

The Vincentimes

Special Edition

Winter 2016

Brockville Conference Launches New Program to Take a Bite Out of Childhood Hunger

The St. Francis Xavier, Brockville Conference has had a couple of busy years! Our Fundraising Committee has been working overtime and our members have been very active! Throughout the 2015 calendar year, \$36,811.86 in assistance was provided to those in need in our community. As of Oct 20th 2016, another \$41,543.79 in assistance has been provided, including food vouchers given out during emergency home visits, utilities and rent payments, Christmas assistance, and the sponsorship of kids to play soccer & hockey, or attend day and overnight summer camps, when their families cannot afford the costs themselves, among other things. One little girl who attended a camp this summer wrote us a lovely thank you note with the following excerpt "I had so much fun. And thanks to you, I experienced what I did at this awesome camp"! Of course none of these activities or vouchers would be possible without the generosity of our parishioners and donors, for whom we are very grateful.

Our newest project is the Weekender Program for Kids. The Weekender Program targets mainly elementary school aged children from JK through to Grade 6, who experience a "food deficit" in their lives. Many of these children benefit from school breakfast and/or lunch programs during the week, but oftentimes their families do not have enough

food to meet their nutritional needs on the weekend, meaning the kids go hungry. That's where the Weekender Program for Kids comes in! Starting on Dec 11th, 2015 we began providing 18 children at St.



*Back row, left to right: Paul Sheppard, Dave Smith, Tim Glashan, Jan van Stralen, Larry Sauve, Steve Wace, Helen Coyea, and Rev. Brian Price.
Front row, left to right: Joan Sheppard, Bev Libitz, Claire van Stralen, Joanne Esson, Karen O'Connor-Wace, Carol Ravnaas and Laura Roobol.
Missing from the photo that day was Father Justin Pulikunnel, Marc Dennis and Kathy Fry.*

Francis Xavier School in Brockville, who had been identified by the school as having a food deficit, a large baggie full of food items for them to take home each Friday throughout the school year. Food items such as canned pasta, soup mix, granola bars, fruit cups, juice boxes, oatmeal, etc. helped to fill their tummies over the weekends. In May 2016 we added two additional Brockville schools to the program.

The 2015/16 St. Francis Xavier School coordinator wrote us a thank-you with the following excerpts, "They (the kids) would come into my room with big smiles on their faces excitedly anticipating what goodies they were going to get for that weekend", and "we are very blessed to have this amazing program in our community". Smiles on the faces of the kids who might otherwise go hungry was music to our ears!

As with all things new, there have been some challenges over the past year, but nothing insurmountable. We are currently using a storage room at St. Mary CHS in Brockville to store the food, and their Grade 12 Leadership Class students are helping us pack the food packages, alongside the SSVP volunteers. As of the writing of this article, we

are very pleased to say we are now in 5 area schools (we added 1 school from Prescott and 1 from Toledo), reaching a total of 64 children. We are also planning to add two more schools early in the New Year!

If you have any questions, or you would like more information on the program, please contact Laura Roobol, Coordinator Weekender Program for Kids, in Brockville, at 613-345-2698.

Weekenders Program for Kids



Hello and welcome to the Weekenders Program for Kids! In order to make things go smoothly we (SSVP) require each school to have one **contact person**, for both the parents and us. This person will be accountable for **determining the number of children** in need of the program; getting the required **consent** from the parents; the storage and **distribution** of the food each Friday; and **returning the reusable grocery bags** to the office. Please note the contact person does not have to do all these duties by themselves, but they must ensure it all gets done! J Here are the details on each of the responsibilities:

- The staff at **every school knows their kids**, and know which ones of them would benefit from this program. Please make a list, class by class, considering all children who typically don't bring much food from home during the school week, or children whose families you know are struggling and could use a hand. These are the children to enroll in the Weekenders Program for Kids.
- We ask the school to get and retain a **consent form** for each child enrolled in the Weekenders Program (one form per family). Ideally this consent form will be signed by a parent or guardian. In those circumstances where parents/guardians are unresponsive, we would ask that a phone call be made to the parents/guardians by the school contact person or designee, to gain permission from the parent/guardian. A consent form can then be used to document the date of the call, who was called to give permission, along with the name of the staff member making the call. **Note:** To respect confidentiality, we do not need the names of the children, simply the total number of children enrolled in the Weekenders Program.
- We will **deliver the food** pre-packaged in large baggies, inside reusable grocery bags (approx. 5 pre-packaged large baggies per reusable grocery bag) **every second Wednesday**. We do this to account for PD days, or students leaving early for the weekend. If the delivery will be any different day of the week we will let your contact person know ahead of time.
- We will deliver the bags to the school office, unless you instruct us differently. The school is responsible for **storing** two weeks of food **and distributing** the food weekly. If a child is not going to be at school on the Friday, please give them their bag on Thursday. If there is a PD day on Friday, please hand out all the bags on Thursday. If a child misses Friday, please give them their bag on the first day they return to school the next week.
- We have two sets of **reusable grocery bags** for each school, and they **must be returned** every two weeks in order for us to repack them. Please ensure they are waiting for us to pick up in the office every Wednesday we deliver (from the second week on).
- In an effort to ensure the kids benefitting from this program are not unduly singled out, we encourage the school to develop a system where the kids can pick up and slip their weekly food pack into their own backpack, without the rest of their class watching.



If you have any concerns or questions please feel free to contact Laura Roobol at 613-345-2698

HOW TO START YOUR OWN WEEKENDER PROGRAM

Volunteers: You need volunteers to help with the inventory, the groceries, the books, packing and delivering the food packages, etc.

Fundraising: It costs approx. \$170 to sponsor a child for a year (based on providing assistance for 38 weeks of the school year, at a cost of \$4.50 per week).

Storage and Packing Location:

You will need a place to store the food, and to pack the food packages from. Tables are also a necessity.

School and School Coordinator:

Find your partner school and introduce them to the program. The school is responsible for appointing a coordinator, for determining the number of children in need, and for getting consent from the parents.

Food Package Contents: The food in the weekend packages should require little to no preparation, and require no extra ingredients.

Groceries, Inventory and Game Plan: Based on the number of children enrolled and the contents of your weekend packages, groceries will have to be done, inventory kept up to date, packing and deliveries.



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul



The Weekenders for Kids

The St. Francis Xavier Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, is thrilled to be partnering with your child's school, to offer the Weekenders Program for Kids. Starting on **Friday September 30th**, and continuing every Friday of the school year, your child will be given a supply of nutritious meals and snacks to take home with them for the weekend. The food is at no cost to your child. Only one form per family is required and all information is kept confidential.

If you think your child or children could benefit from this program please fill in this form and return it to the school by **Friday September 23rd**. If you have any questions please contact your school coordinator **name here** at 613-xxx-xxxx.

Name and grade of child(ren)

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Family Phone Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

(Please Print Name)

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date: _____

Note: Parents are responsible for managing any food allergies their children may have to the food provided through this program.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a lay Catholic organization.



**SOCIETY OF
SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL -
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The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

Mission:

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a lay Catholic organization whose mission is: To live the Gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice and joy.

Values:

The Mission of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul implies that as Vincentians, we:

See Christ in anyone who suffers;
Come together as a family;
Have personal contact with the poor;
Help in all possible ways.

**Contents of a Typical Weekender Program for Kids
Food Package with
Possible Saturday & Sunday Meal Plan**

Canned Pasta - 1

Apple Juice Box – 1

Orange Juice Box – 1

Applesauce Cup - 1

Pudding Cup – 1

Oatmeal – 2 (different flavours)

Soup Mix – 1

Granola Bars – 2

Cheese & crackers – 2

Rice Crispie Sq. – 2

Gummie Fruit Shapes – 2

Breakfast: Pk. of oatmeal & an apple or orange juice box

Snack: Granola Bar

Lunch: 2 cups chicken noodle soup and cheese & cracker pk.

Snack: Gummie Fruit shapes

Supper: ½ can of pasta & a pudding cup or applesauce

Snack: Rice Crispie sq.