



Community Foundation
for Kingston & Area

KINGSTON & AREA'S

VitalSigns®

Published in partnership with
Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox
& Addington (KFL&A) Public Health

2014

**One of our most important
Vital Signs is your vote.
Vote on October 27.**



... almost 40 per cent of KFL&A adult population is NOT engaged in their communities.

... almost 65 per cent of eligible voters did NOT vote in the last municipal election.

We need to become a more engaged community ...

Municipal elections take place October 27.

Why bother?

Getting involved in your community improves your sense of wellbeing and satisfaction with life!

1st step

Check if you are on the Voters' List at www.voterlookup.ca/

Need more help?

Start here:
2014 Voters' Guide for Ontario Municipal and School Board Elections www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=10337

Vital Signs® 2014 digs deeper into the data gathered in the 2013 KFL&A Community Wellbeing Survey administered by the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. (CIW) Results from 2013 revealed that:

“We’re satisfied but... we have work to do!”

What is that work?

Almost 40 per cent of KFL&A residents are not engaged at all in their communities.

Highly civically engaged residents have a higher quality of life than people who are less civically engaged.

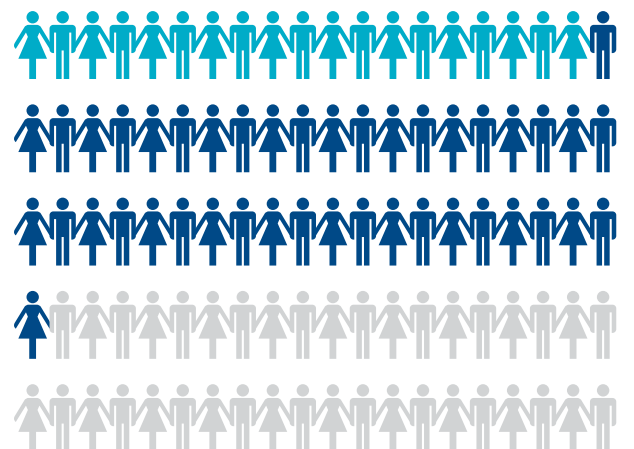
There is room to improve our wellbeing and our communities' wellbeing. Why not get in on the act!

The Community Foundation for Kingston & Area (CFKA) focuses this year on two wellbeing domains: Community Vitality and Democratic Engagement.



Less than 20 per cent of our Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington (KFL&A) residents are Highly Engaged in our community.

Community Engagement



- Highly engaged:** People who participated in three or more surveyed activities in the past 12 months.
- Somewhat engaged:** People who participated in one or two surveyed activities in the past 12 months.
- Not engaged:** People who did not participate in any of the surveyed activities in the past 12 months.

Democratic Engagement

Healthy democracies require more than high voter turnout. Democratically engaged communities are those where citizens regularly interact with government, exchanging ideas, building trust, and ensuring accountability. (CIW)

It's my civic duty to vote.

Canadians express an interest in politics and consider it their civic duty to vote. BUT as individuals we are not very engaged democratically at the community level.

- Well under 40 per cent have voted in recent municipal elections.
- The level of interest in KFL&A municipal politics ranges from 13 per cent among the Not Engaged to 43.5 per cent among the Highly Engaged.
- Overall, in our communities, the level of satisfaction in the Democratic Engagement domain is lower than any other domain of wellbeing.
- The volunteer rate for political activities in Canada is very low at about 2 per cent.

Are we engaged with our governments?

A successful democracy is a reciprocal enterprise: citizens work to be engaged and governments work to engage their citizens. Strengthening citizen engagement at the municipal level is likely more possible.

“Emphasis on the importance of citizen engagement is more pronounced at the municipal level and the methods and scope of engagement are significantly more diverse, individualized and comprehensive than found at the provincial and federal levels.” (CIW)

As reported in last year's Vital Signs, the 2013 KFL&A survey of residents revealed that the majority of respondents did not feel that their local governments and programmes had made a difference in their lives. A similar pattern, as reported in other CIW publications, emerges at the federal level. Canadians level of confidence in government tends to rest at just over 50 per cent. There is a strong disconnect!

“An engaged city brings people together for conversations to address issues of common importance, to solve shared problems, and to bring about positive social change. It involves people in the decision-making process such that it improves the resulting decision and, over time, builds the trust that is needed for fully empowered communities to actively create a common future.”

(Vancouver Mayor's Engaged City Task Force, 2013)

What is happening in our area?

