

A plate full of stories as told on the Paper Plate project

Within Reach

a Perry County

Job & Family

Services (J&FS) Column

Perry JFS in a partnership with The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) will be participating in the Paper Plate Project throughout the month of February.

The Paper Plate Project is a way to show our local and state legislators the hardships that 15.1 percent of Ohioans, who are living in poverty, must face each day and to demonstrate the difficult decisions these individuals must face on a daily basis.

The Paper Plate Project provides Ohioans with the opportunity to voice their stories and the trials that they or their loved ones are facing by writing these stories onto empty paper plates.

The empty paper plate represents the hunger, literally the empty plates and tables, that millions of Ohioans and thousands of Perry County residents face each day. OASHF's goal is

to take 50,000 paper plates to Ohio's Capitol Building to represent those who must choose between paying the rent and buying groceries or paying for medical expenses and putting food on the table. These individuals who are forced to make such daunting choices deserve to have their voices heard.

To ensure that the residents of Perry County are heard by our state leaders during the budget process, Perry JFS is asking clients and community members to either stop by their office Monday through Friday during the hours of 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. to write their stories on empty paper plates or to e-mail their stories to argoc@odjfs.state.oh.us.

These stories should include information about the individual's/family's current situation, how the Recession has affected the individual and their family, and what Ohio food pantries mean to them.

(Information for this article was provided by Cassandra Argo, HarvestCorps member)