



OAKVILLE
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
all for community.

2011

PERSPECTIVES

Oakville Community Foundation's **VitalSigns**[®]

WHAT MAKES A COMMUNITY SUCCESSFUL?

As we see it, it starts with engaging people around shared values, encouraging the exchange of ideas, working toward a common set of goals and expectations, and cultivating a sense of unity and belonging.

In this report, we present the perspectives of numerous community leaders on three related issues which underpin a vibrant and strong Oakville: poverty, charitable giving & voluntarism, and mental health. We also share published statistics to explore the rippling effects related to each and formulate some trends to watch. By illuminating matters that often remain hidden, challenging perceptions, and promoting dialogue and action, we aim to create a clearer sense of our Town's needs, seek a strengthening of the ties among us, and hope to bring out the best that Oakville has to offer.

Unlike previous years, in which we covered 11 indicators of community vitality, our chosen focus this year on poverty, charitable giving & voluntarism, and mental health aligns with the findings of our 2008 and 2009 Vital Signs® reports and our recent strategic planning process. Through this exercise, we focused on what we believe to be Oakville's areas of greatest need and established where our involvement would have the biggest impact.

For over 17 years, the Oakville Community Foundation has played a leading role in convening people, ideas and resources to improve our quality of life. We thank the thousands of individuals and organizations whose tireless efforts have inspired a culture of caring and helped build the framework for a successful community.

While there is much to celebrate, even more remains to be done. By focusing on what unites us, rather than what sets us apart, we will sustain the kind of community we can all be proud to call home.

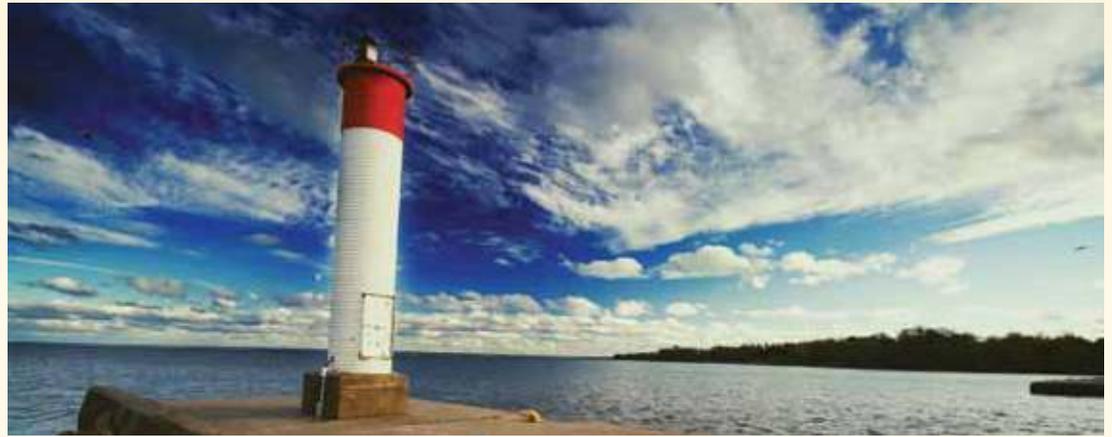

Rusty Baillie, CEO


Jim Rager, Chair



HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW OAKVILLE?

Understanding our town's composition is the first step to identifying patterns and the services people need. Research confirms that Oakville is young but aging, diverse, affluent, educated, and growing.



SIZE AND SCOPE

183,700

Oakville's population projection for 2011¹



1 IN 8

residents in Halton was a senior in 2009²

14,390

The number of new residential units planned for Oakville, between 2015-2031, slated for 6 growth areas – Midtown Oakville, Uptown Core, Palermo Village, Kerr Village, Bronte Village, and Downtown Oakville³

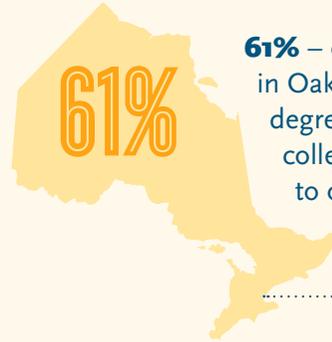


The projected increase in Oakville's population between 2006 and 2014⁴



12% between the 2001 and 2006 census years, Oakville's 0-18 population grew by 12%, during which time Ontario witnessed a 3% decrease for this age group⁵

