1999. For an

- excellent discussion of Canada's international commitments in the context of changes to social programs, see Shelagh Day and Gwen Brodsky, *Women and the Equality Deficit: The Impact of Restructuring Canada's Social Programs*. Ottawa: Status of Women Canada, 1998. For two more general examples, see Broadbent, *The Rise and Fall of Economic and Social Rights* and Tom Kent, *Social Policy 2000: An Agenda*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1999.
26. For a good discussion of Canada's dismissal of its commitments, see Riches, *First World Hunger*, pp.65-69; Day and Brodsky, *Women and the Equality Deficit*. For a discussion of Canada's human rights commitments in context of Canada's social union, see Paul Leduc Browne (ed.), *Finding Our Collective Voice: Options for a new social union*. Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 1998.
 27. For example, see National Anti-Poverty Organization, *The 50th Anniversary of the UN Declaration: Human Rights Meltdown in Canada*, Submission to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Geneva, November 16, 1998. For a discussion of education and advocacy activities and international commitments, see Day and Brodsky, *Women and the Equality Deficit*.
 28. Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being were announced in the 1997 Federal Government Throne Speech, but they are not yet operational.
 29. The National Children's Agenda was initiated in 1997. In the spring of 1999, a framework paper for the Agenda was released.
 30. Federal/Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health. *Strategies for Population Health: Investing in the Health of Canadians*. Ottawa: Health Canada, 1994.
 31. For an elaboration of the determinants of health and an understanding of the development and principles of population health, see Canada: Department of Health, *Towards a Common Understanding: Clarifying the Core Concepts of Population Health*, Ottawa: Health Canada, 1997; Canada: Department of Health, *Health Canada's Transition to a Population Health Approach*, Ottawa: Health Canada, 1997. For a condensed version, see David I Hay and Andy Wachtel. *The Well-Being of British Columbia's Children and Youth: A framework for understanding and action*. Vancouver: First Call Coalition, 1998, especially Sections II and III.
 32. Joint Steering Committee, National Nutrition Plan for Canada. *Op. cit.*; Federal/Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health. *Building a National Strategy for Healthy Child Development*. Ottawa: Health Canada, 1998.
 33. Canada: Department of Health. *Canada Action Plan for Children: Guide to Applicants*. Ottawa: Health Canada, 1995; Canada: Department of Health. *Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program: Guide to Applicants*. Ottawa: Health Canada, 1995.
 34. Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services. *The National Child Benefit: Building a Better Future for Canadian Children*. Ottawa: Human Resources Development Canada, 1997, p.6.
 35. *Ibid.*, p.3.
 36. See Government of Canada. *Backgrounder – National Children's Agenda*. Ottawa: Minister



of Public Works and Government Services, 1997, <http://socialunion.gc.ca/nca/nca1_e.html>; Also see, Task Group Report. *National Children's Agenda Framework*, August 22, 1997.

37. Government of Canada. *Backgrounders – National Children's Agenda*, p.1.
38. It can also be argued that the CHST is a major *mechanism* through which cuts to programs were made and may continue to be made. Unlike previous arrangements for federal-provincial transfers, like CAP and EPF, the CHST is relatively unencumbered with legislative requirements as to how the transfer monies have to be spent. See Day and Brodsky, *Women and the Equality Deficit*.
39. See Broadbent. *The Rise and Fall of Economic and Social Rights*; Canadian Council on Social Development. *Will the 1998 Federal Budget Bring Down Canada's Social Deficit?* Ottawa: CCSD, 1998 <http://www.ccsd.ca/pr/pp_bud98.htm>; Day and Brodsky. *Women and the Equality Deficit*; Christa Freiler and Judy Cerny. *Benefiting Canada's Children: Perspectives on Gender and Social Responsibility*. Ottawa: Status of Women Canada, 1998; Kent. *Social Policy 2000*; Judith Maxwell. "Reconnecting Communities: Two Scenarios for the 21st Century," in *The Philanthropist*, 14(3), 1998; Tarasuk and Davis. *Responses to Food Insecurity ...*; Sherri Torjman. *Strategies for a Caring Society*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1998.
40. Ken Battle. *Persistent Poverty*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1997; David I. Hay. "Campaign 2000: Child and Family Poverty in Canada," in Jane Pulkingham and Gordon Ternowetsky (eds.), *Child and Family Policies: Struggles, Strategies, and Options*. Halifax: Fernwood, pp.116-133, 1997; National Council of Welfare. *Poverty Profile 1996*. Ottawa: NCW, 1998; Armine Yalnizyan. *The Growing Gap: A report on growing inequality between the rich and poor in Canada*. Toronto: Centre for Social Justice, 1998.
41. Statistics Canada. *Income Distributions by Size in Canada, 1996*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1997, catalogue No. 13-207-XPB, cited in (and where the quotation is from) National Council of Welfare. *Poverty Profile 1996*, p.1.
42. Ken Battle. *Government Fights the Growing Gap Between Rich and Poor*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1995.
43. *Ibid.*; Battle, *Persistent Poverty*, 1997.
44. Canadian Council on Social Development. "Average Incomes of Families and Unattached Individuals, Canada, 1951-1995," from <http://www.ccsd.ca/fs_avgin.html>. Ottawa: CCSD, 1997.
45. Although some commentators disagree that governments are unable to continue their support of social programs. See Linda McQuaig. *The Cult of Impotence*. Toronto: Viking Penguin, 1998.
46. Federal, provincial, and territorial government representatives are currently negotiating a "new social union," a major component being the restoration of federal cuts to health, education, and social service transfer payments, although the talk is all about health care funding. See Edward Greenspon. "Federal offer plays well at social-union talks," in *The Globe and Mail*, January 13, 1999, p. A1; Edward Greenspon. "Provinces must cooperate to get health funds," in *The Globe*

