



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Sara's Pantry partners with Glenboro School to deliver a daily fresh fruit program thanks to Healthy Together Now grant.**

**Glenboro, MB [03.10.21]** – Sara's Pantry, Glenboro's food security program has increased its impact even more with a new partnership with the Glenboro School and funding provided by the Manitoba Government through the Healthy Together Now grant program.

Sara's Pantry started providing the community of Glenboro with healthy food hampers in January 2021. Still, Ryan Diehl, Principal at the Glenboro School, has been involved with Sara's Pantry since the initial discussion in the spring of 2020.

"It was really important for the school to be involved in this project," said Diehl. "Learning about food security and the importance of building your community up together are important life skills; being a part of Sara's Pantry provides excellent learning opportunities for our students."

Kyrsten Godard, Occupational Therapist, working locally for Prairie Mountain Health and the private sector, is currently filling the role of secretary for Sara's Pantry. Godard sees the hope this project has brought to the community. "While living in a pandemic, the partnership with the Glenboro School including Principle, Ryan Diehl, has created a major glimmer of light, empowerment, and hope to our community in a difficult time," said Godard. "COVID-19 has placed various stressors, financially, physically and mentally, on individuals and families; In my opinion, the role of this program has not come at a better time."

The Breakfast Club of Canada reports that, in Canada, 2 million children start school on an empty stomach, which Godard says is alarming. "We know that nutrition is not only important for our physical health and growth but crucial for brain development such as thinking abilities, attention, concentration and the list goes on; By working together, we are providing children with a daily opportunity to have nutritious snacks that can help them perform to their best abilities and excel while in the classroom." Said Godard. "The partnership Sara's Pantry has created with Glenboro school, and the goals of the fresh fruit program will provide not only life skills and a long-term, positive impact to the students but also an immediate effect."

Thanks to the Healthy Together Now grant, a daily fresh fruit program has been established with the school and delivered by the students. The program offers students an opportunity to manage the produce order, quality, and control, promote healthy eating and create awareness about more significant social issues. "The school is already thinking logistically on this project," said Godard. "Making arrangements with the Glenboro Co-op to stock extra fruit, fruit pick up, and safe delivery to each classroom accordingly to provincial health guidelines are all things the school has already started working on; they are thinking ahead and constantly looking for new learning opportunities."

While the program will begin with providing fresh fruit for Kindergarten to Grade 8, Mr. Diehl says the partnership with Sara's Pantry has started the conversation with the senior students about Food Security and what it means. "Our students want to be involved," said Diehl. "We expect the speech around food equity to grow as we see more opportunities that come up with providing daily fruit." The school plans to incorporate classroom discussions about food insecurity, healthy eating, and options available.

Grade 10 student Sophia Anderson has taken steps of her own to be involved in this project. Anderson recently launched an Instagram account for Sara's Pantry. "I'm grateful to have the opportunity to help out for such an important cause," said Anderson. "I love helping people, so being able to be a part of an organization that is going to make a difference in and around the community is something I'm thankful for."

Anderson will be responsible for developing content and managing Sara's Pantry's online social presence. "Creating meaningful social content takes time and skill," said Karen Burton, Marketing & Community Relations Specialist at Westoba Credit Union and Sara's Pantry volunteer. "The fact that Sophie came to us is an indication of just how much support this program has received from the community."

Diehl and Godard will be working together to create a permanent position for a senior student to manage Sara's Pantry Instagram account for future years. "Supporting senior students to manage the Sara's Pantry Instagram account will be a great way to keep Glenboro School involved long-term," said Godard. "It's another avenue to communicate to the public about the food bank, especially as our world becomes more social media-driven. A huge thank-you and acknowledgement go out to Sophia for initiating and kick-starting Sara's Pantry Instagram account; It is uplifting to see a young adult take the initiative to help her community while trying to juggle everything else that comes with being a senior student."

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### **About Sara's Pantry**

Sara's Pantry, located at 504 Railway Avenue (rear entrance) in Glenboro, is a program aimed at making access to healthy food equitable in Glenboro and the area. Contact Sara's Pantry on Facebook @saraspantryglenboro; Instagram @saras.pantry or email [saraspantry2020@gmail.com](mailto:saraspantry2020@gmail.com).

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