FORCES AT PLAY



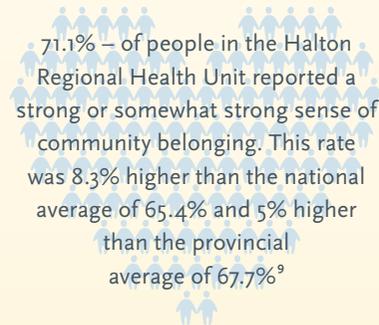
61% – of people aged 15 years or older living in Oakville have a certificate, diploma or degree through an apprenticeship, trade, college or university program, compared to only 51% in Ontario⁶



\$101,675

The median family income in Oakville for all families⁷

71.1% – of people in the Halton Regional Health Unit reported a strong or somewhat strong sense of community belonging. This rate was 8.3% higher than the national average of 65.4% and 5% higher than the provincial average of 67.7%⁹



LIVING LONGER

In Halton, life expectancy is above the Ontario average. For males it was 77 in 1990 and 80 in 2004 (vs 75 and 78 for Ontario). For females it was 83 in 1990 and 84 in 2004 (vs. 81 and 83 in Ontario)⁸



1 IN 3

Residents in Oakville is an immigrant. Nearly half (46%) of Halton's 100,000+ immigrants and over half (52%) of its 13,000 recent immigrants live in Oakville¹⁰

POVERTY

“The people we help are incredibly resilient and skilled at overcoming the material deprivation of poverty. What they need from the community is inclusion. They cannot overcome the social exclusion caused by poverty on their own. While they appreciate our assistance, having identity and a voice that matters are worth far much more.”

Colleen Sym,

Executive Director and Lawyer, Halton Community Legal Services

Oakville is an affluent community – one that provides an enviable standard of living thanks to our many natural and human-made amenities. But living in our midst are thousands of people, often unseen, for whom daily life is a struggle.

Those who work full time jobs at minimum wage but need to support a family... are under-employed due to a lack of recognition of foreign credentials... or living on fixed incomes from disability pensions, old age security, or social assistance... often cannot make ends meet and must choose amongst food, electricity, medication, shelter and clothing.

Research demonstrates that low-income Canadians are more likely to die earlier and suffer more illnesses than Canadians with higher incomes, regardless of age, sex, race, and place of residence. It also confirms that children and youth who have had a healthy start to life are more likely to stay in school, enter the job market, and be successful in their chosen profession later in life.” The conditions in which people are born, grow, work, learn and live – known as the social determinants of health – play a fundamental role in shaping their well-being.¹²

Poverty costs us all. Whether it's measured by our reduced employment pool and tax base and its negative impact on our competitiveness and productivity, the increased pressure on finite public expenditures for social services or health care, or the strain on the dignity that is an inherent right of humanity, poverty is a concern we can't afford to ignore.



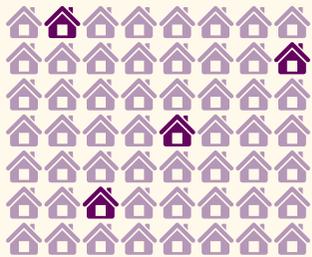


NO ONE CHOOSES A LIFE OF POVERTY. THEY'RE PUSHED THERE BY CIRCUMSTANCES...

"No one chooses a life of poverty. They're pushed there by circumstances beyond their control and forced to turn to a system that's too complex, inflexible, slow and uncaring to be effective. We need to find a better way to lift people up and put them on a sustained path to prosperity."

Marc Hamel, Co-Chair, Halton Poverty Roundtable

SIZE AND SCOPE



WHERE IS POVERTY?

