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

Disaggregated Experiences of Homelessness 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 experienced homelessness 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 experienced homelessness or hidden homelessness.**

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.

Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region

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 (8.1%) respondents identified experiencing either homelessness or hidden homelessness.
- 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 less than half (48.3%) of respondents who identified having experiences of homelessness had a strong or very strong sense of belonging. In contrast, almost two-thirds (65.7%) of respondents who didn't have experiences of homelessness had a strong or very strong sense of belonging. This is a 17.4 percent point difference.
- Self-assessed mental health also saw differences between the two groups. Only about four in 10 (40.5%) of youth with experiences of homelessness described their mental health as more positive—a 15.9 percentage point difference from those with no experiences of homelessness.
- 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 six subpopulations of young people and will continue to disaggregate the data and release two 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:

"In my opinion, the most valuable things that the Region could do in order to help the community is take measures to control gentrification and build more affordable housing."

—2021 YIS Respondent

"There are vulnerable people whose lives have been impacted by the pandemic and housing is only becoming more expensive. In my area, there are two affordable housing projects in process while condos continue to pop up all over the place. This city needs to do better."

—2021 YIS Respondent

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 well-being 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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