

# CCC Feature Resources

## Little Free Pantry

Providing a Little Free Pantry in Early Learning Communities can help foster a sense of community and provide a safe entry point for families who might be experiencing food scarcity. The Little Free Pantry is a tool to support the immediate and local need of the families in your program who are already engaged in your early learning and care spaces.

Early Learning Child Care Licensing Act  
Principles and Matters to be Considered:

- C) Diversity in the background and circumstances of children in the program of their families, including those children in the program of their families, including those who may be experiencing social or economic vulnerability

**Whether a family has an abundance of a food item or a family has a need for resources, a Little Free Pantry can be a source that can help support a household in need and create a reciprocal feeling of community.**



Food insecurity is a growing trend for families in the Alberta context. Stats Canada's Household Food Scarcity report from April 23rd, 2022 shows that moderate or severe food insecurity for persons under 18 years has risen from 13.5% in 2019 to 16.3% in 2020 alone.

A University of Toronto report has also found Alberta ranks highest in food insecurity based on data from 2021. The report found over 20 per cent of Albertans say they are struggling to put food on the table. (Rafferty Baker, CBC). The report also found that 1.4 million children in Canada live in households that experience food insecurity.

This data is concerning however, as Early Learning Communities we have an opportunity to create Free Little Pantries for families or colleagues who may need a helping hand.

**Let us show you how!**



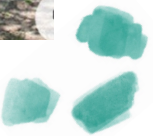
## Step 1

Choose an indoor location that is accessible to families where they can take what they need or give easily. We suggest an indoor area, given the extreme weather conditions in Alberta. An entry area is a great place for the pantry to live!



## Step 2

Source materials to construct a pantry- use a bookshelf, ask families for materials, search buy and sell groups, share your ideas in an educator meeting, circulate a newsletter with your idea and what materials you are needing. As you involve your early learning groups and extended communities, you will create excitement and “places of vitality” (Makovichuk, L., et al., 2014). Clear plexiglass is great for families to see what is inside. See example



## Step 3

Host an in-person or online food drive. Use your community and involve the children to build a small bank of non-perishable food items and hygiene items. Use social media to your advantage and collect high need food bank items listed on your local food bank websites.



## Step 4

Delegate a team or an individual of your early learning community to be responsible for weekly checks for expiry dates, refilling items, checking for cleanliness or pests. This team can also be responsible for checking in with families on what items they would like to see most in the free little pantries.



## Step 5

Enjoy creating a practical resource for families!



This resource is inspired from: [www.littlefreepantry.org](http://www.littlefreepantry.org)

References and Resources:

Anchan, M. (2022, Aug. 23) - Report finds Albertans have highest rate of food insecurity in the country. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/food-insecurity-alberta>

Canadian Community Health Survey (2022) <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca> Canadian Community Health Survey - Canada.ca

Makovichuk, L., Hewes, J., Lirette, P., & Thomas, N. (2014). Flight: Alberta's early Learning and care framework. Retrieved from [www.flightframework.com](http://www.flightframework.com)

Statistics Canada, Table 13-10-0835-01 Food insecurity by age group and sex DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/1310083501-eng>

Tarasuk V, Li T, Fafard St-Germain AA. (2022) Household food insecurity in Canada, 2021. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved from <https://proof.utoronto.ca>