The **7.5%** of households in Oakville that are low income are spread out across the Town.¹³ People in poverty can be our neighbours or those standing in line next to us at the grocery store or library

-\$369 the monthly shortfall faced by a single man, age 31, on social assistance¹⁶



TOTAL
INCOME
\$606



AVERAGE RENT
IN HALTON
\$731



COST OF
NUTRITIOUS DIET
\$244



LEAVING A
DEFICIT OF
\$369

1 IN 4 female lone parent families in Oakville lives in poverty¹⁴



↑22.3%

Based on the Low Income Measure (LIM), an indicator of relative poverty, the overall poverty rate in Oakville rose **22.3%** between 2001 and 2009, from **11.8%** to **14.4%**. This rate was **35.3%** lower than the provincial average of **22.2%** and **33.2%** lower than the national average of **21.5%**¹⁷



\$22,896 – the annual income a family of four receives from social assistance and additional benefits or credits¹⁵

FORCES AT PLAY

\$1.47

The amount Canadians spend for every dollar earned – putting families in record levels of debt, where the loss of a job or the onset of illness can trigger a descent into poverty¹⁸

27 YEARS

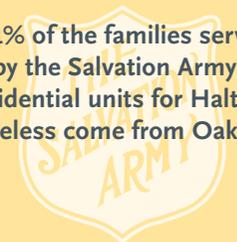
While the average wait time is 2.7 years, it would take a cumulative 27 years to accommodate everyone on the wait list for affordable housing in Halton¹⁹

13%

Demand for social housing by seniors is up 13%, yet their relative wait time is low at 1.8 years.²⁰ Seniors are also seeking access to Oakville's only homeless shelter in record numbers²¹

ALMOST ½

44% of the families served by the Salvation Army's residential units for Halton's homeless come from Oakville²²



“There’s a misperception that people coming to our food bank are all lazy or have mental health issues. Most are hard working and desire change but lack knowledge, opportunities or skills. Food helps to meet a physical need and shows the community cares, but it’s only the first step. Changing a life requires much more – like education, affordable housing, and money for transportation.”

Ben Ward,

Former Executive Director, Kerr Street Ministries



TENSIONS

3.6% – The rise in consumer prices in Ontario between June 2010-2011. This included a **34.4%** increase in the cost of gasoline and a **5.8%** increase in the cost of food purchased from stores.²³

GAPS

Transportation, even the public kind, can be unaffordable for a person in poverty. Relying on it to get to work (often to two or more part time jobs), take children to daycare, visit different foodbanks or other agencies scattered across the town is costly and takes a lot of time.

IDEAS

Have you ever wondered how difficult it can be to make ends meet? Take the **“Do The Math Challenge”**, hosted by The Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto.

<http://dothemath.thestop.org/>

“People don’t realize that they are only one step away from poverty themselves. An illness, divorce or job loss can start a downward spiral that forces them to seek help, even if they’ve never had to rely on the system before.”

Michelle Knoll,
Executive Director,
Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre

ACTION

Halton Food for Thought – In 2011, the Oakville Community Foundation channeled funding from four fundholders to a Breakfast Program supported by Halton Food For Thought. The program directly impacts 50 children in Oakville considered at-risk; addresses poverty prevention and child hunger through the provision of healthy food before school; engages ethno-specific, immigrant, youth and older adult volunteers; and aims to build a healthier community by encouraging children to establish life-long healthy eating habits.

To read about other external factors compounding poverty, gaps in services that people face, and additional ideas that have been implemented to combat it, please visit our website at:

www.theocf.org/VitalSigns/Poverty

CHARITABLE GIVING AND VOLUNTARISM

“Youth have a remarkable sense of social justice. There’s no one more passionate than a teen who has just discovered the inequity in society and who wants to correct it. It’s a fabulous opportunity for building leadership and a caring culture.”

Wayne Joudrie,

Former Director of Education, Halton District School Board

Oakville is a caring community. The sentiment is echoed by countless agencies, sports clubs, and faith congregations, and the scores of people whose contributions sustain them. Yet despite all the bake sales and car washes, sponsoring of friends to participate in events, and small gifts at the check-out aisles, the number of donations directly being given to charities is stagnant – and that’s cause for alarm.