- and Mail*, January 13, 1999, p. A7; Edward Greenspon. "Health care not the only casualty of federal cutbacks," in *The Globe and Mail*, December 19, 1998, p. A9.
47. On the professionalization of the welfare state, see J.K. Krane, "Least Disruptive and Intrusive Course of Action ... for Whom?", in J. Pulkingham and G. Ternowetsky, *Child and Family Policies: Struggles, Strategies, and Options*, Halifax: Fernwood, 1997. On the relationship between program spending and program outcomes, see W.R. Shadish, T.D. Cook, and L.C. Leviton, *Foundations of Program Evaluation*
 48. Life Sciences Research Office. "Core indicators of nutritional status for difficult-to-sample populations," in the *Journal of Nutrition*, 120:1559-1600, 1990. Cited in McIntyre, Connor, and Warren. *A Glimpse of Child Hunger in Canada*, p.7.
 49. Barbara Davis and Valerie Tarasuk. "Hunger in Canada," in *Agriculture and Human Values*, 11:50-57, 1994. Cited in McIntyre, Connor, and Warren. *Ibid.*
 50. Life Sciences Research Office. *Core indicators of nutritional status ...* Cited in McIntyre, Connor, and Warren. *Ibid.* See also Valerie Tarasuk, George H. Beaton, Jennifer Geduld, and Shelley Hilditch. *Nutritional Vulnerability and Food Insecurity among Women in Families Using Food Banks*. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1998.
 51. Hay. *Campaign 2000: Child and Family Poverty in Canada*.
 52. For a comprehensive discussion of these issues, see Shaw, Racine, and Offord. *The Effects of Breakfast on Children's Mood ...*; McIntyre, Travers, and Dayle. *Children's Feeding Programs in Atlantic Canada*.
 53. Shaw, Racine, and Offord, *Ibid.*
 54. Although some research shows that poor children at risk of hunger have actively been withheld from programs. See McIntyre, Travers, and Dayle. *Children's Feeding Programs in Atlantic Canada*; Tarasuk, Beaton, Geduld, and Hilditch. *Nutritional Vulnerability*.
 55. McIntyre, Connor, and Warren. *A Glimpse of Child Hunger in Canada*.
 56. McIntyre, Connor, and Warren. *Ibid.* See also Tarasuk, Beaton, Geduld, and Hilditch. *Nutritional Vulnerability*.
 57. Particularly important programs requiring rate increases are provincial social assistance and federal child benefits. For a discussion of this in the context of hunger and food insecurity, see McIntyre, Connor, and Warren. *Ibid*; Shaw, Racine, and Offord. *The Effects of Breakfast on Children's Mood ...*; Tarasuk and Davis. *Responses to Food Insecurity*. For recent assessments of federal and provincial child and family benefits, see National Council of Welfare. *Child Benefits: Kids Are Still Hungry*. Ottawa: NCW, 1998; Ken Battle and Michael Mendelson. *Child Benefit Reform in Canada: An Evaluative Framework and Future Directions*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1997; Freiler and Cerny. *Benefitting Canada's children*; and, Jane Pulkingham, Gordon Ternowetsky, and David I Hay. "Eradicating poverty or victimizing the poorest? New program will not raise poor children's incomes," in *CCPA Monitor*, 4(1):6-7, 1997. For a discussion of the adequacy of the mix of employment and transfer income, see Hay. *Campaign 2000: Child and Family Poverty*





