Stormont Dundas & Glengarry Community Consultation on the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy

A Report from January 21st 2014

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Executive Summary

Giving a voice to poverty and its impact not only on individuals but also on the community was the goal of the January 21st, 2014 Community Consultation. This project was a collaborative initiative with Linking Hands (a project of the House of Lazarus), the Poverty Working Group & the Social Development Council of Cornwall and Area, the Eastern Ontario Health Unit and the office of Jim McDonnell MPP.

While other Ontario communities were selected for a provincial wide consultation our area was not included. Consequently we conducted a rural based consultation using the same format; the response was positive. Sixty three individuals representing a very broad demographic provided input with regard to poverty in Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry (S.D. & G.).

The consultation explored the following questions:

- Ontario's first strategy focused on children. Going forward should Ontario continue to have a specific focus? If so, who or what should be the focus?
- What is the most important thing the Government of Ontario can do to help reduce poverty? Is there an initiative that the government has implemented as part of the first Strategy that should be revisited?
- How can all levels of government, community groups, the private sector, and other stakeholders work together to better address the barriers that keep people from getting out of poverty (e.g. Access to employment, education child care, supports etc.)?
- Looking back at the last five years of Ontario's first Poverty Reduction Strategy, what worked well? What can Ontario do differently moving forward?
- When it comes to reducing poverty in Ontario, what would success look like in 15 years from now?

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis the Medical Officer of Health for the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, spoke on the negative effects of children living in poverty in our area. Data indicated that living conditions during the first 27 months of life, including the prenatal period were clear indicators of future health and success. He noted that poverty accounts for 20% of healthcare costs in Canada ($25 billion - $30 billion). Also he noted that spending $1.00 now will save $8.00 in the future.

For more information on related statistics please visit the following inks:

http://www.child-youth-health.net/english/publications-and-resources/

http://www.eohu.ca/health_matters/health_matters_e.php

The report captures the strengths and challenges of the consultation experience. The recommendations require cooperation between all levels of government and communities.

The report has conflicting opinions due to the nature of the event, and are topics that need to be further explored.

Executive Summary … Continued

Summary of Recommendations

1. Dr. Paul Roumeliotis' report provides compelling and comprehensive data that must be used in assessing and developing programs to be funded by the province. The data collected must form the basis for program development.

2. While reactive approaches have some merit in urgent situations they cannot be the norm. Programs that are highly detailed and highlight the return on investment of tax payers money are needed. Policy and program development must be non partisan and long term (5 - 25 year programs with regular review).

3. The provincial and municipal governments must take down the barriers that hinder cooperation and collaboration between government ministries, departments, agencies as well as the profit sector. We encourage the government to relax bureaucratic 'red tape' to allow quicker access to services and reduced wait lists.

4. Understand that urban, rural and small cities have different cultures and economic climates to support the success of sustainable programming and policy development.

5. Strong leadership is pivotal to sustain communities and the 'living local' concept by developing a sense of community ownership for all members regardless of economic status. The effort must engage all community members including the private sector, local government, agencies and organizations.

6. Support policies that encourage practical, ethical life & social skill development. Life skills include literacy, healthy living styles, parenting, relationship building, effective communication, leadership skills, job readiness and employability. These basic building blocks of resilient communities need to be taught to everyone and at all ages within our communities thereby creating individuals with a sense of identity and pride.

7. Continue to analyze the data from the local and provincial consultations to brainstorm innovative, practical, and applied solutions to local levels of poverty.

Included in the Appendices of this report are:

Appendix A lists the recorded comments from each table for each question. Nine major topics were identified as primary focus areas to be considered and sub topics were developed under these which can be found in Appendix A. The 9 main topics are: Education; Housing; Employment/Economy; Transportation; Community Building; Governance; Programs; Children and Parents and Health Care.

EOHU Eastern Ontario Health Unit BSEO Bureau de santé de l'est de l'Ontario

Health and Poverty
Dr. Paul Roumeliotis
Medical Officer of Health

When one talks about the effects of poverty, people tend to automatically think that it is related to material things like not having enough money to purchase a variety of items. However, poverty has been associated with more than that. In fact, it has been associated with poor health. Many studies have confirmed that the poorer one is, the less healthy he or she is. For example, a Canadian National Population Health Survey (1997) revealed that rates of chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, cancer and cataracts were higher among the poor as compared to those with higher income. The same survey showed that among 12-year-old children, the rates of very good health increased with the family income. It is also known that obesity is higher among the poorer as compared to the rich, and this, across all ages. A study in Winnipeg comparing rates of deaths in adults showed that the rates of premature deaths were the highest among the poorest population. Even life expectancy depends on poverty levels. The poorer have a lower life expectancy as compared to the richer. Reflecting the impact of poverty, a 2011 federal government report estimated that the poverty related illness accounts for about 20% of our overall health spending.

Another fact relates to access to health care and services. Poorer women report a lower rate of Pap Tests (screening for cervical cancer) and mammograms as compared to their richer counterparts. Even post heart attack care rates, consultation and investigation are lower in the poorer. It is important to note that these are Canadian data, where health care access is "universal".

Poverty is a determinant of health, and really is an example of how our environment or surrounding affects our well-being. There is no medical or biological reason that explains the different rates of illness. Other determinants include education level, race, family setting and status as well as where one lives. Often, the poorer have several factors working against them. For example, single-parent families tend to have very low incomes, live in poorer, less-serviced areas and tend to be more isolated. All of these factors together play a role in decreasing the quality of health.

Going back to poverty, I want to focus on the long-term effects of being poor. For adults, it does translate into higher rates of disease and premature death. Sadly, the American Cancer Society has characterized poverty as an official "carcinogen". Carcinogen means something that causes cancer. What about the effect of poverty on children? What a child is exposed to early in life can translate into long-term illness in adulthood. For example, low birth weight, which tends to occur in the poor more often, is now associated with increased rates of a whole slew of illnesses later in life as compared to babies born with a normal birth weight. Given these long term outcomes, it is especially vital that society understands the effects of poverty and works collectively to address this issue. I hope that after reading this, you have a better understanding of the relationship between health and poverty. Please pass the word around.

Ontario
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Jim McDonell, MPP/Député
Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry

Queen's Park Office:
Room 343, Legislative Bldg.
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A8
Tel. 416-325-2910
Fax 416-325-2917

Constituency Office:
120 Second Street West
Time Square
Cornwall, Ontario K6J 1G5
Tel. 613-933-6513
Fax 613-933-6449

E-mail: jim.mcdonellco@pc.ola.org
Website: www.jimmcdonellmpp.ca

March 28, 2014

SD&G Community Consultation – Poverty Reduction Strategy

I want to thank everyone who participated in our consultation on the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy session in Finch on January 21, 2014. I was extremely pleased to see the level of participation from all sectors, including local government, public health, education, the public and the local agencies who work every day to support the people of our community.

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis of the Eastern Ontario Health Unit started the day off with critical information that helped us understand some of the science behind the important issue of poverty and its impact on childhood development, overall health and life expectancy. His research also highlighted how our region compared to the provincial data, and specifically where we lagged behind. If we are going to win our war on poverty, we must understand the issues and determine where best to target our resources.
The session identified an abundance of data and feedback from the people who are on the front lines every day helping our most vulnerable and needy citizens. This report identifies many issues that are particular to our region, as well as those that are experienced across the province. I will ensure that this important information is put in the hands of the Ministry and I will work hard to ensure programs are put in place to achieve real change.

I want to thank the Social Development Council of Cornwall and Area, The House of Lazarus, the Poverty Working Group and the Eastern Ontario Health Unit for helping us put this forum together. As well, I would like to thank the South Nation Conservation Region for making their excellent conference facilities available for us.

Now we must take the next step towards realizing the needed changes that will improve the quality of life for ALL of our residents.

Jim McDonell
Member of Provincial Parliament
Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry

Bureau de Queen's Park: Bureau 343 • Édifice de l'Assemblée législative • Queen's Park • Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1A8 • Tél. 416-325-2910 • Téléc. 416-325-2917
Bureau de circonscription: Time Square • 120, rue Second Ouest • Cornwall (Ontario) K6J 1G5 • Tél. 613-933-6513 • Téléc. 613-933-6449
Bureaux - Satellites: Morrisburg et Winchester • 1-800-514-9660

A Message from the House of Lazarus

The Linking Hands network is a collaborative between several community agencies including the House of Lazarus, Naomi's Family Resource Centre, the Glengarry Interagency Group, the SD&G Libraries, the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, the municipal townships of North & South Dundas, and community members. Linking Hands is a project of the House of Lazarus that was initiated in April 2010 in response to our participation in the province wide social audit conducted by ISARC (Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition). Audit meetings were held province wide to explore the impact of provincial social policies on those who receive them, those who administer them and the municipal governments that oversee the community.