In the wake of decreasing funds available from government grants, increasing costs and wages, and a growing demand for services particularly during tougher economic times, donors provide an essential source of revenue for the 250 organizations that constitute Halton’s non-profit and charitable sector. While these organizations provide invaluable services that immeasurably enhance our quality of life, they also employ approximately 5,000 people and engage approximately 20,000 volunteers. The sector directly contributes about \$188 million to Halton’s GDP, or \$240 million if you factor in the economic value of volunteer labour.²⁴

Voluntarism, itself, brings its own set of benefits. Research shows that individuals who were involved in community activities as youth or exposed to role models who volunteered tend to make much larger charitable donations as adults.²⁵ We also know that young people who are involved in their community report higher feelings of self-esteem and overall good health, and are significantly less likely to engage in sexual activity, violence, and use tobacco, drugs or alcohol.²⁶

Charitable giving and voluntarism are cornerstones of a vibrant community. It’s in all of our best interests to show that we care.





OAKVILLE IS A POWERFUL PLACE TO MAKE GOOD THINGS HAPPEN.

“Oakville is a powerful place to make good things happen. People care, are well educated, have a strong social conscience, and want to make a difference.”

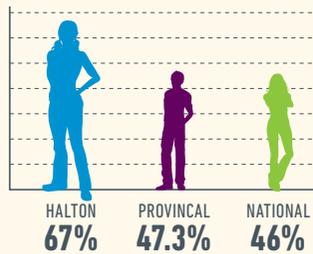
Grace Attard, Member, Oakville Community Foundation Board of Directors, and Founder, e-Spot™

SIZE AND SCOPE



Holding Steady – For each of the 2007, 2008, and 2009 taxation years, **31%** of Oakville residents reported making charitable donations on their tax returns²⁷

67% – of the population in Halton Region aged 15 and over volunteered their time through an agency, group or organization in 2007, compared to **47.3%** provincially, and **46%** nationally²⁸



38 million – The number of hours contributed by volunteers in Halton during the 12 month reference period of the 2007 Canada Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating. This is the equivalent of **20,232** full-time, year round jobs²⁹



= 1,000,000 volunteered hours

FORCES AT PLAY



WE'RE GENEROUS

31% of Oakville residents reported charitable gifts on their tax returns during 2007-2009, compared to approximately **25%** of Ontarians and **24%** of Canadians. The median gift was also larger – approximately **\$360** each year in Oakville, compared to approximately **\$310** in Ontario and **\$250** across Canada³⁰



We belong – **74%** of 12 year olds and **62%** of 15 year olds in Oakville reported a strong sense of belonging in their community³¹



>\$1 million The Oakville Community Foundation and its' Fundholders granted **\$1,037,668** in 2010, an increase of **77%** from 2009 levels³³



23% of charitable organizations report that their existence is at risk and **14%** are under high stress, according to a survey of 1,600 charity leaders across Canada³²

“The YMCA of Oakville’s annual Fill the Bus campaign experienced a significant shortfall this year, yet the need in our community is growing. We’ve bridged the gap with our own resources to send many deserving kids to camp who otherwise couldn't afford to attend.”

Darryl McKenzie, President & CEO, YMCA of Oakville



“While Oakville remains generous, we are beginning to see slight stagnation in overall giving.”

Barbara Burton, CEO, United Way of Oakville

ACTION

Random Act of Kindness Day – on November 4, 2011 the Oakville Community Foundation invites you to participate in Oakville’s first-ever “Random Act of Kindness” day. Spearheaded by the Foundation and delivered in concert with a broad range of groups from our charitable, non-profit, educational, youth, business, corporate, media and municipal sectors, our goal is to mobilize as many people as possible to do a good deed in our community. To find out more about this annual event or to get involved, visit www.theocf.org/RAK

TENSIONS

Financial insecurity – whether it is due to stock market performance or job insecurity, community leaders point to an increasing lack of confidence in the future that is causing current and potential donors to pull back, out of genuine concern for their own financial well-being.