- in Canada*; Battle. *Government Fights Growing Gap*, 1995; Battle. *Persistent Poverty*, 1997.
58. Again, evidence tends to be anecdotal. For a review of this issue, see British Columbia Heart Health Coalition. *Feed Our Future: Secure Our Health. A plan to put BC at the forefront of food and nutritional health in Canada*. Vancouver: Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon, 1997.
59. Field. *Putting Food First*.
60. McIntyre, Travers, and Dayle. *Children's Feeding Programs in Atlantic Canada*; Tarasuk and Reynolds. *A qualitative study*...
61. Riches. *First World Hunger*
62. McIntyre, Travers, and Dayle. *Children's Feeding Programs in Atlantic Canada*.
63. Martha O'Connor, personal communications, January 29, 1999.
64. Tarasuk, Beaton, Geduld, and Hilditch. *Nutritional Vulnerability*.
65. Toronto Food Policy Council. *Developing a Food System Which is Just and Environmentally Sustainable*. Toronto: Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994, p. 7. Cited in Riches. *First World Hunger*, p. 69.
66. For a discussion and examples of community-government partnerships, see: W.Roberts, R. MacRae and L. Stahlbrand, "Real Food for a Change," Toronto: Random House, 1999; M. Koc, R. MacRae, L.J.A. Mougeot, J. Welsh, (editors), *For Hunger Proof Cities; Sustainable Urban Food Systems*, Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1999; Toronto Food Policy Council, "If the Health Care System Believed 'You Are What You Eat': Strategies to Integrate Our Food and Health Systems", Discussion Paper 3, November 1997; Toronto Food Policy Council, "Reducing Urban Hunger in Ontario: Policy Responses to Support the Transition from Food Charity to Local Food Security," Discussion Paper 1, December 1994; Debbie Field and Anuja Mendiratta, "Food 2002: What Would It Take For Everyone in Ontario to Have Access to Affordable, Nutritious Food?," Toronto: FoodShare, 1999.
67. For a discussion of the importance of conceptual frameworks, see David I Hay. *Evaluating Measures of Well-Being*, a paper presented to the CSLS Conference on the State of Living Standards and the Quality of Life in Canada, Victoria: Information Partnership, October 1998. Available at <www.CSLS.ca> and at <www.InfoPartners.ca>.
68. Information on the social union framework agreement (SUFA) is available at the following site: http://socialunion.gc.ca/news/020499_e.html
69. See McRae, Rod. "So Why Is the City of Toronto Concerned about Food and Agriculture Policy? A Short History of the Toronto Food Policy Council," *C and A Bulletin*, Volume 50, Winter, 1994.
70. For examples of community economic development (CED) initiatives in the food sector, see Fairholm, Jacinta. "Urban Agriculture and Food Security Initiatives in Canada: A Survey of Canadian Nongovernmental Organizations," *Cities Feeding People (CFP) Report Series, Report 25, International Development Research Centre, March, 1999* (see www.idrc.ca/cfp/rep16_e.html); Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition. "Healthy Food, Healthy Communities: How to initiate

grassroots food projects using the Healthy Communities Process," Toronto, Ontario, January, 1997; Garr, Robin. Reinvesting In America: The Grassroots Movements That Are Feeding the Hungry, Housing the Homeless and Putting Americans Back to Work, Addison-Wesley, 1995 (see www.grass-roots.org).

Appendix A

BACKGROUND

Health Canada recently completed a three-phase review of school-based nutrition and feeding programs in Canada. In Phase I, interviews were conducted with provincial government officials about existing programs within their jurisdictions.¹ Tables summarized the state of program development by province and territory, including program descriptions, characteristics, management, and evaluation. In addition, some information on school

food service guidelines, policies and nutrition education initiatives was included.

During Phase II, a literature review and analysis were conducted on the role of breakfast programs in contributing to children's mood, behaviour and ability to learn.² The paper produced from this analysis contained a concise summary of the major findings from the scientific literature, and it outlined policy implications and recommendations.