While the Poverty Reduction Strategy introduced in 2008 has brought awareness and some positive steps to reduce the impact of poverty to those living on a low income we have barely scratched the surface on reaching a solution, particularly in dealing with rural poverty. The nitial strategy focus was on children and this has provided a foundation on which to build a poverty reduction focus that is cross sector. Poverty affects everyone in the community in some way, introducing a strategy that focuses on building sustainable resilient communities is the only solution for effective and long term poverty reduction. This will require collaboration and cooperation between all levels of government, community agencies, businesses large and small, and community members. This strategy needs to be long term (25 year), non partisan, and based on current, relevant, and local statistics. It will require regular evaluations and adjustments based on updated statistical data and input from program and service providers.

As will be detailed in the attached report from our locally conducted Poverty Reduction Consultation event held on January 21st, 2014 in Finch ON, clear areas in need of exploration and funding were identified. Education, Housing, Employment/Economy, Transportation, Community Building, Governance, Programs, Children and Parents, and Health Care) are the corner stones for building a future where poverty is minimal. Also highlighted are some key starting points for consideration such as increasing early year programming for children, increasing life skills and practical education for our youth, increasing accessibility to health care and other basic needs resources, and increasing education and employment opportunities that are meaningful, relevant and long term. Achieving many of these goals will rely on a shift, lead provincially, in the way our society thinks about poverty; and that we all have a role to play in eliminating poverty.

Pauline Pratt
Executive Director
House of Lazarus

Once each group had rotated through each of the above questions, we set aside an additional 15 minutes for the groups to discuss the feedback.

We had a facilitator and a raconteur at each table to help guide the groups through the discussion questions and take notes to ensure that everyone's comments were recorded properly. The following is a summary of the notes taken from that meeting.

The notes were grouped together by topic and arranged into a more formal format. Recurring themes within the same category have been combined in order to avoid repetition. The ideas were then formulated into sentences and pieced together to form paragraphs. Research was then conducted in order to reinforce the points made at the forum. The sources are referenced and are made available in the bibliography and appendices section. The following is the summary of the findings.

A group of attendees at the event on January 21st 2014.

Findings - Question 1.

Ontario's first strategy focused on children. Going forward, should we continue to have a specific focus? If so, who or what should be our focus?

Are we only capable of one focus? A focus does not mean that we are forgetting about everything else. All of the issues at hand are interdependent; therefore, if we are capable of creating positive change in one important area we must continue because it will presumably lead to change in another area. By shifting our thinking of poverty from a charitable cause to a social issue, it is likely we will reduce stigma and aid disadvantaged individuals to overcome the challenges they face by establishing sufficient services to meet their needs. Seemingly, those living in poverty, children included, will benefit from this shift in thinking; however, we must continue to focus on children, as they are the next generation, and continue to examine other data to determine other suitable areas of focus.

As previously mentioned, there is still work to be done in regards to child poverty, therefore, the focus should continue. Early involvement with children is critical; children born into circumstances of poverty have a much better chance of reaching their potential and living a prosperous life with early intervention in potentially detrimental situations. It is imperative that we remember children aren't able to determine their circumstances or their need for assistance and therefore, they require suitable role models to demonstrate a healthy lifestyle for them. The group believes that programs should be put in place with a concentration on children and parents leading more active, outdoor lifestyles with the goal of increasing overall physical & mental health. Our suggestion was to gauge the efficiency of these programs by measuring through a research project that follows a group of children for 15-20 years ensuing program implementation.

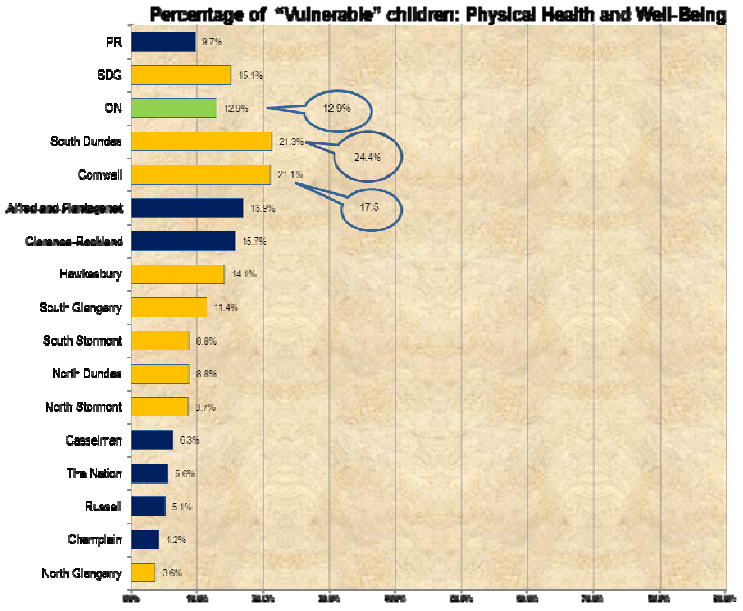
The focus on children should also be shifted to include an emphasis on parent and child health. This idea stems from the recognition that children and parents are interdependent, so by helping one group you ultimately increase the wellbeing of the other group. The provision of mandatory education in our education system

on self care, child care, and parenting for young men and women should contribute to a higher quality of life for individuals and families by increasing essential life skills and the sense of family responsibility. The group believes the importance of the prenatal stage of development should be recognized through policies that give the option of at least one parent to spend more time with the children during the crucial early years of development. The establishment of a policy that increases the option of parental leave from 24-27 months would aid in lowering family stress which would, in turn, assist in decreasing the amount of children living in stressful and tumultuous environments.

Implementing preventative care policies, which focus on issues like smoking, can improve individual health and wellness by recognizing risk factors and targeting potential illnesses that may arise. Being attentive to warning signs and risk factors can make healthcare more effective and less costly. The same preventative strategies should be taken in reference to the availability of free birth control and adequate sexual education; these devices will allow individuals to take responsibility for their sexual health and make informed decisions. We should be mindful that a meager effort gives a meager outcome.

"low education levels are linked with poor health, more stress and lower self-confidence."
- World Health Organization

Education is an extremely important factor in reducing poverty; the education of an individual not only affects all spheres of their life, it also affects the strength of their community. According to the World Health Organization, "low education levels are linked with poor health, more stress and lower self confidence." We should attempt to break the cycle of parents without post secondary education by teaching parents how to budget money for their children's education. By looking at programs implemented by other communities, we can build an effective plan to provide this information as well as practical life skills and home economics classes to permit and empower individuals to develop appropriate and mature coping skills.



Aside from the focus on children, it is imperative that fulfillment of basic needs, such as nutritious food and housing, become another area of focus. Proper nutrition, appropriate housing, accessible transportation, suitable employment opportunities, and income security are all issues facing people living in poverty especially in rural areas because they aren't able to access the resources in their urban centers without difficulty. By creating rural centers and in home programs, services will be more available and accessible transportation will be less of an issue for the rural population, especially seniors.

Furthermore, it was suggested that the implementation of a universal program for nutritious school meals or, at the very least, the provision of education and information on how to provide nutritious meals on a budget could contribute to increased access to nutritious food. Promotion and awareness of the current Green Food Box programs, as well as, an expansion of the program from a monthly initiative to weekly/ by weekly one could also have a very positive impact. The development of community gardens as well as an educative program that teaches individuals how to efficiently prepare the fruits and vegetables they are receiving or growing would also be a low cost way to provide people with wholesome foods.

