

WATERLOO REGION'S
Vital Signs[®]
Priority Report



EXAMINING THE PRIORITIES OF OUR COMMUNITY 2016

Welcome to the 2016 edition of Waterloo Region's Vital Signs[®] – a snapshot of the quality of life in our community. Since 2007, we have strived to inspire civic engagement, provide focus for public debate and connect philanthropic activity with the areas of greatest need. In 2013, a full *Vital Signs* report was released, analyzing the community across 11 key areas. This marked the start of a cycle that focused on four priority areas. In this year's report, we continue to build our understanding of the four priority areas: Belonging & Leadership, Arts & Culture, Getting Started and Health & Wellness.

VITAL SIGNS IS A TOOL FOR KNOWLEDGE

The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation (The KWCF) compiles *Vital Signs* reports based upon current, reliable and valid statistics, special studies and focus groups composed of members of our community. Join a host of other local organizations, foundations and government agencies who use *Vital Signs* as a tool to understand life in Waterloo Region.

VITAL SIGNS IS A TOOL FOR CHANGE

The purpose of *Vital Signs* is not just to capture data and make it accessible. The report is a tool for change, and an instrument for improving life in Waterloo Region.

The KWCF uses the report to guide our activity throughout the year. *Vital Signs* findings are used to provide direction for Foundation granting activities. Last year, 100% of The KWCF's Smart & Caring Grants Program was directed towards the area of belonging, the number one priority identified by *Vital Signs*. In addition to this granting activity, The KWCF leads local programs such as the **Engage!KW** community leadership development program and **Random Act of Kindness Day**[®]. These programs engage the community in connecting with one another for the purpose of enhancing our sense of belonging and increases our ownership of the change we want to see.

VITAL SIGNS IS A TOOL FOR ACTION

Vital Signs is about building community vitality. It is designed to encourage people to come together, step up and take responsibility for making our community what we want it to be. Having a high sense of belonging means nothing if we don't translate feelings into action. *Vital Signs* serves as a tool to help our community find ways to use their time, talent and treasure to make this community a stronger, more vibrant one for all.

STRONG COMMUNITY BELONGING IS A FEELING THAT THE PEOPLE IN ONE'S COMMUNITY MATTER TO ONE ANOTHER.

A community is a network that is geographically based, diverse, open ended, and should be actively welcoming of those who are different, new or isolated. Strong community belonging is a value shared by members of this network. With a high sense of belonging, people within the network can help to meet one another's needs. They can work together for resources, information, emotional support, and to build a sense of identity or purpose. Belonging is also a sense of personal responsibility to contribute to the community.

Many of the social issues that matter to the residents of Waterloo Region are linked to community belonging. In the 2015 *Vital Signs* report, we learned that many residents of Waterloo Region have a "lukewarm" sense of belonging. This year, we sought to better understand what this involves, and to identify ways that each of us can improve this sense of belonging for ourselves and for others.

In order to improve this sense of belonging in ourselves, we found that information about the level of belonging for our various community members is important to understand. Belonging is impacted by transitioning into new life phases, the status of our physical and mental health, and our experiences of the arts, culture and recreation in Waterloo Region.

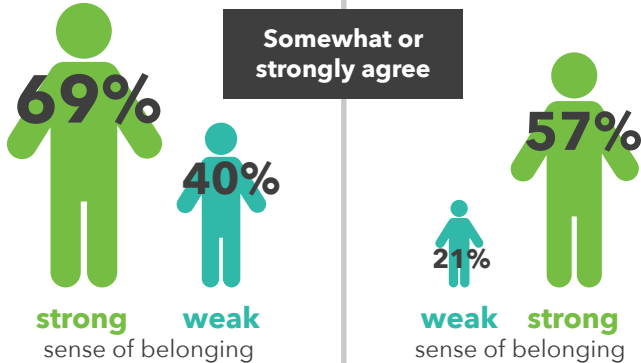
ONLY TOGETHER CAN WE MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE

BELONGING & LEADERSHIP



The Region's programs and services meet the needs of a diverse population

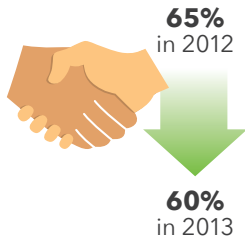
The Region is in touch with the needs of my community



Source: Region of Waterloo Community Priorities & Satisfaction Survey 2015

BIG PICTURE

Our sense of belonging drives behaviours such as donating and volunteering. Few residents are stepping up to donate, and only a small portion of Waterloo Region's visible minority groups are in leadership roles. Those with a weak sense of belonging are more likely to think the Region is not in touch with their needs. Although residents think the Region is a safe place, over recent years levels of trust have declined.



