

# CONNECTING THE DOTS

## The connection between poverty and food security



A collaboration between Eastern Zone Community Health Boards and Mental Health and Addictions Health Promotion team.

## ✓ Unlock the Potential of Food!

### Policy Intervention

Reducing household food insecurity in Canada requires policy intervention to address problems with inadequate and insecure income that underpins food insecurity.

### Guaranteed Basic Income

With a guaranteed basic income many families are more able to provide basics for their families, meaning families won't have to choose between paying rent, buying groceries, and heating their homes.



There is considerable support for a basic income. Read about the [advocacy efforts here](#). Check out the [Atlantic Consensus Statement on Basic Income](#)

### School Food Program

A universal school food program would enable all children to have access to healthy food at school, enabling them to be prepared for learning.



Nova Scotian children consume one third of their daily food every day at school.

### Community + Government

The issue of food insecurity requires a collaborative approach with communities and all levels of government working together to ensure everyone has access to healthy food.



# Did you know?

## Food insecurity is racialized

Food insecurity is two to three times higher among Black and Indigenous households versus white households, even after other sociodemographic characteristics are taken into account.

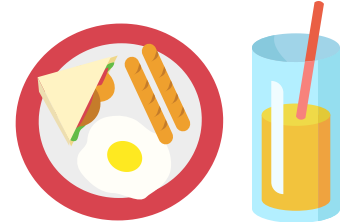
## Poverty and food insecurity rates in Atlantic Canada

Poverty and food insecurity rates in Atlantic Canada are among the highest in Canada and have increased during COVID-19.

According to the latest report on child poverty for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Nova Scotia, financial assistance introduced during the pandemic helped lift 26,810 children in our province out of poverty. This help was only temporary.

## Student nutrition programs are beneficial

Student nutrition programs have positive impacts on children's mental health, including reductions in behavioral and emotional problems, bullying, aggression, anxiety, and depression.



## Food price increases

Last year's report predicted an overall food price increase of 5% to 7% in 2022.

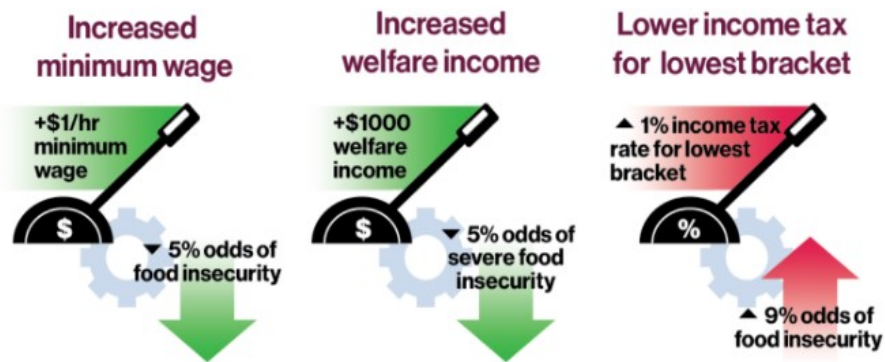
The current rate for food price increases has exceeded this prediction at 10.3% as of September 2022 (according to the latest available CPI data). Canadians are expected to continue to feel the effects of high food inflation in 2023, and food insecurity/affordability will also be a big issue with rising food prices.

# Addressing Food Insecurity

There must be a focus on addressing inadequate incomes to reduce food insecurity in Canada.

Research has repeatedly shown that household food insecurity can be reduced by policy interventions that improve the financial circumstances of households at the bottom of the income spectrum.

**When food-insecure households receive additional income, they spend it in ways that improve their food security.**



Adapted from: Men, F., Urquia, M. L., & Tarasuk, V. (2021). The role of provincial social policies and economic environments in shaping food insecurity among Canadian families with children. *Preventive Medicine*, 148, 106558.

## Sources:

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The Coalition for Healthy School Food. [For a Universal Healthy School Food Program](#).

[The Good Food Network](#)

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[Canada's Food Price Report \(2023\) 13th Edition](#)

[Nova Scotia's child poverty rate dropped by record numbers, thanks to COVID-19 financial assistance](#)