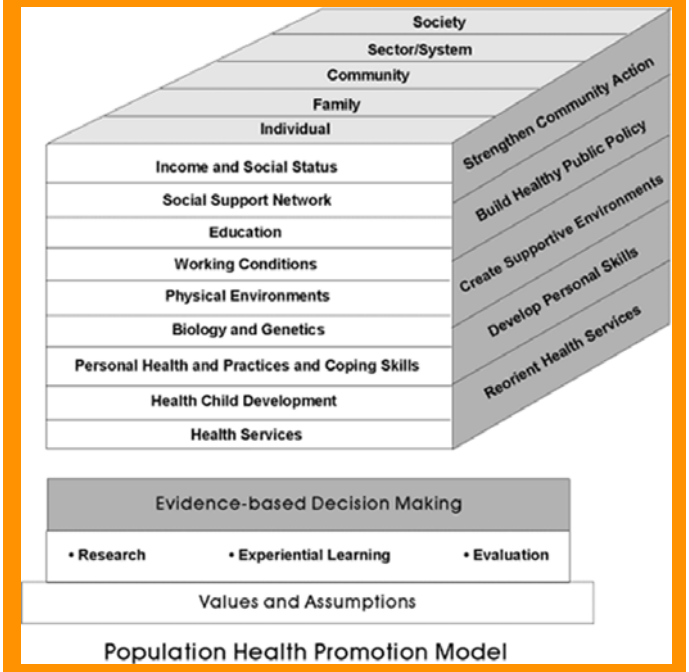
Lastly, the group believed governments and communities should be investing in universal programs to increase the economic development potential and create a more productive and sustainable population. By empowering people, from a young age, to reach their potential we will, hopefully, reduce individual and long term dependence on social services. A long term and continuous strategy that is enshrined in legislation will help to solve some of these problems.

"Can Ontario afford this?
Can Ontario afford not to do this?"

Findings - Question 2.

What is the most important thing The Government of Ontario can do to help reduce poverty?
Is there an initiative we implemented as part of the first strategy that we should revisit?

It is important that the Government of Ontario allow people to work by providing free daycare and early year initiatives that permit families and single parent households to adequately support their needs. Once children are ready to attend school, full time kindergarten programs in schools can be of great benefit to early childhood development. It is imperative that the education system no longer overlook the importance of practical skills training in schools. At the post-secondary level, application processes create barriers; these procedures need to be simplified and tuition reduction needs to be seriously investigated. Student loans are increasing due to tuition costs as well as the cost of living continue to rise; therefore, student grants need to continue because there are many students who do not qualify for OSAP loans or second career funding. Students with disabilities need ongoing support throughout their education; hence, we need to ensure the funding for Educational Assistants and in-school personal support workers continues to be available. The Ministry of Education should be accountable for children who require additional support to learn to their fullest potential by educating teachers to provide an alternate method of material delivery. A university in the Cornwall area would allow students to obtain an education closer to home which would ultimately aid students and their families to save money on housing and transportation. A university in Cornwall would also increase employment and economic opportunities in and around the city for all area residents.



Population Health Promotion Model

Under Article 25 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, every person has a right to an adequate standard of living which includes appropriate housing. By investing in good quality subsidized housing, we can ensure that more Ontarians have their basic needs met. Additionally, the poverty threshold should be lowered in order to provide services to those who do not meet the criteria and are living in substandard living conditions; programs like the Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit need to be reestablished and re-visited in order to raise the standard of living, as a family income of less than $20 000 is very low compared to other provinces. The provincial government should also create more income supplements for families raising children with disabilities.

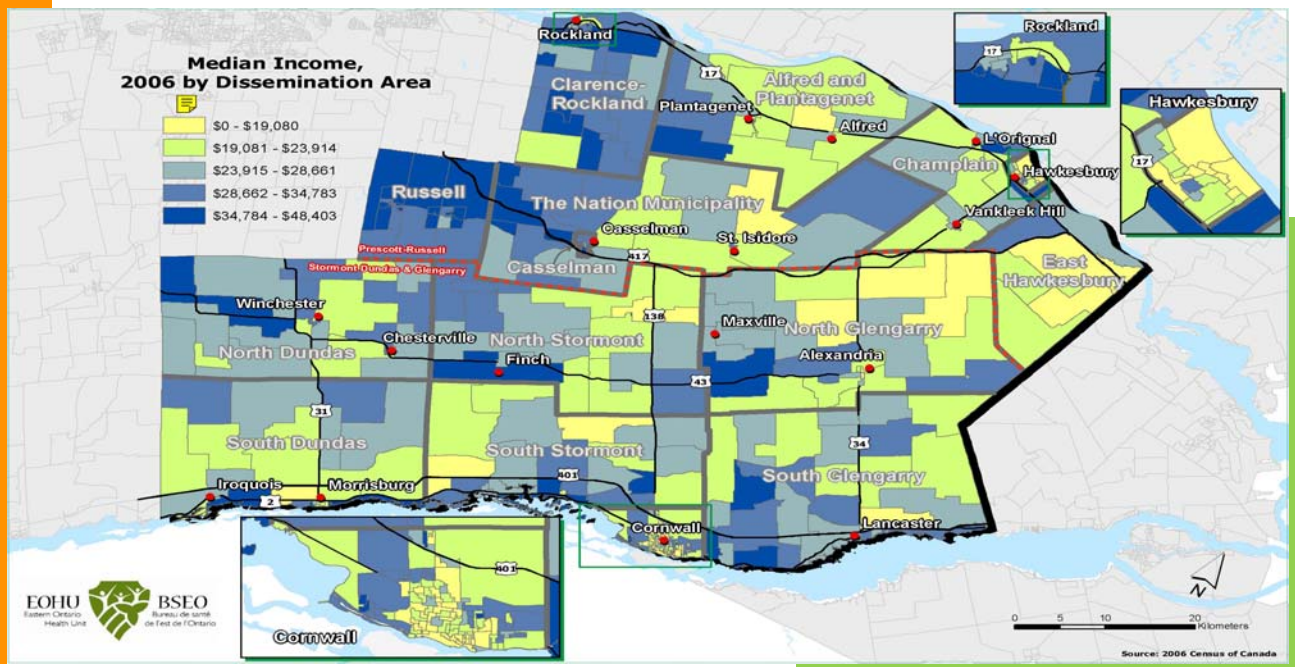
The government should make it a priority to focus on shifting societal thoughts on poverty by creating a banner that the whole community can support and be a part of in order to work towards reducing poverty. The cooperation of all levels of government is

essential to the success of this type of program. Provincial ministries need to keep working together to identify the needs of the population, to design solutions, and to create programs that are more reflective of the community needs. In response to the findings, our government needs to invest in our communities by shifting tax spending to fund programs that will benefit everyone equally. Local government and municipalities need to work together to reduce duplication of services and increase communication and efficiency of community initiatives. The government needs to be aware that Ontario's professionals and voting population are passionate about social change and poverty reduction.

"We are not at a point where we care about everyone"

Allowing people to get into the workplace as quickly as possible creates a stronger economy and sense of community. In order to facilitate this process in Cornwall and area, we need to focus on job creation and public awareness of available jobs. Employment growth, especially for youth, can help to make this effort more successful; Because not everyone is capable of working in the same way, guaranteed income ensures fairness and equality. We need to be mindful of providing working people with dignity so that everyone can feel like they are contributing in some way. This will empower all individuals to feel like they can make a difference.

When creating more programs to target community needs, we should be mindful of the barriers associated with accessing the services. Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), Ontario Works and other provincially managed programs are complex systems and have application processes that are often difficult to navigate. Many clients are turned away because they are not able to complete the process due to literacy or cognitive levels. Criteria for poverty reduction programs need to be more inclusive, client focused, and organized by both the nonprofit and private sectors. Specific services that are needed are income supplements for families on social assistance and families with children who are disabled, as well as extended health coverage for full time jobs, and expanded mental health services. Food banks need to be understood as a basic human right rather than as a charity and human rights and dignity need to be included as an important part of end-of-life care. We need to be mindful of having sufficient funding for palliative care programs.

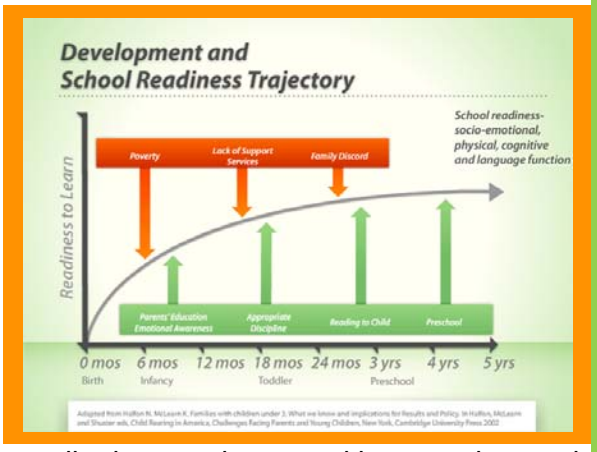


Findings -Questions 3.