- Special Kingston City Council meetings held in four geographical areas of the city to listen directly to residents.
- Greater accessibility for voters in the forthcoming municipal elections with polling stations located on bus routes, telephone and internet voting options and accessible voting equipment.
- Increasing web presence, use of social media (including Twitter), and town hall and live stream events.

Democracy in action

Many residents of Kingston's Pittsburgh Ward were increasingly dissatisfied with the level of services provided by the City, especially when compared to other areas. The expected benefits of the 1998 amalgamation had not materialized.

One of the Special Meetings of City Council took place in February (2014) at the local high school to listen to residents. All City Councillors and many senior City staff were in attendance together with about 170 residents of Pittsburgh Ward. City Councillors could listen but not speak. Staff responded to questions.

A residents' delegation presented the Ward's five priorities to Council.

The City acted:

- Continued with planning and acquisition of land for the Third Crossing.
- Began searching for a suitable location for the Community Centre.
- Undertook infrastructure work needed to be completed prior to work to relieve traffic congestion.

The "take-away" – Citizens, when organized, can directly influence the City's actions, but the City also has to be open to reciprocal engagement.

But there is an alarming decline in voter turnout at all levels of government. It is driven by the low participation rate of young voters.

Let's see what a potential young voter has to say about the issue:

Despite their voting patterns, evidence shows that young people are more politically engaged than ever. Through social media and other information access points, it is easier than ever for them to become informed and involved in a matter of seconds, with the click of a button. In Kingston, high school students annually rack up thousands of volunteer service hours on top of the 40 hours they need to graduate. In theory, such civic engagement should generate a higher voter turnout. The question is, 'where has the relationship between community engagement and voting gone amiss?'

In a study done by Elections Canada, young people identified cynicism in politics, the meaninglessness of participation and lack of knowledge as reasons for not voting. All of these issues point to a common theme: young people do not feel connected to the political process and the system does not respond to their concerns.

For young people to feel connected to the political process, politicians need to begin talking with and about young people.

We must break the cycle where governments are silent on youth issues because "young people don't vote" and youth don't vote because "there is nothing for which to vote." (Maddy Ross)



A Youth Forum on Civic Engagement

The voice of youth must be heard in any discussion about why turnout is declining and how that might be reversed and youth enabled to become more engaged in the community. Building on the recommendations outlined in the Kingston Youth Strategy and Community Action Plan, a Youth Forum on Civic Engagement will be held in October in Kingston. 80 – 100 youth will meet to learn about the democratic process, identify the barriers that limit their participation and offer their ideas and recommendations.



Youth Engagement

Vital Signs® 2013 reported that our population is ageing and we must attract young people to stay in our communities; however,

- Statistics Canada reported July 1, 2013, that youth and children aged under 15 in Kingston (CMA) constituted 14.2 per cent of the total population. This was a 3.4 percentage point decrease from 17.6 per cent in 2001. This share was 1.9 percentage points lower than the national share of 16.1 per cent and 2 percentage points lower than the provincial share of 16.2 per cent.
- Although the overall unemployment rate in Kingston (CMA) in 2013 was 7.53 per cent, the Labour Force Survey reported that the youth (15-24 years old) unemployment rate was 15.6 per cent. This was 1.9 percentage points above the national youth unemployment rate of 13.7 per cent. It has decreased 3.3 percentage points from 18.9 per cent in 2012.

The Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, has championed a series of discussions during the last year to encourage young people to become more engaged in helping develop **smarter and more caring communities**. Kingston's initiative to engage youth was already underway by this time and is described in the following section.

The importance of listening to youth

Introduction: Over the past three years, Kingston has become a pioneer in municipal youth engagement through the Youth 2 Kingston (Y2K) project.

In 2011, after the tragic suicide of Jamie Huble, the teenaged son of an Ottawa city councillor, Kingston City Council recognized that a city must provide for its youth so that they grow up in a healthy community and have access to resources that enable them to thrive mentally and physically.

Youth 2 Kingston was formed, comprised of approximately 75 young people, over 40 organizations that serve youth, and adult allies from every neighbourhood in Kingston and area.

What We Learned: In the summer of 2012, the Y2K team ventured into the community to learn what Kingston youth needed from their municipal government. What they heard in response was surprising, sometimes unsettling, yet optimistic.

- Youth in Kingston felt helped but not heard, with 77 per cent stating they "were not aware of any formal ways to voice their opinion and collaborate with adults."
- When asked how to make Kingston a more youth-friendly city, the second most common answer was about "improved relationships between youth and adults."
- Some 50 per cent of youth surveyed had experienced bullying, and 73 per cent had witnessed homophobia or transphobia.
- When asked about the most pressing issue affecting youth in Kingston, addictions/substance use and abuse was identified.

