



(Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger), REACH supports the YWCA's proposal for a Centre for Women and Families. REACH was developed to work in partnership with multiple organizations and agencies and as such, our REACH's vision and goals align with this Centre. Our vision is that every Regina resident has a right to safe, nutritious, culturally acceptable and affordable food, and the opportunity to obtain it through non-emergency source, this Centre would allow us to continue to collaborate and partner with the YWCA to provide a greater service than we are presently able to do. Our goals include supporting and partnering with organizations such as the YWCA to support healthy food sources, reduce child hunger and to educate by providing nutrition and food skills. Household food insecurity in 2017 affected one in six Canadian children under the age of 18. Food insecurity is a symptom of poverty. One out of seven individuals in Canada live in poverty. Saskatchewan and Regina food insecurity and poverty levels are very similar to the National levels. To build food security for all Regina residents we must work in a variety of ways to ensure effective solutions. This Centre proposes that through leveraging economies of scale, co – location, collaboration and multiple agencies working together that we can create strategies that address hunger and food security, as well as housing; and that this strengthens development of safe neighbourhoods through community activities and resources – all priorities of the City of Regina Social Development.

Food Security for families and proper nutrition provide women and children with a foundation to improve upon their lives. Children who eat properly are better behaved and learn better and therefore are able to do better at school. A good education is one of the key ways out of poverty. Families who prepare food and eat together develop communication and team building skills that not only improves their own lives but that of the communities they live in.

REACH currently partners with the YWCA to provide a mobile store, family basket program, community kitchens and preschool/children cooking classes.

The impact the centre for Women and Families will have on our participants (women and children of the city of Regina) and our organization is that through this proposed new facility we will have sufficient space and kitchen facilities to meet the needs of more women and children than our current situation. Currently we have limited space to meet the demand for food security programs in the Downtown, Cathedral, North Central and surrounding neighbourhoods. This Centre will provide women and children access to REACH programs and services by breaking down barriers of transportation and cost of food and skills. It allows partnering organizations such as the YWCA and REACH and other organizations to work together with the women and children to customize the current services and to develop new initiatives to better meet their individual needs and those of the communities they live in.

REACH continues to work at ways we can address the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. Over 75% of our Family Basket, participants are Aboriginal Women and their children and the majority are single parents. Our partnership with YWCA and our involvement with the proposed Centre would allow us to

expand our services and programs and better meet the specific needs of this group of women and children.

This Centre will assist our Organization and others to collaborate and not only bridge those gaps in the system by working together to deal with complex issues but to make progress on preventative solutions.

Dana Folkersen, REACH Executive Director

Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger Inc.