Children and Youth Planning Table
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Timely child and youth well-being data released by the Children and Youth Planning Table

Data Briefs from the 2021 Waterloo Region Youth Impact Survey are now available.

Waterloo Region, December 2021 – Without a doubt, the past year and a half has had significant effect on people across the globe. There is, however, very limited local data that paints a detailed picture of how children and youth have coped with these changes, and how these changes have shaped their understanding of their own well-being. The 2021 data briefs, alongside the 2020 YIS briefs, provide a much needed, snapshot of the lives of many children and youth in our community during this time.

The Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT) in partnership UNICEF Canada, Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), KW Community Foundation and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) at the University of Waterloo ran the Waterloo Region Waterloo Region Youth Impact Survey (YIS) (YIS) for young people in Waterloo Region through the Spring of 2021. The survey was an opportunity for young people in our community to speak to their own well-being. Data from the 1074 young people in Waterloo Region who participated completed the survey is now available.

The Waterloo Region Waterloo Region Youth Impact Survey asked questions across 9 dimensions of well-being based on the Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-being including belonging, mental and emotional health, connection to the environment and more.

Fast Facts:

- 1074 youth from diverse backgrounds completed the Waterloo Region Waterloo Region Youth Impact Survey between April 30 and June 5, 2021.

- A high number of respondents felt lonely and/or said they lacked social connection to others around them.
- Many respondents experienced discrimination, most frequently about their physical appearance or their sex.
- A growing proportion of respondents are self-assessing their mental health to be fair or poor.
- A notable number of respondents feel they have more school work than they can handle.
- Compared to 2020, more respondents said COVID-19 and social distancing had a negative impact on their participation. (79.8% of respondents).
- Overwhelmingly, youth in Waterloo Region are asking that the data actually be used to help make decisions in our community.

Next Steps:

- The CYPT's next steps include disaggregating the data, as well as working with young people in the community in co-creating meaningful actions to support the needs raised from the Youth Impact Survey.

Quotes from Respondents:

"We should…pay more attention to our mental health, as many people don't feel seen/heard or feel hopeless during covid. I think it's taken a large toll on all youth…"

"The pandemic probably has been the hardest on me. my anxiety definitely has gotten worse; not being able to be with family and friends, not being able to be around other people has been hard…"

"The biggest impact on my well-being is doing school online. I feel like I am not learning as much as I would be if I was in a normal school environment. "

About the CYPT:

The Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT) is a member-driven partnership with over 60 Voting Member Organizations across Waterloo Region. The CYPT works to improve the wellbeing of children and youth through a system of coordinated and effective services that are supported by capacity building initiatives. Recognizing the complex challenges and issues related to the well-being of children and youth, the CYPT operates through a collective impact model seeking to promote the shared vision of: **Happy, healthy children and youth—today and tomorrow.**