This paper represents the work done in Phase III. It contains an analysis of whether school food programs are an appropriate social policy choice for children. Building on the first two phases of Health Canada's work, and supported by additional research, this paper also suggests policy directions for the federal government, community organizations, and other food program stakeholders.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

Health Canada requested that the following two research questions be addressed:

Research Question 1

Are school-based nutrition programs a sound social policy response for children? This discussion may take into consideration the following points:

- ◆ context of changes to social services and the public safety net.
- ◆ context of commitments under Food Security Action Plan, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- ◆ multiple goals of school-based nutrition programs (for example, as a response to hunger, poverty, pressures of working parents, children's poor eating patterns, and the like).
- ◆ issues of local sustainability and dependency.

- ◆ consistency with other key federal strategies in health, social policy and income security.

Research Question 2

What role, if any, should the federal government assume in supporting these programs? This discussion should consider the following:

- ◆ the present involvement of provincial governments and the voluntary sector (such as charitable foundations and community groups) in the funding and delivery of these programs.
- ◆ the role of families in the provision of basic needs for children.
- ◆ assessing the range of possible roles with respect to federal involvement.

Interviews with key informants and a review of relevant research literature were the two methods used in this study. A list of people consulted as key informants is attached as

Appendix B. All literature cited is referenced in the paper's endnotes.

Health Canada provided a selected bibliography of 14 citations on school-based nutrition. From these citations, and through a consultation with Graham Riches at the University of British Columbia, an initial list of key informants was created. Additional literature was sought, and key informants were interviewed based on the recommendations of other informants, or as a result of the particular issues being investigated. Key informants were provided with the background and context for the research verbally or in writing prior to being interviewed. Informants were interviewed by phone or in person in Victoria, Vancouver, Burlington, Hamilton, and Toronto. The research was conducted between November 1998 and February 1999. A preliminary overview of the paper

was reviewed by Health Canada in mid-December 1998.³ The complete draft paper was later reviewed by Health Canada and a select group of key informants,⁴ and the paper was accepted by Health Canada in February 1999. This version of the paper has been edited for publication.

Notes

1. *Scan of Canadian School Nutrition Programs 1998*. Ottawa: Health Canada, Childhood and Youth Division, 1998, unpublished.
2. Aurelia T. Shaw, Yvonne Racine, Dan R. Offord. *The Effects of Breakfast on Children's Mood, Behaviour and Ability to Learn*. Hamilton: Canadian Centre for Studies of Children at Risk, 1998, unpublished.
3. The preliminary overview was also reviewed by Graham Riches and Lynn McIntyre. All comments were incorporated into the paper at the author's discretion.
4. Lise Bertrand, Lydia Dumais, Debbie Field, Phyllis Godfrey, Lynn McIntyre, Martha O'Connor, Dan R. Offord, Yvonne Racine, Graham Riches, and Valerie Tarasuk.



Appendix B

People consulted for this review:

Janice Aull, Ministry for Children and Families, Victoria

Carolyn Barber, Department of Public Health, City of Toronto

Herb Barbolet, Farm Folk/City Folk, Vancouver

Lise Bertrand, Public Health Directorate, Montreal

Gavin Brown, Ministry for Children and Families, Victoria

Barbara Crocker, Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, Vancouver

Lydia Dumais, Health Canada, Ottawa

Laurie Duncan, Ministry for Children and Families, Victoria

Corinne Eisler, Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, Vancouver

Debbie Field, FoodShare, Toronto

Lisa Forster-Coull, Ministry of Health, Victoria

Phyllis Godfrey, Ministry of the Attorney General, Victoria

Louise Hanvey, Canadian Council on Social Development, Ottawa

Anne Hay, St. Christopher's Church, Burlington

Clyde Hertzman, University of British Columbia, Vancouver

Joanne Houghton, Consultant, Prince George

Colin Hughes, Children's Aid Society, Toronto

Laura Kalina, Food Policy Council, Kamloops

Fiona Knight, Consultant, Toronto

Rod MacRae, Food Policy Council, Toronto

Lynn McIntyre, Dalhousie University, Halifax

Catherine Moraes, Toronto District School Board, Toronto

Martha O'Connor, Canadian Living Foundation, Toronto

Dan R. Offord, McMaster University, Hamilton

Yvonne Racine, McMaster University, Hamilton

Graham Riches, University of British Columbia, Vancouver

David Ross, Canadian Council on Social Development, Ottawa

Valerie Tarasuk, University of Toronto, Toronto