Strategy, Support and Actions: All the information collected by Y2K was then incorporated into policies and strategic goals in a document entitled *The Kingston Youth Strategy and Community Action Plan*. The Kingston Youth Strategy was categorized into four major categories or Action Tables:

- Programs and Opportunities
- Health and Wellness
- Environment and Spaces
- Youth Voice

On September 10th, 2013, the document was presented to Kingston City Council, and councillors voted unanimously to endorse the strategy and provide some funding for the co-ordination of its implementation. A collaboration of organizations received a three-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to support the Action Tables, which are clusters of organizations, government departments, businesses and youth working to implement recommendations in each of the four activity areas. The Community Foundation for Kingston & Area also provided funding to assist with activities in the Health and Wellness action area.

In addition to writing the Strategy, Y2K has been prominent in the community, organizing "Adult Ally" training for organizations, Day of Pink flash mobs, and marches against bullying. Y2K representatives also spoke at an international conference in Ottawa on Child Rights in May, and are currently represented at the Kingston Roundtable on Youth Homelessness.

Social media is used extensively for communications with the use of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The Y2K web site at www.studentscommission.ca/y2k/ provides information on the Y2K initiative and *The Kingston Youth Strategy and Community Action Plan* document is available for download from this site.

On-going Work: On Friday, August 22, 2014, Y2K hosted a joint event with the Kingston Community Health Centres to celebrate the end of summer. 'Kickin' it Karnival Style at the Wally' took place at the Wally Elmer Youth Centre in Kingston's north end, with accessible and cost-free programming such as inflatable obstacle courses, skate park, henna tattoos, and a BBQ.

This event was organized by Y2K's two summer students – Noor Huda, 17, and Sam Franklin, 19, who worked alongside the Collaborative Action Steering Team (CAST) Coordinator, Lisa Pennock, to help communicate Y2K's goals and purpose in the community. CAST was the key co-ordinating force for engaging youth and the 40 organizations in creating the strategy and CAST heads up the Youth Voice Action Table. Y2K was able to hire the two full time summer students after receiving a Canada Summer Jobs grant.

Youth Forum: This coming fall, Y2K is using its various grants to assist in further implementation of the Strategy and Community Action Plan. The Youth Adult Partnership Team (YAPT), which is the collaboration of 40 organizations that supported CAST in the beginning, will be meeting to decide on which recommendations to prioritize for action in their next stages. Members of YAPT are joining each of the four Action Tables, and new members are being recruited and welcomed. **A major fall event will be The Youth Forum on Civic Engagement which is scheduled for October 22, 23 and 24, 2014.**

Core Principles: In order to realize the priority recommendations, there are four principles that are at the core of all Y2K actions.

- Enhance youth voice, inclusion and positive interactions between youth and adults.
- Increase communication, collaborative action and leveraging of existing resources among community stakeholders and the city.
- Improve program accessibility and equity of services for young people of all ages (transportation, cost, services, programs, employment).
- Develop programs and services to address current gaps identified by young people.

For the past two years, Kingston has modeled youth engagement municipally and has stated its commitment to doing so in the future. This investment will help Kingston become a stronger city, and a better place to live. As with a tree, the nourishment provided through the roots of Y2K results in a strong and vibrant trunk and a flourishing canopy for youth and young adults to live and thrive in our community. Y2K shows what great things can happen if youth and adults come together.



Maddy Ross,
Y2K Collaborative Action Steering Team Member

Maddy, 17, has been involved with the Y2K project since its inception in 2011. Playing a role in the facilitation, data collection and writing of the Strategy, Maddy has been an active champion of Y2K in the Kingston community.

“Being involved in the CAST of Y2K has totally changed my life. Y2K has made me feel how important I am as well as every individual in this world ... the feeling of being heard makes me feel important and that I matter... The CAST of Y2K...is a place where we build the dreams of every teenager here in Kingston.” (Youth CAST member)



Community Vitality

Vital Communities are characterised by strong, active, and inclusive relationships between residents, private sector, public sector and civil society organisations that work to foster individual and collective wellbeing. These relationships help communities to create, adapt and thrive in the changing world. (CIW)

The CIW report identified two indicators to measure Community Vitality: percentage of people who volunteered in the previous 12 months, and their sense of belonging to the community.

