

CALGARY FOOD BANK

SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT BRIEF REPORT

A Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis is a way to show the wider benefits of a social program. In this case, it identifies, measures and assigns a dollar value to the secondary impacts of the Calgary Food Bank Emergency Food Hamper program. 31 clients were interviewed and asked, “what impact has the Calgary Food Bank had on your life?” The findings were verified with a survey of 1,000 clients.

How does the Calgary Food Bank’s Emergency Food Hamper program improve clients’ lives?



By providing access to nutritious food; for some, the Calgary Food Bank is their only source of food.



Improved mental health; clients reported improved mental health because they no longer had to worry about how they would put food on the table.



Improved financial situation; clients can redirect the money they save on groceries towards other bills.



Increased social benefits; clients appreciate the social interactions they have with staff and volunteers when coming to the Calgary Food Bank.



Improved quality of life; with money saved, clients can spend money on things that improve their quality of life, such as outings with their children.



Improved life circumstance; examples of this include preventing some from being made homeless and some who needed the help when fleeing domestic abuse.

Every dollar donated to the Calgary Food Bank saves Alberta taxpayers \$9.84

$$\frac{[\sum (\text{Total Financial Proxy Cost} \cdot \text{Unique Clients Served Annually} \cdot \text{severity} \cdot (1 - \text{attribution}) \cdot (1 - \text{drop-off}) \cdot (1 - \text{deadweight}))] + (\text{value of donated food})}{\text{Emergency Food Hamper annual program cost}} = \mathbf{\$9.84}$$

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Methodology

A financial proxy was assigned to each outcome. This is how much money the Calgary Food Bank has potentially saved society and other social support systems as a result of clients experiencing those positive secondary impacts.



ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS FOOD:

High food insecurity costs Alberta Health Services (AHS) \$482.50/patient/year



MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS:

Admissions for stress and anxiety cost the AHS \$8554/patient/year



IMPROVED FINANCIAL SITUATION:

Emergency Needs Allowance costs Alberta government \$824/adult/year and \$135/child/year



SOCIAL BENEFITS:

Together All, an initiative that is part of the City of Calgary's Social Isolation strategy, costs approximately \$25/person/year



IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE:

Fair Entry Recreation Fee Assistance costs \$50/adult/year and \$250/child/year



IMPROVED LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES:

It costs \$2550/person/year to house someone in the Calgary homeless shelter system

Calgary Food Bank Client Quote

"It is an allocation issue, where am I going to allocate the resources that I have? Because food is the basic bare minimum in order to be alive, you need food more than you need shelter and clothing... The food bank is helping us with the food so that we can have money for the other things that are part of life."

About the Researcher

Dr Lucy Harry is Head of Research at the Calgary Food Bank. She holds a Masters and Doctorate from the Law Faculty of the University of Oxford, UK. After finishing her PhD, she worked as a researcher at the University of Oxford, as well as a lecturer, and research consultant for international non-profits.

View the full report at calgaryfoodbank.com