



## Media Release

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### **The Ottawa Food Bank KickStarts Innovative Program for Children In-need**

(Ottawa, ON) – In an effort to alleviate rising hunger in school-aged children, The Ottawa Food Bank and three private sector partners have joined forces to launch a program to help get nutritious food to those who need it most. The new program is called KickStart and it provides healthy meals and snacks to children from low-income families throughout the school year and during the summer months.

“We felt compelled to put this program together after seeing the increased need in the community. We’d been hearing from our high-needs schools and agencies that children were coming to school or to their Community House programs hungry – even in the summer months.” said Executive Director Peter Tilley. “We really couldn’t be filling this gap without the incredible generosity of our corporate partners and supporters, who really believe in giving children a fair start.”

The KickStart program came into being thanks to a Community Investment Grant of \$150,000 from Adobe. This significant grant will buy nutritious food items and a refrigerated truck to provide daily and weekly deliveries to 39 KickStart programs. To aid with food purchases, Rogers came forward with a \$50,000 donation to KickStart through their Share the Joy initiative. Their contribution also allowed for the addition of a Registered Dietician to the program who evaluated KickStart food items to make sure children receive the healthiest snacks and meals. During the summer months, Sodexo employees volunteer their time to prepare healthy lunches for children in-need at community day camp programs. This important component of the KickStart program ensures that children who would normally have access to school meal programs do not go hungry in July and August.

“KickStart is just amazing! I can now rely on The Food Bank’s new program to provide our school with a consistent supply of nutritious items every week for our breakfast program – food like yogurt, milk, cheese and whole grain cereal” said Irene Cameron, Principal, Connaught Public School. “This is the kind of program that can really make a difference for some of our vulnerable children and impact how they will learn and grow.”

KickStart currently supports 16 school meal programs, 10 homework clubs, and 13 Community House Summer Camps. In its inaugural year, the program provided a total of 89,030 breakfasts and 26,912 snacks, as well as 12,000 lunches in July and August 2008.

The Ottawa Food Bank is the National Capital Region’s central emergency food assistance organization. Through its 127 member agencies, The Ottawa Food Bank helps 43,000 people each month, nearly 40 per cent of whom are children.

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