Volunteering

The analysis revealed that people with a high level of civic engagement volunteer significantly more than those who are Somewhat Engaged or Not Engaged.

Percentage of people who volunteered in the past 12 months



75.5 per cent of the Highly Engaged



58.4 per cent of the Somewhat Engaged



30.9 per cent of the Not Engaged

In KFL&A 80 per cent of those Highly Engaged in their community volunteer BUT, only 19 per cent report that they are Highly Engaged! **We can certainly do better.**

The 2010 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (CSGVP, Statistics Canada) shows that:

In 2010, the volunteer rate for Kingston (city) was 37.9 per cent. This figure is 9.1 percentage points lower than the national level (47.0 per cent) and 9.8 percentage points lower than the provincial level (47.7 per cent). The volunteer rate decreased 23.6 percentage points from 61.5 per cent in 2007.

To put it simply, in Canada overall 1 in 2 Canadians volunteered, in Kingston only slightly over 1 in 3. **We are lagging behind!**

Bridging the Gap, prepared by **Volunteer Canada** in 2010, examined ways to encourage volunteering in organizations. Its recommendations to organizations ...

- Design clearly defined roles and then be open to volunteers determining the scope of what they can offer.
- Be well organized but not too bureaucratic.
- Match skills to the organization's needs, but do not assume that everyone wants to use the skills related to their profession, trade, or education.

And then there is informal volunteering:

The CSGVP (2010) revealed that more than 8 in 10 Canadians informally volunteered, what we are calling Acts of Community. **Go to page 5 of this report for Acts of Community.**

United Way "Volunteers Grow Community" annual recognition event

Each year during National Volunteer Week, the United Way KFL&A Volunteer Centre honours people in our region who demonstrate their generosity of time and spirit to make a difference through volunteering with local not-for-profit organizations or groups.

"Rates of volunteering are consistently higher in rural and less urban regions." That is, the *Area* in the CFKA name.

(*Volunteering in Canada*. Statistics Canada, 2012)

"We live in the boonies several km from the nearest town or city. Wellbeing for us means watchful neighbours and volunteer drivers ... which we love." (Survey respondent comment)

The Cormier Family

Nominated by Big Brothers Big Sisters



A well-deserved bow by the recipients as the KFL&A United Way Volunteer Centre handed out "Volunteers Grow Community" awards on April 7, 2014 with the Cormier family starting 2nd from the left.

As a single mother, Kim and her three children Madison, Paige and Karter, moved to Kingston a few years ago so Kim could attend school at St. Lawrence College. With the transition to a new community, a very busy schedule, and trying to maintain a family life, Kim sought the services and support of Big Brothers Big Sisters, for her children.

The Cormier family is a shining example of a family volunteering, together. Madison, Paige and Karter have learned through the positive influence and dedication of their mother, what it means to give back. As a family, they volunteer their time at all of the agency's special events. No job is too big or too small.

KFL&A United Way reported that 3,364 students volunteered 15,326 hours during the 2014 *Change the World: Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge* which represents an 85 per cent increase in youth volunteers and an 83 per cent increase in volunteer hours over 2013. This is an impressive achievement!

Behaviours started in early years are more likely to be carried on in later years. The KFL&A United Way supports the *Caring for Others* programme for Grade 4 students with the intention of showing "children that they too can have an impact on their community and show them how they can make a difference in the lives of others." Every small **Act of Community** is important and valued by others. An important lesson.

Chris Cannon helps make our municipality a better place to live...



Chris is currently on the City of Kingston's Committee of Adjustment, which she joined in 1998, following terms as chair of the Township of Kingston Planning Board and the Township of Kingston Committee of Adjustment.

"I applied for and was accepted to the Township of Kingston Planning Board many years ago. It was the first time that I can recall where the township actually advertised for members of the Planning Board. Before that, the Planning Board seemed to be a private fiefdom."

"I sought a chance to have input to what our municipality would look like, and sought to have sound planning principles be applied to land use decisions.

"It was also a great opportunity to exercise leadership and learn from others who were on the committee."

Chris was "the first voice protest" to protect Lemoine Point from development. A long-time involvement with Little Cataraqui Environment Association led to terms on the Boards of the Cataraqui Conservation Foundation and the Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington.

Community Report Card

One of Vital Signs® objectives is to report on trends shown by the indicators used to measure quality of life in our communities. Since this is our sixth annual publication and Statistics Canada has provided updated data, it is now possible to show improvements (and, unfortunately, some deteriorations) over the last several years in our quality of life.