How can all levels of government, community groups, the private sector, and other sectors work together to better address the barriers that keep people from getting out of poverty (e.g. access to employment, education, child care, supports, etc?) What are the strategies for working together? What are the barriers?

What are the strategies for working together?

Working collaboratively in order to meet goals is vital. The 'Triple P' (Positive Parenting Program) is an example of agencies coming together to develop a support system for people in the community. Stakeholders need to make contact and work together to link poverty to economic development and fund solutions that work. By agreeing on a clear, consistent message of the detriment of poverty and the value of poverty reduction we will allow people to have a deeper understanding of poverty.



Monthly community forums that allow for collective support from the community and more open strategy sessions, such as planning, could help to solve any difficulties that arise along the way. We need to coordinate and bring together social services and private sector organizations to work towards a common goal. The private sector's role in poverty reduction is more than just financial; they need to be part of the solution. The private sector has a different skill set that can help with more than budgeting and banking. People who occupy management positions should be expected to sit on a charitable board and share information with employees. People are slowly becoming more responsible for their contributions and are working together and supporting each other but attitudes need to continue to change; by building up individual strengths we can create more opportunities for change.

More volunteers and students need to be involved in poverty reduction strategies; by sharing data from programs like the Upper Canada District School Board's Character Always program we will gain more insight. Connecting with newcomers to Canada and educating and creating awareness of programs in our communities could begin to reduce barriers. We need to work with people seeking to get out of poverty and allow these individuals to reach their full potential.

> ***"When we graduate, we are not going to get a job in our field."***

We need to establish a definition of poverty that everyone can agree on and connect people living in poverty to the services they need. We also need to make volunteer opportunities more available to students and community members. The private sector needs to be educated about poverty in our community to dispel stereotypes and change attitudes. Having our schools teaching core values that reflect this change would ensure that Ontarians are getting a consistent message. We need to study employment trends in Canada, advertise results, and make these results accessible to all . Additionally, post-secondary recruitment programs need to be geared toward available jobs; universities need to be realistic about what job opportunities are available and where.

By getting all three levels of government working together and taking party politics out of the equation, we can ensure clear and accurate communication across sectors and ensure effective teamwork. We are currently working in 'silos', we need to actively address working together. Learning which solutions work in other societies could help us develop programs in a more functional way.

The municipal government needs to be more aware of the population's so they are able to better serve the community. Why is there not a by-partisan committee that oversees transition of government to ensure best results possible for Ontarians?

Helping those in poverty pays off later. In order to best care for the people in our community, we should focus on early prevention, holistic approaches to client care in a circle of care model, funding for addiction services and mental health programs, and follow up and ongoing care facilities. To clear and simplify paperwork, it would be helpful to institute sharing informed consent as long as information privacy is kept as a priority. We should also be empowering people to help themselves by focusing on funding programs that increase their life skills. Addressing poverty for the elderly and keeping seniors at home longer, particularly with the aging population, is something we can work on alongside the private sector. Home care programs should better meet the needs of our aging population.

"As a baby boomer society, we are not looking at the future, we are looking at ourselves"

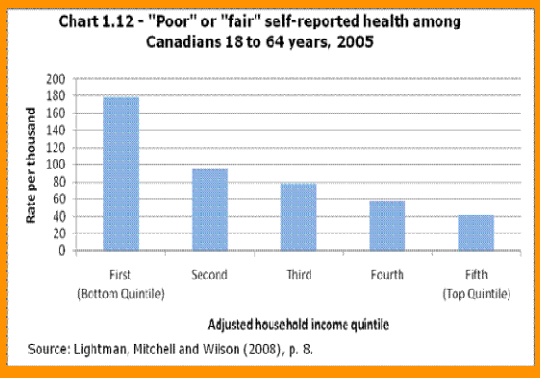
What are the barriers?

It is difficult for individuals to fit into the government's criteria of someone living in poverty, especially those in rural areas who don't have access to programs and opportunities as those in urban areas. The middle class is disappearing because we are losing benefits and wages. There is a disconnect between different socioeconomic status and reality. Stereotypes need to be addressed in order to reduce the stigma associated with poverty, for example laziness and individuals dealing with addiction. There are mixed messages regarding what we need to live well; living within personal means needs to be encouraged and taught because there is a lack of saving, budgeting and soft skills.

"We are setting them (Generation 'Y') up for failure"

It can be difficult to find and access services because there is a lack of communication. The private sector is blind to the realities and are too concerned with the bottom line financially. Private and non-profit sectors have different value systems. Everyone has a different idea about how to deal with poverty. We need to find a middle ground, an approach that common sense dictates. We need to discuss the cost of funding the solution, change some of the criteria, and increase volunteer groups with a required screening process. The group feels we need to keep labour costs low while keeping up with consumer driven attitudes and priorities. Strategies for poverty reduction need to take a holistic approach that incorporate private sector values. We need to start with simplifying the wording used by professionals, to more effectively promote universal health and wellness.

In order to define poverty, we could look at the Quality of Life index instead of only wages and income levels. We need a clear message from leaders with integrity to deal with poverty and bring the socioeconomic value clashes together. Poverty reduction band aids are not a solution, pool the resources together and shift the paradigm. System-wide contribution, from all citizens, is needed for a truly successful program.



"People don't complain about social insurance anymore because it is universal... We need to take that approach to other poverty initiatives"

Findings - Question 4.

**Looking back over the last five years of Ontario's first Poverty Reduction Strategy,
what worked well? What can we do differently moving forward?**

What Worked Well?

Universal child care has really been a benefit to Ontarians. Full Day Kindergarten allowed for adequate stimulation, socialization, and early intervention before the age of four. Kids went to school earlier which intern reduced the amount of child care required which allowed single parents to get full time employment. Having the focus on children and introducing school nutrition programs has been a success. The Early Years Centres are getting children linked to schools effectively and children now have more access to dental care. The child tax benefit and tax benefits for sports has benefited parents and families. Community health centres and health units focus on the social determinants of health has had a huge effect on our community and young parents. The development of further community initiatives to target improvements in early intervention and learning weaknesses will improve the future of our province.

What can we do differently moving forward?

Independent studies are needed to capture accurate statistics. It will be 25 years before we see a difference if we start today. We need to build an awareness of the long term effects. We need to listen to the facts, take what people are saying seriously, and be willing to look at the big picture, such as the impact on future generations, to have a plan that looks forward o the future. A profile of the Early Development Indicators (EDI) of mental health will help to identify the necessary social services for this population to thrive into the next generation.

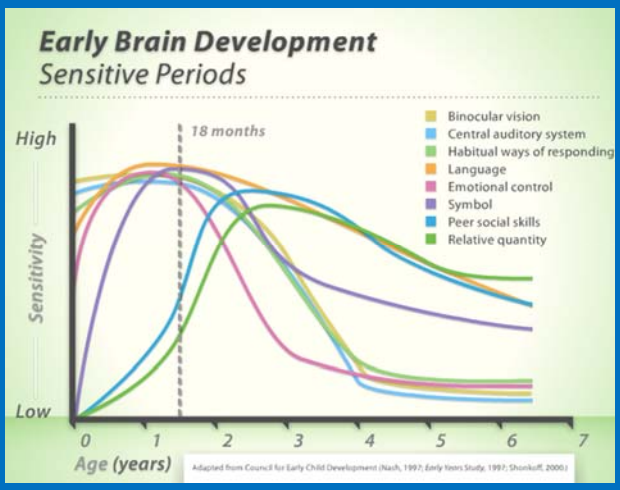
We need more accommodating, safe, affordable, and appropriate housing in Cornwall and SD&G to address the growing problem of homelessness and reduced property values, the same can be said for the province as a whole. Many people living in poverty tend to move to urban areas where there are more resources available which leaves many people in rural areas lacking adequate housing and transportation. Additionally, we need to create more job opportunities for our youth to encourage our young adults to return to rural settings after they finish their education. Rural community pockets need to be approached separately because of cultural differences.

We need more community awareness of the services that are available to individuals and families in every community. We also need to increase awareness in the community that we may have to pay higher taxes, contribute more financially or in other ways, such as volunteering, in order to ensure a sustainable future. We need to further investigate the root causes of organizations' wait lists and see what they are for; this is a big part of the problem in Ontario.