GAPS

Revenues are stagnating and increasingly outpaced by expenditures – while government grants are limited or receding, and individual giving is declining, expenditures are on the rise. On average in Canada, total revenues for charities have decreased slightly while expenditures have increased by almost 5%.³⁴

IDEAS

Looking to volunteer locally?
Search for opportunities by visiting the Volunteer Halton website www.volunteeralton.ca or visit <http://search.hipinfo.info> to access a database of community services available in Halton, if there is a particular organization you want to connect with.

To read about other external factors affecting charitable giving and voluntarism, gaps faced by charities, and additional ideas that have been implemented to encourage philanthropy and involvement, please visit our website at: www.theocf.org/VitalSigns/CharitableGiving&Voluntarism

MENTAL HEALTH

“When we label it mental health, we may be doing ourselves a disservice. These are medical disorders that stem from abnormal neurophysiology. Our system fragments mental and physical health, yet they aren’t separate issues. The more we know, the more we realize that the mind/body split does not hold.”

Dr. Alan Brown,
Chief & Physician Program Director for the Dept. of Psychiatry,
Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital

Whether it’s a youngster’s anxiety about school, a teen with an eating disorder, an adult dealing with depression and perhaps an accompanying addiction, or a senior living with dementia, statistics show that 1 in 5 adults in Canada and 1 in 5 children and youth in Ontario will encounter a mental health issue in their lifetime.³⁵ Oakville’s experience can be expected to be no different.

Research indicates that 70% of mental health problems and illnesses have their onset during childhood or adolescence.³⁶ Evidence dictates that early intervention is best, and that if left untreated, youth are far more likely to be impacted negatively by health and social issues when they become adults.³⁷ Greater emphasis is being placed on developmental assets, or the positive experiences and personal qualities that youth need to grow up healthy, caring and responsible, and not fall into risky behaviours.³⁸ Many recognize the symbiotic nature of poverty and mental health. There’s also increasing awareness of concurrent disorders and a growing realization that the person is not to blame.

With a population that is aging and living longer, the number of people with dementia is also projected to soar, at a time when there will be relatively fewer young people in our community to care for them.

While pharmacological and behavioural interventions continue to make dramatic differences, many are now emphasizing that treating a mental illness is often as much about helping people learn how to cope with their personal stressors as it is about helping them with the condition itself.





I OFTEN TELL PEOPLE THAT RECOVERY COMES DOWN TO THREE THINGS:

"I often tell people that recovery comes down to three things: a home – so you can feel safe, a job or a role in life – which brings responsibility and belonging, and a friend – an ally you can trust. If we could get people these three things, we'd go a long way in ensuring people's mental health and well-being."

Amy Rogers, Information and Referral Specialist, Canadian Mental Health Association - Halton

SIZE AND SCOPE



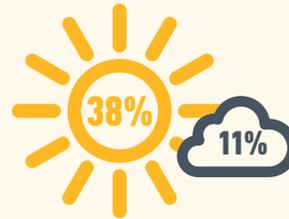
>1/day – Last year, police responded to approximately **500** calls in Oakville, related to mental health issues, which averages out to more than one call a day³⁹



43% – of children raised in low income, lone-mother families experienced some psychiatric disorders or schooling and social problems, compared to only **24%** of those in low income two-parent families⁴⁰



44% – over a 12-month period, **44%** of grade 10 students in Oakville reported at least one episode of binge drinking (five or more drinks on a single occasion) and **35%** reported using illicit drugs⁴¹



Over a 12-month period, **11%** of grade 10 students in Oakville reported thoughts of suicide, while **38%** reported high levels of positive mental health⁴²



1 in 11 – people in Halton (**9%**) aged 65 and over have dementia.⁴³ Each month, the Hamilton/Halton chapter of the Canadian Alzheimer's Society receives **200** new referrals.⁴⁴ The number of cases is projected to more than double in the next **20** years to **10,962** cases for Halton alone⁴⁵

FORCES AT PLAY



UP TO 2 YEARS

The length of time that children in Oakville, age six and under, can wait for mental health services from the Reach Out Centre for Kids in Halton, due to funding restrictions.⁴⁶ Approximately **600** clients in all age groups are waiting for treatment services and **150** for psychology services⁴⁷



1 IN 4

Employed caregivers report that their duties have resulted in moderate to high emotional strain, which is linked with poorer personal health, increased work-life conflict, lower levels of family well-being and reduced fertility⁴⁸



3-4 TIMES

Canadians in the lowest income group are **3-4 times** more likely than those in the highest income group to report fair to poor mental health⁴⁹



9.8M

People in Ontario age 15 and over reported providing unpaid care or assistance to seniors⁵⁰

TENSIONS

Stigma – 50% of Canadians would tell their friends or co-workers that they have a family member with a mental illness, compared to 73% who would discuss cancer and 68% who'd discuss diabetes.⁵¹

GAPS

Funding restrictions – While many agencies favour treating the whole family, not just a child or adolescent dealing with an issue, they are often unable to create programs for adults given that their funding is derived from government programs earmarked for youth.

IDEAS

1-877-825-9011 – The Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COAST) crisis line is available 24 hours, seven days a week, to assist Halton residents who are 16 or older and who have a mental health concern. Information is collected over the phone by a triage worker. If required, a mobile team can assess the individual, and ongoing telephone support is available to prevent further crisis.

ACTION

In 2011, the Oakville Community Foundation supported the Art Therapy Program at Danielle's Place, an Eating Disorder Support and Resource Centre that complements the traditional medical model of care through the provision of support, outreach and education. The Art Therapy Program allows participants to exhibit their thoughts, feelings and emotions by creating artwork. It offers a self-directed approach to recovery that aids participants in self-discovery and provides an outlet for their eating disorder.

“There’s a great fear associated with losing one’s cognition. This fear often prevents people from getting help.”

Mary Burnett,
CEO, Alzheimer’s Society of Hamilton and Halton



“I love what I do. It’s a privilege to have people entrust me with the most painful aspects of their lives. I am amazed at the ability that people have to heal. What happens ‘to’ people is often out of their control, especially when talking about a child. Most people have a great capacity to heal and cope... but everyone needs help.”

Dr. Angela Saunders,
Registered Psychologist and Head of Psychology,
Reach Out Centre for Kids

To read about other external factors compounding mental illness, gaps in services that people face, additional ideas that have been implemented to combat it, please visit our website at: www.theocf.org/VitalSigns/MentalHealth



WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

Building a strong and caring community is a bigger task than any one person, organization or level of government can achieve. It requires a vision for what can be – and for what shouldn't be – and the concern, wisdom and talents of many in order to affect positive and truly lasting change.

We hope that you are inspired to find a way to make a difference. Your responsibility, generosity and involvement, however large or small, will help build the social capital needed to enrich our collective future.

Please take the opportunity to share your perspective. Your participation will help us create the 'unity' at the core of a vibrant and vital Oakville **community**.

Visit www.theocf.org/VitalSigns to make your voice heard.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SOURCES

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We wish to thank our partners in supporting
the vision and mission of the OCF

For a complete list of all partners,
please visit www.theocf.org



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Vital Signs® is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities, identifies significant trends, and assigns grades in a range of areas critical to quality of life. Vital Signs® is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

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A complete list of the references can be found by visiting our website,
www.theocf.org/VitalSigns

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OAKVILLE
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FOUNDATION
all for community.

OUR TOMORROW

For local families, businesses and charities, the Oakville Community Foundation (OCF), receives and pools charitable gifts for endowments that benefit and strengthen the community at large. OCF endowments support a broad range of charities in areas of Arts and Culture, Health, Sports & Youth Leadership, Religion, Social Services, Education and Environment.

We act as a knowledge resource and catalyst, generating awareness of the issues and challenges in our own community. We bring people and organizations together to stimulate new ideas, build participation and strengthen community philanthropy.

We utilize publications such as our Vital Signs® report to help us identify and address issues and opportunities in our community. As of 2010, OCF has over \$43 million invested for the benefit of our community. In 2010, we are proud to have supported over 145 charities.



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA

OAKVILLE
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