MOST RESIDENTS THINK THEY CAN TRUST OTHERS.

However, this rate has declined recently.

Source: Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council: Fear of Crime in Waterloo Region & Beyond 2014

LESS THAN 1 IN 4

Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge tax filers donate to a charity.

Source: Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 111-0001



13.1%

of the community's population belongs to a visible minority but...



...they only constitute

5.9%

OF PEOPLE IN LEADERSHIP ROLES IN THE REGION.

Source: Immigration Partnership Waterloo Region: Counting Diversity 2013

ARTS & CULTURE

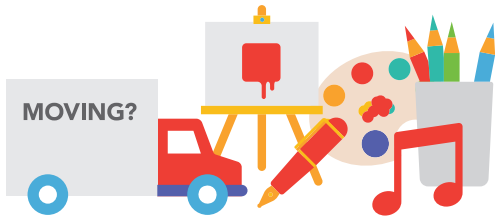
When asked: "What are the most appealing aspects of life in Waterloo Region?"



ARTS & CULTURE RANKED IN THE TOP 4

Source: Region of Waterloo Community Priorities & Satisfaction Survey 2015

65% of businesses and skilled workers agree that a thriving arts and culture scene is a driving factor when considering relocation



Source: Culture for Competitiveness: How Vibrant Culture Attracts Top Talent (2016)



BIG PICTURE

Most residents think that promoting arts, culture and heritage should be a priority. It is understood that development of the arts and culture sector is a key strategy to grow the local economy and attract and retain talented people and their families. However, artists earn less than the general labour force. People with a poor quality of life have a less favourable perception of the status of arts and culture in Waterloo Region.

TOTAL AVERAGE PER CAPITA INVESTMENT IN CULTURE AND RECREATION

for the cities and townships in Waterloo Region has increased since 2013.



Source: Consolidated Financial Statements from all municipalities in the region and Region of Waterloo Population Data

TOTAL AVERAGE INCOME

(2010)

GENERAL LABOUR FORCE

\$47,900

Source: Hill Strategies Research: Cultural Workers/Creative Industries: A Kitchener Conversation 2015

CULTURAL WORKERS

\$42,600

archives, libraries, heritage, broadcasting, film and video, sound recording, publishing, architecture, design and printing



ARTISTS

\$31,000

visual artists, craftspeople, writers, performing artists and filmmakers



GETTING STARTED



TYPICAL IMMIGRANTS DO NOT ACHIEVE INCOME COMPARABLE TO PEOPLE BORN IN CANADA UNTIL APPROXIMATELY 20 YEARS AFTER MOVING HERE.

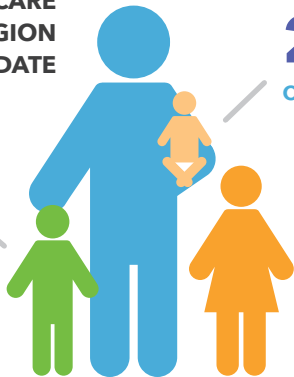
Source: Waterloo Region Immigration Fact Sheet: Employment, Education & Income 2015

BIG PICTURE

The experience of those in Waterloo Region transitioning to new life phases isn't always easy. Immigrants take longer to earn as much as Canadian-born residents. Our young people are experiencing challenges graduating high school on time and transitioning out of their parents' home. New parents are faced with the challenge of accessing licensed child care.

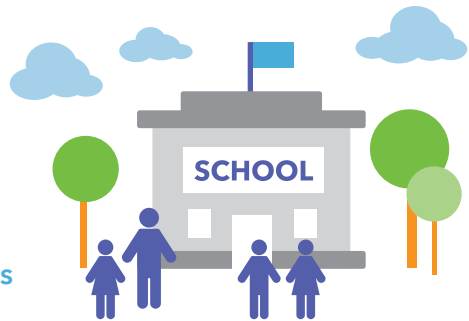
LICENSED CHILD CARE IN WATERLOO REGION CAN ACCOMMODATE

21%
of toddlers



2%
of infants

31%
of preschoolers



90% OF SCHOOLS IN WATERLOO REGION offer before and after school programs.