"We have lost the connection of neighbours helping neighbours"

Question 4 - Continued

Class sizes need to be smaller to allow children to receive optimal learning and attention. By keeping schools open longer this community resource could be more fully utilized such as access to school gymnasiums in off hours by the general population, especially in rural areas. Schools need to shift their focus to practical education, life skills development, and building upon strengths rather than having a curriculum based on a 'one size fits all' model. Extracurricular activities at schools need to be designed to give kids a more rounded experience with sports, music, and life skills. Preschool programs are important for children up to the age of four, we should continue this and have more funding available for daycare programs. Based on the statistics from Dr. Paul's speech , we need to have funded programs to provide prenatal and infant stimulation, such as increasing the option of parental leave to 24-27 months for a new born or adopted child.



Minimum wage should be a living wage, having a permanent full time minimum wage job leaves you below the Low Income Cut Off (LICO) which means the government is subsidizing businesses when those individuals still need to turn to Ontario Works to sustain their families. There are fewer meaningful jobs; all we have left is part time or contract work available. The income disparity between the rich and the poor is widening every year. We need aim to decrease this disparity by increasing post-secondary education opportunities for all students.

We need to re-examine and clarify the poverty line and re-engage our citizens. Ontario is not as engaged as in the past; the war on poverty is more of a 'Silent War' and we are losing. Poverty efforts need to be increased because it is an issue that is about much more than finances and affects us all; government efforts need to be about ensuring basic needs (such as healthy food) coverage for everyone. There are links between poverty, relationship building, education, goal setting, and health; many individuals form relationships that are largely paid services (agencies, therapists etc.). Introducing the 'Bridges out of Poverty' program would be an important step towards providing adequate education and support as well as targeting the 'us vs. them' mentality.

Poverty should be on the agenda all the time for all levels of government. There is too much wasted money in Provincial and Federal politics leading to distrust between ministries and other organizations the government does not control such as school boards, municipalities, and hospitals. We need to better understand the government infrastructure and encourage the government to deal with issues across ministries. Moving forward, it is also important that local purchasing policies be created and there be more cooperation between banks and seasonal workers and small business owners.

Programs, like the Healthy Smiles program, are limited in access and therefore, program funds are not being spent to their maximum efficiency. Access to good family doctors and health care provincially and rurally would decrease this problem as well as a focus on preventative care.

Findings - Question 5.

When it comes to reducing poverty in Ontario, what would success look like 15 years from now?

There would be no more negative stats for our children. Instead, we would see increased test scores and high school graduates reaching their full potential. Families would be able to feed their children and not have to worry about how to pay their bills. More paid holidays and funding that allows one parent to stay home will be available to allow families to spend quality time together, decrease family stress, and create healthier family dynamics. There would be less bullying, divorce, sexual assault, suicide, domestic violence, and family stress and our community would be made up of insightful and informed individuals. Everyone would have a safe and healthy place called home where healthy food is available to all. Everyone would have essential life skills, less mental health problems, a higher quality of life, an increased sense of community, respected rights and a healthy level of income. Those who are not self-sustaining would be taught how to become self-sustaining and live within their means.

"People who are poor are not non-people"

People would have access to high quality, inexpensive childcare, healthcare, and suitable housing. Ontarians would have strong family values, individual pride, and community and personal connections would be highly valued and commonplace. There would be more programs for children in the first 27 months of life which would contribute to children with less stress, fewer behavioral problems, and lower performance anxiety. School nutrition programs would be expanded and education for children would be equal and fair, regardless of their financial situation. There would be more sports and extracurricular activities in schools to reduce costs for families. The Children's Aid Society would no longer be needed.

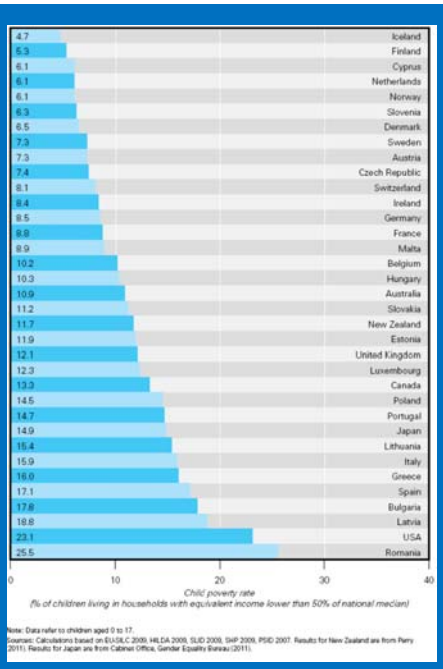
In fifteen years, there would be no need for food banks and other food programs. Preventative health programs will be more frequent than reactive ones, 'Ghettos' will be eliminated in favor of enhanced housing programs. Low income housing facilities will be placed within and around high to and middle income communities to help give residents and children from low income families better role models, better access to resources and education. fewer children will be in the welfare system, and activities will be more accessible to all. Success means that Ontario Works will really be an emergency fund instead of a long-term solution and there would be a universal retirement pension, eye care program, dental program and drug plan for all.

An important part of success would be to consistently revisit the cycle to re-evaluate our plan. Priorities would be changed, there would be more importance on social interactions, and less importance on financial goals. Beyond 21 programs, for adults who are developmentally challenged, would be further developed to increase access to resources for adults affected by lifelong special needs. Local transportation would be improved, however, more children would walk to school. We would invite universities to the area and university tuition would be reduced by 30% to start. More people will seek an education in the trades, apprenticeships will be more accessible, and licensing and involvement in trades will be re-examined and expanded.

Question 5. - Continued

There would be shorter wait times in hospitals, more clinics open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and more nurse practitioners available to care for patients. The focus on the elderly would be increased by creating inter-generational community programs and making changes to pension plans. Minimum wage would be sufficient to cover all basic needs. Ministries would talk to each other, link strategies, and work together. The Federal and Provincial government would have more interest in investing in social programs.

The income gap between people living in wealth and people living in poverty would be reduced. There would be improved housing programs, a thriving, sustainable economy, and less than 5% child poverty. Education costs would be reduced to enable high education communities, higher literacy rates, and more individual career growth. Healthcare costs would be reduced, leading to lower tax rates. We would keep what resources we have, such as schools and post offices and more people would spend locally. Teen pregnancy rates and crime rates would be reduced significantly. The need for food banks would be reduced and there would be a 'back to nature' movement that could encourage food growth instead of lawns. Our goal would be to reach world peace and have a self sufficient, self-sustaining resilient society.



What have we missed?

What have we not yet covered during this community consultation?

We need to look at improving math skills among students. It would also be great if children had access to more extra-curricular activities, the addition of a late bus system that would provide children with a ride home when after-school programs are finished would be ideal. Teachers are primary role models and should be setting the example for some of what is recommended for the folks of tomorrow.

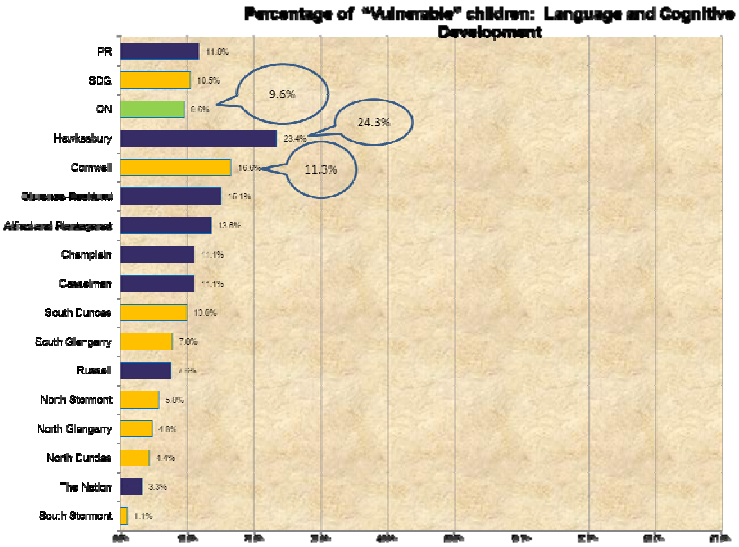
We need to look at employment equity and make sure that everyone is given equal wages regardless of gender, age or race. Our focus needs to be on reducing personal debt and providing people with tax breaks for things such as volunteering. Looking at the root causes of poverty will allow us to have better insight on solving this issue. People in positions of power need to listen to individuals who have experienced poverty to find appropriate solutions. Asking those living in poverty about their experiences and bring the information forward.

