

THE GREAT BIG CRUNCH TURNS TEN!

More Than 277,000 Students Take A Bite For Healthy School Food Programs



For Immediate Release

March 9th, 2017 (TORONTO) What does 277,000 kids crunching into an apple sound like? A School Food Revolution!

Today at 2:30pm EST hundreds of thousands of Canadians from coast to coast to coast will be readying their noisiest crunch to bring attention to the issue of children's nutrition and healthy school food.

The Great Big Crunch, founded and coordinated by FoodShare Toronto, is a fun initiative to get kids, educators, parents, community members and politicians to take action (and a bite) to raise awareness about the impact food has on our kids.

This year marks the 10th anniversary and passing the millionth crunch and to celebrate these milestones, FoodShare provided free apples to over 100,000 students in 244 Toronto schools who registered for the biggest crunch to date.

"What makes the Great Big Crunch easy is that all it takes is an apple, a moment of silence and a big bite. With that in mind we wanted to help get apples into the hands of as many local students as possible. With over 100,000 registered FoodShare staff headed out on a grand adventure, visiting school communities of all sizes, and seeing first hand the students who would be making some noise with us in today's 10th anniversary celebration" shares Meredith Hayes "As we prepare to Crunch at 2:30 the importance of connecting these students, and all students across Canada, with good healthy food in schools everyday will be top of mind."

The reaction to this year's crunch has been tremendous and the registrations and stories have poured in across the country:

- Food First in the North West Territories is providing apples for seven schools to join the action, with the crunch farthest north in Sachs Harbour
- A school in Puvirnituk, Northern Quebec wrote to let us know that instead of taking a bite into an apple, they'll be fishing and eating fresh local fish to highly healthy eating and local food.
- Over 20,000 students in Hamilton alone will be crunching.

Students aren't the only ones who will be crunching. Toronto City Councilor Joe Mihevc will be handing out apples today at City Hall and in Ottawa, Members of Parliament will take the [Great](#)

[Big Crunch on Parliament Hill](#) raising awareness of the importance of healthy school food programs and food literacy.

Why Crunch?

Canada remains one of the few industrialized countries without a national school food program, and it's time that changed.

- Canadian children face a number of serious food-related problems.
- Poor diet is leading to kids developing chronic diseases, like Type 2 diabetes, once only diagnosed in adults.
- Two-thirds of children do not eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- A third of elementary school students, and two-thirds of high school students do not eat a healthy breakfast before going to school, and 1.15 million Canadian children live in households that have trouble putting food on the table, leaving them at risk for physical and mental health problems and less able to concentrate in class.

You are invited to join us for The Great Big Crunch for a moment of anti-silence.

FoodShare will be hosting the Minister of Children and Youth Services, the Honorable Michael Coteau, alongside local grade 4 and 5 students from Bala Avenue Community School to celebrate the incredible impact student nutrition programs have in schools across Toronto and the country.

Date: March 9th

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm *Crunch @ 2:30 EST

Location: FoodShare Toronto Community Food Hub at 120 Industry Street, Unit C.

Photo and interview opportunities involving students taking the a Great Big Crunch with Meredith Hayes, Great Big Crunch Founder, Minister of Children and Youth Services, the Honorable Michael Coteau.

Media Inquiries: Heidi Pyper 416 417 2883 heidi@foodshare.net

About FoodShare

FoodShare Toronto is Canada's original direct field to table Community Food Hub. Since 1985, FoodShare has modeled a food system that is sustainable and accessible to everyone. We deliver good healthy food, and food education to underserved schools and communities through programs focused in fresh produce distribution, food literacy education and nutrition, urban agriculture, and community cooking. All programs support a variety of health, economic, environmental, community, and social benefits, and seek to improve food access for people and communities currently underserved by the food system. Find out more at www.foodshare.net.

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