Where data are available, they are presented for Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington (KFL&A). If not, they are for Kingston Census Metropolitan Area (CMA).

We're improving ...

- ▼ **Immigrant unemployment is decreasing.** In 2011, the unemployment rate of recent immigrants (i.e., entered the country within the last five years) was 8.8 per cent in Kingston (CMA), down from 14.7 per cent in 2006.
- ▼ **Smoking continues to decline.** In 2012, the percentage of KFL&A residents 12 years + who identified themselves as smokers was 18.9 per cent, 2.1 percent below the national average. The rate had dropped by 7.1 from 26.0 per cent in 2003.
- ▲ **Physical activity is up.** In 2013, the percentage of KFL&A residents 12 years + who reported being at least moderately physically active during leisure time had risen to 55.6 per cent, up from 52.6 per cent in 2003. This was also 10.7 per cent above the national level of 55.2 per cent.
- ▼ **Child poverty declines slowly.** In 2012, the child poverty rate in Kingston (CMA), based on the Low Income Measure, was 16.3 per cent, down 3.1 percentage points from 19.4 per cent in 2001. This was 14.6 per cent below the national average of 19.1 per cent.
- ▼ **Single-parent family poverty rate is high but declining slowly.** In 2012, the poverty rate of single-parent families in Kingston (CMA), based on the Low Income Measures was 30.7 per cent, down 2.7 percentage points from 33.5 per cent in 2001. This was 4.5 per cent lower than the national average of 32.2 per cent.
- ▼ **Young adults living at home declines.** In 2011, 32.4 per cent of young adults aged 20-29 lived in the parental home in Kingston (CMA), down 3.7 percentage points from 36.1 per cent in 2006. This is 76.6 per cent of the national rate of 42.3 per cent.
- ▼ **Violent crime continues to decline.** At 1,011 per 100,000 persons in 2013, the violent crime rate in Kingston (CMA) decreased 6.7 per cent from 2012.

Trends that are headed in the wrong direction ...

- ▼ **Immigrants are not choosing Kingston.** The proportion of foreign-born population living in Kingston CMA in 2011 was 11.8 per cent of total population, a decline of 0.6 per cent from 12.4 per cent in 2001. The provincial equivalent is 28.5 per cent.
- ▲ **Obesity continues to increase.** In 2013, 25.4 per cent of those 18 years + in KFL&A reported being overweight or obese. This is up from 20.2 per cent in 2008 and is 35 per cent above the national average.
- ▼ **Charitable donors declined.** In 2012, the per cent of tax filers in Kingston (CMA) who were charitable donors declined to 25.7 per cent. In 2002, 29.2 per cent of tax filers contributed. The median donation in 2012 was \$310, up from \$240 in 2002.
- ▲ **Sexual assault continues to be a problem.** At 90.3 per 100,000 persons in 2013, the sexual assault rate in Kingston (CMA) increased 15.5 per cent from 78.2 per 100,000 in 2001. The rate was 49.0 per cent above the national average of 60.6 per 100,000.



“Kingston faces less favorable economic circumstances in the future. We can sit back and accept this evaluation or try to actively influence our future. More community engagement and more political involvement will each have to play significant roles in any such action.” (Dr. Peter Kirkham, retired economist and former Chief Statistician, Statistics Canada)



How did our economy perform in the last several years... and what does the future hold?

Surprisingly, from 2000 to 2014, Kingston enjoyed a relatively stable period of economic growth (about 1 per cent per year) and avoided the effects of the 2008 meltdown. Median family income increased by 3.2 per cent per year. Since the general price level rose about 2 per cent per year, Kingston families, on average, had a real gain in family income of about 1.2 per cent per year. We did not have shrinking real incomes that so many other economies experienced. And, the potential labour force grew at 1.1 per cent per year.

This economic performance is partially explained by the structure of our economy. Between 45 per cent and 50 per cent of our economy is comprised of government-supported activities: education (16 per cent), health care and social assistance (17 per cent), public administration (8.6 per cent) and the large presence of the military.

This economic structure is a double-edged sword: on the one hand it protects the city in an economic downturn; on the other, it means our fate, to a large degree, rests in the hands of other levels of government. To offset this vulnerability, given future constraints on government budgets, our community needs to diversify its economy and attract more productivity-enhancing activities.

In the short term, the Conference Board of Canada reported Kingston's economy is expected to see growth from 1.2 per cent in 2014 to 1.8 per cent in 2015 (which would be its strongest gain since 2010).