Source: Region Of Waterloo Early Learning and Child Care Profiles 2015

Source: Region Of Waterloo Early Learning and Child Care Profiles 2015

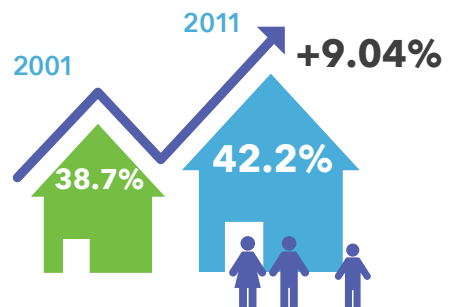


21% OF YOUTH IN PUBLIC SCHOOL ARE NOT GRADUATING after 5 years of secondary school.

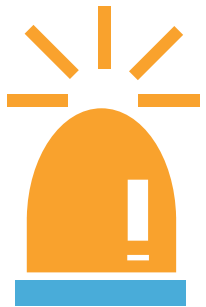
Source: Waterloo Region District School Board Graduation Rates 2015

MORE YOUNG ADULTS AGED 20-29 ARE LIVING IN THEIR PARENTS' HOME in the Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge Census Metropolitan area.

Source: 2011 Census: Family portrait: Continuity and change in Canadian families and households



HEALTH & WELLNESS



In May 2016, officers of the Waterloo Regional Police Service responded to **364 INCIDENTS INVOLVING MENTAL ILLNESS OR SUICIDE ATTEMPTS**

Source: Waterloo Region Police Service; Data shared by Mental Health Enhanced Crisis Team



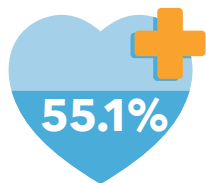
BIG PICTURE

While most residents believe that they are in good or excellent health, many people report having chronic health conditions. In addition, some people are not able to access the resources they need to improve their health and are unable to live their lives fully due to health challenges.

2/3 ★★☆☆

of Waterloo Region residents perceived their **health to be very good or excellent** (2014)

Source: Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 105-0501



of adults in Waterloo Region reported **one or more chronic health conditions**

Source: Region of Waterloo Public Health Quick Stats: Chronic Disease Prevention (2011-2012)

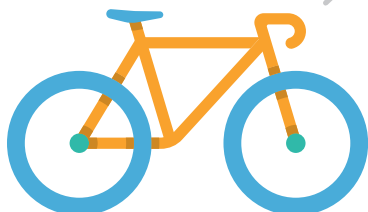
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME MORE THAN

\$100k

1.3x

MORE LIKELY TO ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING LEISURE TIME.

Source: Region of Waterloo Public Health Quick Stats: Leisure time Physical Activity 2014



RESIDENTS WITH POOR QUALITY OF LIFE ARE LESS LIKELY

to feel that their neighbourhoods provide opportunities to be physically active.



Source: Region of Waterloo Community Priorities & Satisfaction Survey 2015

1/3 OF RESIDENTS EXPERIENCED LIMITATIONS IN PARTICIPATING IN ACTIVITIES

due to a physical or mental condition or health problem expected to last 6 months or longer.

Source: Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 105-0501



THAN THOSE WITH AN ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME LESS THAN

\$40k



VITAL SIGNS PRIORITY AREAS

In the 2013 full *Vital Signs* report we examined all 11 issue areas to understand the bigger picture of the challenges facing our community. From that broader, strategic perspective, The KWCF worked with focus groups, an Expert Review Panel and a data consultant to understand our community's most pressing issues. With our *Vital Signs* Priority Reports in 2014, 2015 and now in 2016, we have taken the time to dive deeper into the top four issue areas that challenge our community.

Announced at the October 2013 launch event, the community's Priority Areas for the current cycle are Belonging & Leadership, Arts & Culture, Getting Started (in life and in Canada) and Health & Wellness. You can access original and supplemental data, and download a digital copy of the report at: www.wrvitalsigns.ca



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA

www.cfc-fcc.ca

COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Vital Signs® is a community checkup conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life. Vital Signs is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada and with special thanks to the Toronto Foundation for developing and sharing the Vital Signs concept. For more information visit: www.vitalsignscanada.ca



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OUR FOUNDATION

Community is foremost in our minds at The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation. We continuously strive to improve the quality of life for all citizens in Waterloo Region by building assets to provide lasting support for local priorities, addressing community needs through grant making, educating others about local organizations and programs and providing leadership by bringing people and organizations together to address key issues and opportunities.

NG &
SHIP

ALTH &
LNESS

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

The KWCF wishes to extend our sincerest thanks to the many organizations that provided information, guidance, statistics or in any way assisted in the creation of this year's report. We are especially grateful to the dynamic community leaders of our Expert Review Panel for their guidance and to our community partners for their support.

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SPECIAL THANKS!

To the following partners for their leadership and/or generous support
in making this year's Waterloo Region's Vital Signs® a reality:

