Children and Youth Planning Table
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NEW well-being data released by the Children and Youth Planning Table

Disaggregated Long-Term Physical or Mental Condition Snapshot from the 2021 Waterloo Region Youth Impact Survey is now available.

Waterloo Region, June 2022 – Disaggregated data from the Youth Impact Survey (YIS) focused on youth who identify as having a long-term physical or mental condition provides a much-needed snapshot of the lives of many children and youth in our community over the last year.

This Snapshot focuses on the information shared by youth who **identified as having a long-term physical or mental condition.**

The Children and Youth Planning Table's (CYPT) vision of happy, healthy children and youth— today and tomorrow, applies to all children and youth in our community. Given the importance of centering equity, social inclusion, and anti-discrimination in our belonging-related work, the CYPT is disaggregating the 2021 Youth Impact Survey across a variety of demographic and identity-based dimensions.

The 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 Youth Impact Survey for young people in our community 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 1,074 young people in Waterloo Region who participated completed the survey was published in December of 2021.

The YIS 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. The ultimate goal of the disaggregated YIS Snapshot Briefs is to provide members of our community with equity-focused insights that take into account the needs and interests of different groups of children and youth.

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Fast Facts:

- 1,074 youth from diverse backgrounds completed the Waterloo Region Waterloo Region Youth Impact Survey between April 30 and June 5, 2021.
- In total, almost one in 10 (9.3%) respondents identified experiencing discrimination due to their sexual orientation.
- Aggregate data suggests that 64.1% of all YIS respondents said they felt a very strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging to their community. **After disaggregating our data, we see that those only about one-third (36.8%) of respondents with a long-term physical or mental condition said they felt a strong or very strong sense of belonging**. About two-thirds (67.5%) of respondents with long-term physical or mental condition said they felt a strong or very strong sense of belonging.
- Self-assessed **mental health** also saw significant differences between the two groups. Only about two in 10 (23.1%) of youth with long-term physical or mental conditions described their mental health as more positive—a 36.4 percentage point difference from those with no long-term physical or mental condition.
- UNICEF Canada defines belonging as "feeling loved and supported and having mutually caring and respectful relationships."9 This love and support can come from many sources including friends, family, teachers, pets, and people in the community. Locally, when we think about belonging for children and youth, we recognize the importance of equity, relationships and attachment, and feeling valued, heard and included.

Next Steps:

- The CYPT has now disaggregated data along five subpopulations of young people and will continue to disaggregate the data and release three more Snapshots. We are also working directly with young people in the community in co-creating meaningful actions to support the needs raised from the Youth Impact Survey.

Quotes from Respondents:

"[There is] almost no way for kids with disabilities like me to be included, especially with COVID risks because of my health issues that put me at risk. I get left out of my community during normal times but especially this year."

—2021 YIS Respondent

"Need ways for disabled youth to be included and supported. We are left out and not considered (even this survey was impossible to do without my parent helping and many of the questions were very difficult for me to understand)."

—2021 YIS Respondent

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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.

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