



# Pandemic Working Group (PWG)

**Location:** Zoom

**Date:** Thursday, September 16, 2021

**Time:** 12:00pm to 1:00pm

## Agenda & Notes

| Agenda Item   | Notes  |
|---|--|
| <b>Food Bank of Waterloo Region</b>                 | <p><b>Food Bank Usage Trends</b></p> <p>Wendi Campbell attended and provided presentation on data trends of the Food Bank. <i>Link to Feed</i> is a Provincial database of food bank usage. Use data to communicate about high-need areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ 36% of individuals who are accessing food assistance were under age 18.</li><li>○ 1/20 households received food assistance in 2019.</li><li>○ 100 community programs are part of the 'food assistance network'. They are the ones with relationships to families.</li></ul> <p>Opened a call line during the pandemic to support people with barriers to accessing food supports. Started to expand out to other navigation supports for assistance. Interested in breaking down further barriers to accessing systems. Family Compass is one resource they refer to.</p> <p>Feel passionate about their role to help connect families and community to safe food systems, as well as other supports they may need.</p> <p>When CERB ends, expect Food Bank demand could raise by an additional 30%.</p> <p>Gaps – communications internally and consistently with networks in the community. Challenges with the amount of info that folks are bombarded by. Diverse community food needs. Working to proactively go out into networks to look for specific things (e.g., increase of Halal products) &amp; how to distribute equitably.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Alison to extend invite to Wendi/Food Bank staff to participate on the CYPT Data, Research and Evaluation Team.</li></ul> |
| <b>Welcoming Newcomer Families from Afghanistan</b> | <p>100 Afghan families now here in our community (along with other newcomers who have arrived from other countries). Roughly 50 children and youth.</p>  |



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|------------------|---|
|                  | <p>Since we last met, some folks are arriving without status (as they have come in via other channels besides Federal program). <b>If families from Afghanistan without status are showing up in programs they need to be directed to Reception House.</b></p> <p>Newcomers are split between 4 sites at the moment (some in uptown Waterloo, and downtown Kitchener).</p> <p>Finding housing, attachment to primary care, workforce opportunities are issues they are focused on.</p> <p>Where children are not able to register in school (as different boards have different rules), need to figure out programming split between different locations. The pandemic makes it very difficult (not as logistically straight-forward as the Syrian newcomer event).</p> <p>How can we help the children while families are being settled in? Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ what might it mean to remove some EarlyON co-horted blocks of time to offer to newcomer families. Roger St. location is about to re-open, could change the re-opening plan to support these urgent needs.</li> <li>○ Marie-Pierre shared a practice in Peel –dispatch of buses to certain schools.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Community Foundation</a> fund now launched with KW Community Foundation. It's a place community members can donate money to support resettlement efforts if of interest.</p> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tara to share social media posts that can be shared via org social media.</li> <li>- Tara to bring forward the offers from EarlyON to ED at Reception House.</li> <li>- Barb will follow up off-line with Tara re: child care.</li> <li>- Follow up with City reps who might be able to offer spaces. \</li> <li>- Group members to direct families from Afghanistan without status to Reception House.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Education</b> | <p>Erin from WCDSB shared it still feels like transition time. Thus far, 11 positive cases in their Board (available anytime on-line). <a href="#">Website is changing</a> (emphasis on equity-related content, as well as resources for parents re: <a href="#">return to school</a> time). Partners encouraged to visit. Event coming up via Catholic Community Foundation for parents.</p>   |



# Children and Youth Planning Table

of Waterloo Region

| Agenda Item                 | Notes   |
|-----------------------------|---|
|                             | Gabrielle from Viamonde updated that masks for JK/SK students are now mandatory.  |
| <b>Member Updates/Other</b> | <p>Kathy brought forward the discussions happening at Lutherwood re: proof of vaccination practices. Challenging where staff in community services are moving in and out of different settings.</p> <p>Jaime brought forward info re: staff vaccination – 85% are fully vaccinated. Looks like about 15% are working through accommodations.</p> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Topic for next meeting. Attestation policy. Practices and challenges.</li></ul> |
| <b>Vaccination Roll Out</b> |   |
| <b>Child Welfare</b>        |   |
| <b>Next Steps</b>           | <b>Next meeting:</b> September 30, 12pm to 1pm  |

## **Future Agenda Items**

- Health and wellness of the workforce
- Supports needed for children/youth/families during pandemic recovery
- FACS trends related to pandemic impacts