

December 11, 2017
For Immediate Release



How Niagara Can Give with Dignity this Christmas and Throughout the Year

Niagara Region, Ontario – The Niagara Poverty Reduction Network (NPRN) aims to ensure that all Niagara residents live above the poverty line and are treated with respect and dignity. At this time of year, people often feel the desire to donate gifts and volunteer and are generally interested in helping people in need. The NPRN wants to educate the Niagara community on how we can all give with social justice in mind and truly help reduce discrimination and the effects of poverty for people in Niagara.

Women, children, persons of colour, persons with disabilities and Indigenous persons are often impacted the most by the experience of poverty leading to toxic stress, inadequate housing, food insecurity, poor health, social exclusion, less opportunity and stigma. In Niagara, poverty costs us all 1.38 billion dollars annually. There are 55,644 people in Niagara who live below the Low Income Measure. They are our friends, family, neighbours and members of our community. When you give this holiday, and throughout the year, we want to ensure your heartfelt generosity creates the impact you want to see.

So how do we give with dignity and with social justice in mind?

Here are ten easy ways you can make your gift giving even more impactful:

1. **Be Kind:** Myth bust, call out discrimination when you hear it or see it, be an ally.
2. **Learn About Your Community:** What is happening to move things forward in your community?
3. **Make Informed Decisions:** Do your research. Support ethical, inclusive organizations & products.
4. **Get Involved:** Share your gifts and talents. Meet your neighbours. Find your way to be engaged!
5. **Listen:** Share space by actively listening to someone's story. Storytelling is powerful.
6. **Be Inquisitive:** Ask important questions, but don't be invasive.
7. **Watch Your Language:** The experience of poverty is harmful - don't perpetuate discrimination.
8. **Take Action:** Advocate for change, in a respectful manner, to undo harmful social systems.
9. **Value Experience:** Volunteer, support a charity event, organize a neighbourhood block party.
10. **Buy Local:** Support local vendors, farmers, artisans and neighbours who make Niagara unique!

The NPRN encourages people this holiday, and throughout the year, to give and live with social justice in mind. Start to have the conversations we need to have: let's talk about supporting policies and programs that increase opportunities such as adequate access to aid, affordable housing and child care, a living wage and other initiatives that improve the quality of life for all people in Niagara.

The NPRN is a group of residents, businesses and organizations. Our vision is “All Niagara residents live above the poverty line.” NPRN works to, and encourages Niagara residents, businesses and organizations to work together to improve the quality of life in Niagara. We speak with a community voice that incorporates the multiple voices of Niagara and prioritizes the voice of those currently experiencing poverty. For more information on the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network, visit www.wipeoutpoverty.ca.

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