Poverty reduction needs to be an important item on the agenda of all levels of government. We need to look at the criteria that the government is using to make decisions about poverty and how the strategies are being evaluated. The government needs to focus on making common sense, long term investments in our society rather than spending and petty politics need to be taken out of the conversations about solutions. More people need to be engaged in government. We need more input and participation in forums from agencies serving people with disabilities and people who are living with disabilities.

What have we missed? ...Continued

"*Poverty is reduced when people in their* community are connected."

We need to be looking at engaging the private sector in finding a solution to our problems. Public and private support are needed in order to fully reach our goals. People need to see that there are plenty of opportunities to contribute rather than there being punishments for not working. Our local economy needs to be more diversified and we need local purchasing policies implemented. Increased park space for residents to gather would create a greater sense of community and more forest coverage of the land would help keep our resources intact. Further work needs to be done to ensure every Individual, especially children, feels their human rights are enforced and respected.



Please see the 'appendix - A' for the information in this report organized and categorized by theme.

We welcome your thoughts, comments and input on this document. These can be send to :

Alex de Wit
Executive Director
Social Development Council of Cornwall and Area
26 Montreal Rd.
Cornwall ON K6H 1B1
adewit@sdccornwall.ca
(613) 930-0211

Pauline Pratt
Executive Director
House of Lazarus
2245 Simms St, Mountain, ON K0E 1S0
house.lazarus@gmail.com
(613) 989-3830

Appendix – A

This section has re-organized the information in the report and categorized it based on themes. The information is presented in alphabetical order.

Access to Care

Reduced Wait Times

Another issue facing individuals in poverty is access to adequate health care. Participants stated that many individuals in our community do not receive proper and timely care for their ailments mostly because they lack the transportation to medical services, the wait times for an appropriate caretaker are extremely lengthy or they are unable to cover the costs of some services.
The group believes that this problem can be solved by increasing doctors and nurse practitioners in the area to lessen wait times and increase availability. It was recommended that by creating in-home programs and community health centers or 24/7 clinics more people would have access to what they need and it would lessen the strain on the medical resources already available. A universal medical plan to cover the costs of eye care, dental care and prescription medications would also reduce the financial burden on those experiencing medical issues.

Participants hope that with these improvements all community members could receive suitable and adequate health care.

Children & Parents

Parental Leave

Following along the lines of Dr. Paul's inspiring message, children and parents were a recurring theme throughout the poverty reduction discussion. Dr. Paul's message established that the first 27 months of a child's life are extremely crucial to having new generations develop into healthy, happy, and productive members of society. It is believed that many of our children aren't receiving proper attention and education within their first 4 years which is leading to more health and behavioural problems and, ultimately, making it difficult for these children to thrive.

Participants agreed that Dr. Paul's message should be circulated to promote awareness about the significance of providing early intervention for children under 4 years of age through early year initiatives like the Healthy Babies Program and full day kindergarten. It was also discussed that an increase of parental leave up to 24 months for newborns or adopted children or increased parental funding to allow one parent to stay at home with the children until they begin full-time school could be helpful in increasing the quality of life for children under 4.

Contributors believe that by bringing the focus back to children, specifically in the early years, and by helping parents to be more involved in this life stage we will be providing children with a better chance to reach their full potential and become self-sustaining individuals. Hopefully, giving parents more time to raise their children will reduce family stress and contribute to healthier and more positive family dynamics.

Community Building

Listen

Attendees identified the need to ask people living in poverty about their experience instead of telling them what will be provided. It was recognized that rural communities have individual cultures and are culturally different than urban or city cultures the voice of the private sector needs to be sought and valued in decisions of policy making. There needs to be a continuous cycle of evaluation that indicates how programs are working and not working.

Teach

Participants saw the value in holding community forums and open strategy sessions on a regular basis. It was identified that all sectors need to come together at these sessions: the private sector, social services, local government, business, community members etc. This was seen as a way of building community awareness and relationships, a place to have open conversation on the challenges of building a sustainable community where future generations will live and grow and prosper. Children are our future and need help today to have the skills, both educational and personal, to build sustainable rural communities. Solutions to be discussed included increased tax rates so everyone is better off; increased volunteer involvement so programs etc. can be delivered at lower costs. Programs like Bridges out of Poverty and Circle of Care are good tools for education and support. Messaging from all of these efforts needs to be consistent in focus and direction.

It was also indicated that education on local resources and how to access them is needed as is education on building relationships within families, businesses, agencies, governments and communities.. Education is also needed to shift thinking and eliminate the stigma of living in poverty. Many find themselves in poverty through no fault of their own due to illness, loss of employment, life circumstances etc.

Culture

Recognizing that the culture of a community is a determining factor in the type and success of any program or project is vital. Creating a sustainable, resilient and healthy community demands awareness of the culture and the development of education and programs that highlight the inter- connectedness of all members. Being willing to recognize and eliminate stereotyping and connect to newcomers to Canada and the community through education and awareness is key to a healthy community. The collaboration of all sectors will provide a broad base for community engagement and community building by identify the strengths and challenges that currently exist for the development of sustainability. Local solutions for local issues perhaps revise our priorities.

The Culture of a community includes attitudes, how we shop, how we play and relate to one another. Programs and projects that encourage outdoor activities can develop interests and respect for the environment, build healthy individuals and awareness of local assets. Bringing back the front porch, getting back to nature and building family values were activities that were highlighted as ways of impacting the cultural that may have a positive impact on decreasing bullying, less stressed kids, increasing family values and pride in who we are. When communities see themselves as sustainable i.e. financially viable, environmentally balanced and socially connected there is a sense of wanting to be involved and knowing that what I do has an impact.

Special Needs

There is a wide variety of special needs from physical to emotional to mental.
Being aware of, and understanding, the various special needs of community members is important to ensuring access and inclusivity. This needs to be part of the broad conversation. Special needs impact children and adults and are often for a lifetime and not just for the moment. We need to ensure that resources and activities are accessible to all members of the community

Education of Children

As A Continued Focus

The participants felt strongly that children should remain a key focus of governments at all levels. Provincial policy needs to reflect a dedication to creating learning environments that provide opportunities for children to reach their full potential in all areas of development. Recommendations include smaller class sizes to allow a better learning environment where children can also receive the nurturing they need, and preschool programs for 4 year olds. It is also critical to provide extracurricular activities that will provide children with a more rounded life experience; these include: music, sports, life skills and could be accomplished by developing partner programs with local agencies and municipal governments and fully utilizing community resources.

Daycare

Participants highlighted the need for funding for day care. Some were concerned that maybe children were entering the school system too young. It is suggested that the provincial government review the its funding commitment to the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program as results are very strong for this program and many would benefit from expanding this. Funding for programs based on the statistics of Dr. Paul Roumeliotis that focus on prenatal and infant health covering the first 27 months, including prenatal care and education is imperative. Funding for nutritious breakfast and lunch programs for children could ensure adequate nutrition for learning.

Children are the future. Creating a generation of individuals who have strong core values and the ability to navigate life's journey is a huge responsibility. This early life skills learning falls to parents, our teachers and child care providers. Education, cooperation and collaborative strategies need to be developed at a provincial level to ensure consistent programs and the desired results.

Future of Education in Ontario

To have a future Ontario where there is equality participants felt that with solid informed provincial policies in place the cost of secondary education would be reduced and funding programs would be in place to support low income individuals allowing everyone and equal opportunity for a post-secondary education and better employment opportunities. For our children there would be increased test scores and negative educational score statistics would be a thing of the past. We would also see an increased number of high school graduates and our citizens would have the opportunity to reach their full potentials. There would also be easier access and opportunity for trades employment as the province takes a hard look at the licensing of trades and apprenticeship accessibility. Having local university and college programs would benefit local students bringing employment and employability skills strengthening local economies. Literacy rates would be reduced and life skills abilities would be clearly visible in strengthened communities. And while everyone may not be a candidate for post graduate education there is funding and opportunities for the development of individual potential.

Education - Post-Secondary Education

What worked

Children went to school earlier reducing the amount of child care required thereby saving dollars and helping with the provincial budget. Full day kindergarten provides access to early education allowing for the development of socialization skills in young children.