Build it and they will come?

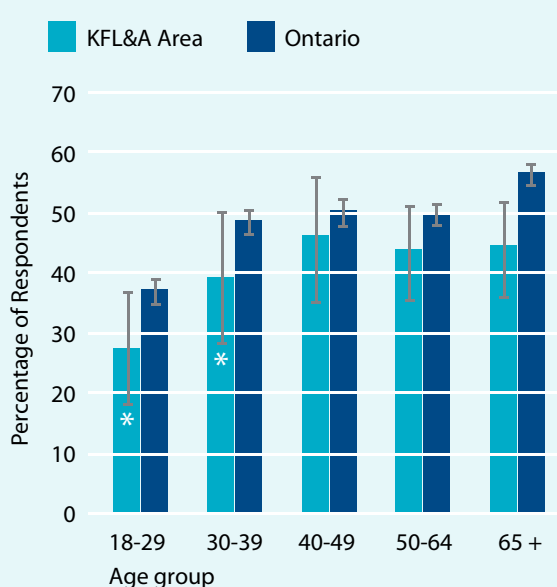
Participating in **regular physical activity** can provide a variety of health benefits across all age, gender, ethnic and socioeconomic subgroups. Physical activity can improve body composition, cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness, academic achievement, self-esteem and social behaviours.

Figure 1 shows that just under half of adults aged 40 and over in KFL&A were inactive (=> 1.5 kcal/kg/day energy expenditure) in 2011/12. However, the percentage of inactive adults aged 65 and over in the KFL&A area is lower than Ontario, which is encouraging.

Figure 2 displays the usage of recreational and cultural opportunities by respondents in 2013 from the KFL&A Community Wellbeing Survey. It shows that KFL&A residents access a wide variety of recreational and cultural facilities in the KFL&A area, with parks and the public libraries being accessed most often by residents. However, this figure also highlights the fact some of these facilities such as outdoor rinks, splash pads and the visual arts and performing arts, are used by less than 10 per cent of the respondents.

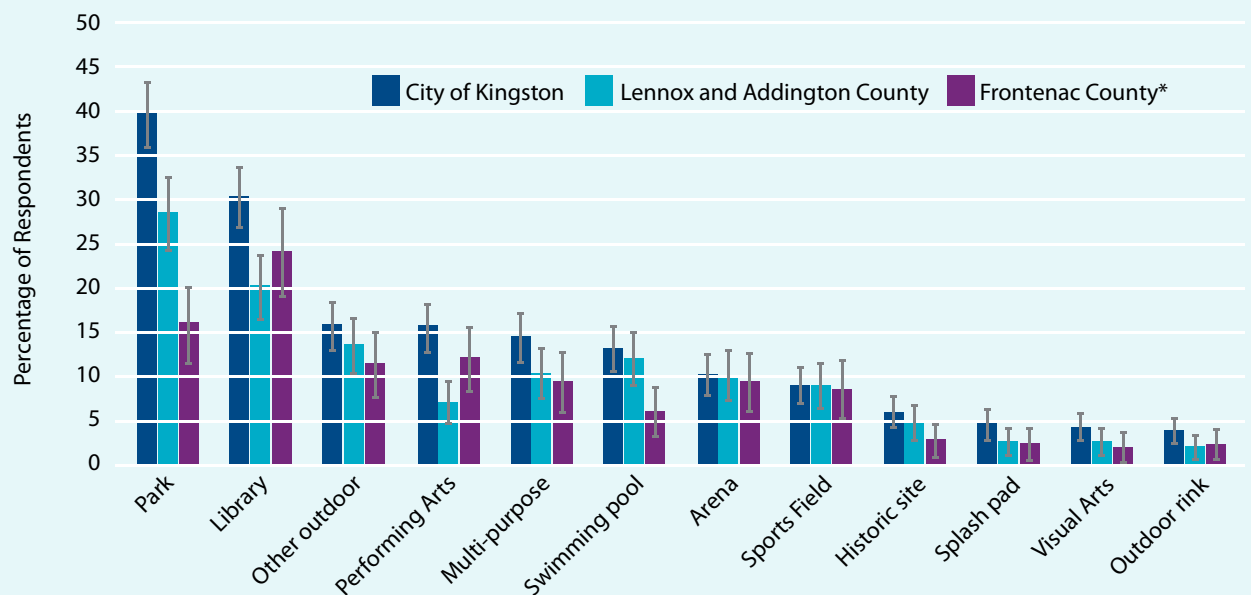
Other survey data (not shown) shows that 56.7 per cent (53.9-59.3) of KFL&A residents aged 18 and over in 2010 used any recreation facility at least once in the previous year.² The percentage of those who use recreational facilities decreases with increasing age. There is an opportunity to increase physical activity levels of adults by encouraging greater use of recreational facilities in KFL&A, especially as one ages. About three quarters of KFL&A residents aged 18 and over were aware of walking, biking and nature trails in the KFL&A area in 2010, and about 59.9 per cent (56.1-61.9) of residents use these trails.³

