

## STEPS FOR TEAMS AND TEAM LEADERS

Please find the following attachments for your Information Package as you approach and set up meetings with your MPP.

- The DO THE MATH SURVEY TOOL
- The PUT THE FOOD IN THE BUDGET PG.1
- PFIB QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
- YORK REGION FACT SHEET

We've also included a Sample Copy of a letter you can direct to your MPP and include in the Information Package. It is only a draft and you can use it any way you like. You need to address it to your specific MPP and also identify who it is coming from.

### STEPS

- Call your local MPP and ask for a meeting to discuss poverty in your community and specifically to Do the Math activity together. You can send the survey link in advance or bring a paper copy to the meeting or ask your MPP to complete it 'online' during your meeting. <http://dothemath.thestop.org/index.php>
- It is best to provide them with a paper copy as well as a link to the online version, and ask them to do it before the meeting. If they complete it prior to the meeting then it will allow more time for discussion and a better use of time.
- The Package can be provided ahead of time along with the Survey Tool or you can take it with you on the day of the meeting – whichever strategy works best for you.
- Re-convene your Do the Math team and discuss the Survey with your MPP.
- Ask your MPP if you can share his/her thoughts and findings after having completed the survey, with [www.povertywatchontario.ca](http://www.povertywatchontario.ca)
- Remember this is not a hard sell opportunity and is not intended to embarrass them, but the goal is awareness, education and the opportunity to begin a dialogue and discussion around these issues and throughout this process, hopefully gain their support for the \$100 monthly Healthy Food Supplement for OW and ODSCP recipients
- Contact the campaign and share your results with organizers across the province by sending an email to [pclutterbuck@spno.ca](mailto:pclutterbuck@spno.ca) . We will summarize and report out results on the Put Food in the Budget page on the Poverty Watch Ontario web site ([www.povertywatchontario.ca/put-food-in-the-budget/](http://www.povertywatchontario.ca/put-food-in-the-budget/) )

Let us know the following:

- Did your MPP Do the Math? (If not, what reason did s/he give to skip the survey? We want to report on this information also.)

- Did your MPP say that current rates were adequate or did s/he admit that they do not add up to a life of health and dignity?
- How much did your MPP calculate the minimum (dollar amount) of income a person in the riding needs each month to live a healthy life and participate with dignity in the community?

### **Final Recommendation re:**

Ascertaining the numbers of Individuals who are affected by the issues at hand, Volunteers and Organizations who are already working in a given municipality or riding that would be in support of the Healthy Food Supplement.

As Ron Berresford pointed out at our meeting on July 14<sup>th</sup>, we can often have more leverage with the MPPs when we remind them how many people are either affected by the issue that we are talking about, or how many people are already actively working in the constituency (volunteers and organizations) trying to address the issues and support the people that are most vulnerable in this instance. The number of volunteers or in-kind hours being committed also speaks volumes to the community commitment that already exists, and that would be bolstered by sound political decisions like supporting the \$100 monthly Healthy Food Supplement. In combination, these efforts can go a long way to making a real difference in the lives of people. It helps to make the point that the decision to support the supplement is a logical and pragmatic way of addressing issues of hunger and poverty and in conjunction with what is already happening in the community, it can have an even greater impact than a stand alone initiative.

Ron suggested that it would be helpful to ascertain, by each municipality, how many organizations are already working in that riding (in this case) to address issues of poverty, homelessness, hunger etc. An estimate of the number of volunteers or volunteer hours being committed would also make a strong case for the community and constituency support that exists in a given riding, for the \$100 monthly Healthy Food Supplement. In this case we are actually presenting the MPP with a picture of the volume of people in his/her riding, that would be in favor of such a supplement and a picture of the people in his/her riding, who are very much interested in seeing their MPP support such a decision. That is the type of leverage we need. And in that way, the small group going in to see the MPP and discuss Do the Math, is actually representing a much broader group of constituents (voters) who are in favor of the Healthy Food Supplement.

We don't have the data on organizations and number of volunteers by riding at our fingertips, but if the individual teams have some way of gleaning this information or at least coming up with some approximations, for their riding, it would at the very least give a picture of what communities are doing already to address these issues, as well as the number of people who are affected and of course those who are interested in seeing their MPP vote in favor of the supplement.

Best of Luck to Everyone and we look forward to meeting back on September 1<sup>st</sup> to see what we've been able to accomplish over the summer months

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