Access

There is a strong correlation between poverty and a lack of post-secondary education. Access to post-secondary education should be increased for everyone regardless of economic status. Providing low income parents the opportunity to go to college/university there would be a clear understanding of the importance of encouraging children to seek further education thereby breaking the cycle. Providing education funding for individuals eligible for social services is key to the success of breaking the cycle of unemploy-ability. Universities need to be realistic about job opportunities and gear educational programs to meet current and future employment needs. Local opportunities for education in rural areas would have a positive impact. With the development of local universities and colleges those living in smaller communities would have equal access to post-secondary education as students living in larger centres.

There also is a need for programs that provide services and for students with disabilities at a post secondary level to allow those students access to their right to education and

Teachers

It is well known in the community that not everyone learns the same way at the same time. Teachers need to be further educated and supported to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. This could be accomplished by increasing the number of tutors and EA's that are available to support students.

Tuition Fees

The provincial government needs to look at the fee structure and the criteria for post-secondary education. Tuition fees are escalating creating an insurmountable barrier for many candidates to even consider college or university. Student loans are increasing and grants are limited. Reducing tuition costs by 30% and lowering the threshold for grants post-secondary education would be more available thereby increasing the employability individuals.

Education – Practical education

Life Skills

The group identified the need for educational programs that focus on life skills, to be taught in high schools and through agencies serving young people not in school. A successful strategy would build on people's strengths, and not put everyone in the same box. Life skills include but are not limited to: money management, nutrition, home economics, relationships, parenting, single parenting, living independently. This would require a long term marketing program to have the greatest impact on future generations.

Employment/Economy

Basic Needs

Those in attendance feel it is necessary for the province to develop programs or tax credits that will increase the basic needs coverage of individuals. Basic needs should be further defined to include housing, food, medical and dental programs. A guaranteed income level for all Ontarians is needed, creating fair and equal distribution of provincial funds regardless if someone is working or on disability.

Business

Participants identified the role of local business in a viable poverty reduction strategy. Banks need to reassess lending policies and financial services to include strategies and programs that will support independent business owners, seasonal workers and others who are not employed in the main stream. They need to become more community aware and share their expertise in programs and projects that will build more financially educated individuals and business in the communities they serve.

Local purchasing policies need to be defined and produced to build economic sustainability into smaller and rural communities. Educational materials and programs must be produced to highlight the importance and advantages of shopping local to community members.

It is recommended that individuals seeking education in business management should be required to sit for a term as a board member of a non-profit board.

A thriving local economy will help to build a stronger provincial economy providing employment opportunities that provide an adequate level of income. This may include the development of manufacturing and other industries leading to a more sustainable Canada.

Community Building

It was felt by those in attendance that to have a sustainable community it is critical that our children are encouraged to return to our communities after they graduate and that they have meaningful jobs opportunities to return to. In order to accomplish this goal it was noted that all levels of government must work together to better address the issue.

Education

Participants felt that while there was some initiative in the original provincial poverty reduction strategy in the area of post-secondary schooling there is a need for further funding and programs to provide education for those who are eligible and to stimulate the local economies.

Provincial funding needs to be geared towards developing university and college programs that lead to jobs, with an increased focus on getting people into various trades.

Employment

Participants agreed that rural and smaller communities need employment opportunities that help young people stay in their communities. Programs that create employability skills and provided the awareness of available jobs, as well as meaningful jobs with a future, will encourage young people to return to or stay in their rural communities.

A minimum wage that is also a living wage will be a key aspect of keeping young people in our community and we should also encourage employers to move away from contract workers and part time jobs as it pushes people away from our communities. Continued Funding programs for full time kindergarten and free daycare for eligible families should be explored so those wanting to seek employment can.

Transportation

Transportation was highlighted as a formidable barrier for many and especially for those who live in poverty. Whether getting to a job, a doctor or social services accessible transportation is a key challenge for those living in rural Ontario. The cost of fuel and parking is prohibitive and detrimental to many who are in need of services.

Special Needs

Participants identified that seniors and individuals living on a fixed income have a higher incidence of living in poverty. Provincial strategies need to look into income supplements for this population, and for families with children with disabilities, including families supporting adult children with disabilities.

Envisioning Ontario's Future

Through education, awareness and programs we see a future where respect and dignity are woven throughout the culture, where crime is decreased and the gap between rich, poor is narrowed and there is an increased sense of community. Community stakeholders including local businesses, agencies, churches, local governments and community members come together for conversations that will build towards solutions for a local culture that is inclusive and sustainable. The development of a sustainable community demands community involvement from all sectors, and strong leadership.

Family Dynamics

Educating Parents

Participants believe that having a calm, low stress home life is the key to raising resilient and healthy children. People living in poverty are plagued with high stress home lives due in large part to the financial strain of living pay cheque to pay cheque. The stress can lead to anger, frustration, and exhaustion which can lead to arguments and chaos. If this continues many families find themselves dealing with divorce and/or domestic violence and familial upheaval.

Contributors agreed that creating free programs to educate all parents, especially those that are young and inexperienced, in areas such as child care, child and parental health, communication, problem solving, physical activity, budgeting, navigation of social programs, and stress and time management will prove very important in enabling children and their parents to live in an environment where they are able to thrive. It was also suggested that funding and support for single parents be increased to enable all children more time with their parents and decrease the stress of raising a family on one income.

In summary, participants hope that by providing more free education to parents as well as extra funding to single parents, financial strain in many families will be reduced which will lead to an increase in healthy family dynamics and hopefully, ultimately, reduce the amount of children and families living below the poverty line.

Governance

Information

The need for independent surveys and studies that capture accurate, meaningful and local statistics was identified, as well as the need to reassess the poverty line drawn by current government guidelines. In order for the province or municipal governments to plan and implement successful programs and projects it is imperative that they are using independent and local statistics.

Awareness

Provincial and local governing bodies need to be able to look at the big picture and consider the impact on future generations and continue to focus on children. They need to be made aware of the impact of poverty on everyone. They need to agree on a message that engages all community members and identifies how poverty hurts everyone. A long term, non-partisan plan is needed that looks at 5 - 25 years to ensure consistency and a positive impact on future generations. The links between poverty, health, relationship building, education and goal setting needs to be explored, using current statistical reports like Dr. Paul's report and the EDI. To be effective the silos have to be taken down across all sectors government and agency to allow for cooperative programming solutions. We need to eliminate us vs them thinking and develop strategies and programs that empower people and transition them off the social system when feasible, recognizing that not everyone can work.

Solutions

It was identified that what is needed is for the provincial government to listen and take poverty seriously. Basic needs have to be assured and this includes housing, education, food, jobs, income, transportation, etc. It is felt that Ontario is not as engaged as it was in the past on the war on poverty which has become a "silent war". Governments have done little to engage Ontarians on the fight against poverty and its impact on all Ontarians. Wait lists for services are too long and there are too many of them. This needs to be addressed immediately, including housing. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights notes that individuals have a right to housing. Other societies have successful programs that can be considered. Employment opportunities especially in the manufacturing industry are growing scarce and this impacts Ontario's/Canada's economy on the whole. As new issues arise these need to be addressed through honest, informed discussion and through the lens of the province so the government can develop specific programs and funding that are effective and solution oriented bringing all stakeholders together.
We envision an Ontario with a tangible, steady poverty reduction success with less than 5% child poverty

Leadership

Strong effective leadership is a key element for success in any effort
Participants felt that poverty has to be raised as a higher agenda item at all three levels of government.

Clear message on value of lifting people out of poverty
Close loop holes and get rid of bad leaders who abuse their position
Cross sector communication and cooperation of all levels of government is critical to the success of a poverty reduction strategy. Ministries talk to each other, develop joint strategies and work together. Both federal and provincial governments need to invest in social programs.
Having Politicians at all levels need to engage with agencies, business, churches, and community members at community forums and conferences
As parties change through elections, programs that are working well are often eliminated, underfunded or modified due to political agendas and not societal agendas Party politics has to be removed from the poverty reduction strategy
Successful policies and programs need to be protected from a change in government.
important, Municipal politicians have to embrace private sector folks as part of the solution, and engage in ground –up solutions to poverty in their communities. .

Health Care

Access to Healthy Food

There are many people living in this community whose basic needs haven't been met and this can have very detrimental effects on their overall mental and physical health. Food banks and other charity centres are still relied on by many to feed their families and cover their most elementary necessities.
Contributors agreed that everyone in the community should have their basic needs such as nutritious food and shelter covered without it being a constant struggle. The government should look at a policy that grants everyone access to healthy food especially with a focus on covering basic nourishment for those on social assistance. It was also suggested that projects like Community Garden and the Green Food Box be expanded and become more accessible and that organizations providing funding or resources to cover these basic needs receive monetary support from the government.
Participants hope that with more government support and expanded community projects, every individual is able to easily access the many items and resources that are essential to their survival.