Figure 1. Percentage of adults who are inactive by age group in KFL&A area and Ontario, 2011/12



*Use with caution due to high variability of the data within these two age groupings. I = (in the graphs) represents the 95 per cent confidence interval. Source: Canadian Community Health Survey 2011/12, Statistics Canada, Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Figure 2. Regular use of recreational and cultural facilities in the KFL&A area in the previous year, by region of residence, 2013



I = (in the graphs) represents the 95 per cent confidence interval. *Frontenac County does not include the City of Kingston in this analysis.

Source: KFL&A Canadian Index of Wellbeing Survey 2013, University of Waterloo.

The KFL&A Community Wellbeing Survey found that people who are highly civically engaged use the visual arts and performing arts more frequently than do those who are not civically engaged.⁴ In addition, those who are highly civically engaged report greater satisfaction in their overall feelings of community vitality and overall health than those who are not civically engaged. This highlights the importance for all residents to continue to be involved in the community and increase their usage of recreational and cultural opportunities in the KFL&A area.

These issues that face our community – modest civic engagement, low utilization of resources, inactivity leading to poor health and an aging population – have complex and interconnected causes. To address them, we must change our ways and foster a community response. And just, perhaps, with the way we shape and build our community, they will start to come.

Suzanne Fegan, Epidemiologist, Knowledge Management Division, KFL&A Public Health

1. Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology. Canadian Physical Activity, and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines [document on internet]. Ottawa (ON): Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology; 2012. [cited 7 Aug 2014]. ISBN 978-1-896900-30-8. Available from: www.csep.ca/english/view.aspx?x=804
 2. Facts & Figures: Recreational Facility Use. Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS) 2002-2005 and 2007-2010, KFL&A Public Health
 3. Facts & Figures: Recreational Trails Awareness and Use. Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS) 2002-2005 and 2007-2010, KFL&A Public Health
 4. Phillips, K., Hibrech, M., & Smale, B. (2014). Civic Engagement and Community Wellbeing in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington. A Report Based on the results of the CIW Community Wellbeing in KFL&A. Waterloo, ON: Canadian Index of Wellbeing and University of Waterloo.

Want to improve your wellbeing and your community's wellbeing?

Of course, you do! The evidence is in:

Highly civically engaged residents have a higher quality of life than people who are less civically engaged.

Highly civically engaged residents are generally more engaged in other areas of life: they volunteer more, do more to help the environment, and use community facilities more often than less engaged residents. They are also more interested in local politics, feel a stronger sense of belonging to the community, and report higher satisfaction across all domains of wellbeing. But, that is only 19.1 per cent of the residents of the KFL& A. **Almost 40 per cent of residents could improve their wellbeing by engaging in more Acts of Community.**

Acts of Community

A Civic Engagement Pyramid (after NABUUR.com)



Here is Odile Burume's story.



Odile's family came to Canada 6 years ago from the Democratic Republic of Congo, settling in Ottawa first, where she had her first experience with volunteers at the local community centre: "They were warm, welcoming and made everyone feel included."

Salvation Army volunteers moved her family to Kingston, and the First Baptist Church helped them make the adjustment to their new city. Stephen Kirby, who befriended the family, "along with Kingston Community Health Centres – Immigrant Services (ISKA), helped my family settle in and feel part of the Kingston community. All these people helped my family willingly and without expecting anything in return. They were kind and generous and soon introduced me to the youth group. It really helped me. I met new people, made new friends, got help on my homework and had fun."

“After all my experiences with volunteers, I'm now giving back to my community. I have been involved with different events with ISKA... Volunteering is a great experience which I think everyone should do. You build communication skills, learn about teamwork, and help your community become a better, safer place.”

How engaged in your community are you?

See how many activities you are already doing, and challenge yourself to do a few more. **Check it off when you do it!**

Lead

1. Get your name on the ballot for local, provincial or federal elections.
2. Organize a block BBQ celebration.
3. Organize a community table at a restaurant.
4. Serve on the board or stand for office in a local organization.
5. Chair a committee in an active charity or non-profit community service organization.

Act

6. Vote!
7. Be active in your community school, neighbourhood, civic, or community association.
8. Be active in a local service club or fraternal organization.
9. Provide some emotional support or counselling for someone who is showing stress in their life.
10. Teach, coach or tutor someone who wishes to improve their skills.
11. Provide childcare for someone who wishes to perform an **Act of Community**.
12. Volunteer for an organization, political party, etc.
13. Participate in a demonstration or protest.
14. Contact your local council member or municipal official about a local issue.
15. Write a letter to the editor of the newspaper about a local issue.
16. Do some essential paperwork; e.g., pay bills, banking, fill out tax forms for someone who needs assistance.
17. Take some time today for personal development; e.g., meditation, practice a musical instrument.
18. Be active in your union or professional association.

Care

19. Help a friend or neighbour with chores they are having difficulty getting done; e.g., cook a meal, weed the garden, shovel the snow.
20. Help someone get their essential errands done by driving to shopping, medical appointments, etc.
21. Visit a relative.
22. Make a new friend.
23. Nurture an existing friendship/relationship.
24. Check in on a neighbour today.
25. Give an egg to a desperate neighbor who is in the middle of making a recipe and is in need.
26. Participate in a community-wide event; e.g., pick up litter day, earth day.
27. Participate in local events to protect the local environment.
28. Socialize today with family, friends, or neighbours.
29. Go for a walk or a hike in a local conservation area or park.
30. Try a new thing today.
31. Join a recreation organization; e.g., sports club, health club.
32. Join a cultural organization; e.g., book club, theatre group, choir.
33. Join a public interest group; e.g., food security, environment, homelessness.
34. Babysit your neighbour's kids / grandchildren.
35. Sign up at the local volunteer services agency to let organizations know that you are available.
36. Write a letter to a local friend.
37. Listen to someone / be a good listener.
38. Attend synagogue, church, mosque, etc. or participate in a related activity.
39. Attend a municipal council meeting.
40. Attend a Ward or neighbourhood meeting.

41. Attend a local planning meeting or open house.
42. Join a Facebook page on a local issue.
43. Play a sport – on a team or with an informal group.
44. Use your public library.
45. Visit an historic site in your community today.
46. Attend a cultural event; e.g., festival, art exhibition, dance or theatre performance, concert.

Be Aware

47. Hang out on the front porch or over the fence with your neighbours.
48. Share flowers from your garden with a neighbour.
49. Borrow a cup of sugar for a baking project.
50. Meet and greet your letter carrier.

Now add your own new acts of community:

51. _____
52. _____
53. _____
54. _____
55. _____
56. _____

Share your Acts of Community on Twitter #CFKActs



We thank the following sponsors who have generously supported this Vital Signs® 2014 report



We wish to extend our thanks and gratitude to the many who assisted with this report including the following:

Vital Signs®

Community foundations taking the pulse of Canadian communities.

Vital Signs® is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities, identifies significant trends, and supports action on issues that are critical to our quality of life. Special thanks to the Toronto Foundation for developing and sharing the Vital Signs concept and Community Foundations of Canada for supporting a coordinated national Vital Signs initiative.



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For more information visit: www.vitalsignscanada.ca

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The Canadian Index of Wellbeing, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences, University of Waterloo created a new index, Civic Engagement, in order to explore the 2013 survey data further and specifically the relationship between KFL&A's residents' level of civic engagement and selected indicators associated with wellbeing.

The CIW's methodology and analysis is provided in the reports "*Civic Engagement and Community Wellbeing in Kingston, Frontenac, Lenox & Addington*", June 2014 and "*Technical Supplement to Civic Engagement and Community Wellbeing in KFL&A*", August 2014. The results were used throughout this *Vital Signs®* report.

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Community Foundation for Kingston & Area

The Community Foundation for Kingston & Area is an independent, local charitable organization, founded in 1995. We strengthen our community by connecting charitable giving to community needs. The Foundation encourages individuals and organizations to establish and help grow permanent endowments, which allows us to invest in our community in perpetuity.

Funds are invested and income earned is used to provide charitable grants. To date, the Foundation has distributed over \$8 million dollars.

Your community makes you and you make your community.

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The reports from the CIW together with other reference sources used in preparation of *Vital Signs® 2014* are provided at the Community Foundation's web site at: www.cfka.org/publications/vital-signs.

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