Housing

Participants identified lack of affordable and adequate housing as one of the key barriers to poverty reduction. Housing should be listed as a human right. To be adequate, housing must be an affordable and healthy environment with standards that meet strict provincial and municipal guidelines. Funding must be provided to develop housing programs, whether by building subsidized and coop housing units, a housing credit, re-instated housing start-up funding or developing new strategies to reduce the impact of families and children living in inadequate housing conditions that rob them of their health and dignity.

Mental Health

There was concern among group members about the lack of mental health services. Mental illnesses can be extremely debilitating especially because of the stigma attached to them and how much there is still left to learn about them. The group recognized unaddressed mental health issues as a problem in rural areas and suggested that a community profile be taken of those who are disadvantaged and suffering from mental health issues to identify the needs in the community. Once the direst needs are determined, many contributors hope that programming specific to community needs can be introduced to the community and hopefully decrease the amount of people suffering from mental illness altogether.

Oral Health

Participants also recognized a need for better access to oral health care. The Healthy Smiles program through the provincial government has very limited access and leaves a gap in services for many young children. Many young adults over 18 go without dental services because they can't afford them and dental coverage is really lacking for this age group. The group believes through the implementation of a universal dental care plan no one would have to go without necessary dental care because it wasn't affordable.

Programs

The current poverty reduction strategy includes programs that have proven to be effective in bringing about some changes. These include the child tax benefit; tax benefits for sports; universal child care and the introduction of the school nutrition programs. The initial development of Community Health Centres with their focus on the *Social Determinants of Health* has allowed for the development of local initiatives in identified areas of learning weakness and intervention in learning for children.

Programs Initiatives Requiring Development and Funding

Pre Natal - First 27 Months

Dr Paul's findings are conclusive and cannot be ignored if we are serious about developing and funding programs that will have a decisive and long term impact on our children. Intervention as early as possible is key to the development of healthy, happy and well-adjusted children, adolescents and adults.

Parents

The continued funding for programs like PPP (Positive Parenting Program) and development of new projects and programs that begin with parenting from prenatal through childhood is essential. These programs must also be geared to many categories of parents including single mom's and dad's and grandparents who are parenting grandchildren.. The focus has to be on kids and getting them and their parents involved in school and community activities where the cost is not a barrier.

Community

Building sustainable communities requires funding from provincial and municipal governments to invest in programs that serve everyone, free of barriers. There are programs like Bridges out of Poverty that can be offered across the community bringing all sectors together to listen, learn and teach.

Special Needs

Programs for individuals with special needs regardless of age are essential. Whether it is for children, youth, adults, or seniors, it is necessary to feel part of the community in accessible and inclusive ways. Programs are needed that will help seniors stay in their homes longer and ensure they have adequate funds to meet all their basic needs including housing. There is also the need for continued support of EA's for children with special needs in school.

Barriers/Challenges

The application process for services needs to be simplified and dignified. This means application forms that are not complicated. Literacy challenges were highlighted as a key barrier. Services are located in urban centres, which creates a significant challenge for rural residents requiring access to transportation and fuel. Services are also spread out in various locations where a one stop place would make more sense. Agencies that communicate with each other and are on the same page would be much more effective in the delivery of services. It is necessary that those in need of services be identified as early as possible and be approached with a holistic service strategy.

Poverty 15 Years from Now

Programs

Attendees saw a future where some programs were a thing of the past and Ontario Works was only required as an emergency fund . Programs that focused on prevention (not reaction) were primary. Quality childcare was inexpensive or provided, with easy access to all services. EDI scores were improved and statistics no longer indicated that the rich have better health and longevity than the poor. There was no need for food banks. All families were able to feed their children, and nutrition programs in schools were expanded. Services that were needed were completely accessible for everyone. Universal retirement pensions were properly funded. Everyone had the right to the basics of life and there were less suicides.

Transportation

Participants agreed that there needs to be collaborative strategies with various levels of government to meet the current challenges of local and accessible transportation.

Appendix B -The original Transcribed Notes

Notes are organized by question and the topics discussed.
Each question is sub-divided by group and table.

MPP Jim McDonell-

The state of Ontario's lower income families has seen some improvement in the five years since the introduction of the Breaking the Cycle: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy launched in 2008; however, expected results have overall fallen short. These results are based on eight indicators selected during strategy development. These indicators are based upon aspects such as income levels, education, health, housing and standard of living:

- School Readiness
- High School Graduation Rates
- Educational Progress
- Birth Weights
- Low Income Measure (LIM)
- Depth of Poverty
- Standard of Living
- Ontario Housing Measure

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis-

- Child's health as an important predictor of future wellness, 40-50 years down the line all encompassing;
- 70% of our "health wellness" signs are not healthcare related or outside of the medical sphere;
- Poverty accounts for 20% of healthcare costs across Canada (25-30 billion dollars.);
- Direct correlation between poverty and health status;
- Canada is ranked 19 out of 26 countries in this area (not a strong showing);
- The first 1000 days (27 months) of a child's life are critical to their future outcome;
- Abnormal proteins have been found to appear in those critical early months of a child when any "physical, social or medical insult" occurs;
- People abused as children have higher rates of heart disease as adults;
- Growth failure found in neglected babies.

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Open discussion question for group round-table consideration:

"When it comes to reducing poverty in Ontario, what would success look like in 15 years from now?"

Group 1

- No more negative early-childhood results as presented by Dr. Paul earlier;
- Improved test scores;
- Increased levels of education.. life potential;
- Decrease in or loss of food banks;
- School food programs;
- Increased healthy family relationships;
- Reduced crime and domestic abuse;
- Better informed parents through improved and targeted information release;
- Increased and/or improved organization cooperation (i.e. less autonomy over and more sharing of information)
- Increase in healthy food availability;
- Various Provincial Ministries working together better on joint strategies;
- Reduction in the economic gap between the "rich" and "poor";
- Affordable day-care access;
- Increased focus on the "trade occupations";
- A single parent income can support a family;
- Increased and financially achievable activities for children and youth.

Group 2

- Reduced post-secondary education costs;
- Healthy homes;
- A thriving economy;
- Free healthy foods for all;
- Improved health outcomes;
- Everyone is able to make a "living wage";
- Lower crime statistics;
- Everyone has "life-skills";
- Universal pension plan for all workers;
- Universal eye care, dental care, etc.;
- Decrease in negatively marked health levels;
- Higher quality of life for all;
- Improved access to beneficial programs;
- Subsidized day-care;
- Improved focus on social programs by federal and provincial governments;
- Increased fairness in tax payment distribution between the "wealthy" and the "poor";
- Informed public discussions;
- Increased "charity" shown by all.

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Group 3

- CAS eliminated;
- Less abuse, domestic assaults and single parent families;
- Improvement in overall mental health statistics;
- Improved access to services;
- Affordable education;
- The "smallest of wage" is "enough of a wage";
- Improvement seen across the board of poverty related economic indicators;
- Reduced income disparity;
- Realistic goals set and then met and measured;
- Back to "basic-life skills";
- Focus efforts at a community level (local solutions for local problems);
- Revisiting cycles of poverty continuously to best keep tabs on the drivers of poverty;
- Improved environmental conditions (social, financial, and environmental balance);
- The ability to financially "get ahead";
- Fostering / channelling what abilities an individual may possess to the maximum possible;
- Unskilled labour available to those who require and seek it.

Group 4

- Reduced violence and abuse;
- Improved general health;
- Ability to meet basic needs;
- Increased job availability with improved wages;
- Sustainable economy;
- Retain industry here,
- No further need for food banks;
- Reduced drop-out rate;
- Retention of our "educated" children through improved local opportunities;
- Increased focus on being a part of and supporting the local economy;
- Reduced transportation costs;
- Affordable child care;
- Increased availability of clinical health care;
- Reduced bullying and improved inclusion;
- Increased / improved parent involvement in school;
- Reduced cost for activities locally.

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Group 5

- We look more like Denmark;
- An underused health care budget or the first ever reduction in health care spending;
- Improved access to healthy foods;
- Plenty of affordable housing;
- Increased awareness of the benefits of physical activity and the opportunities for;
- Children walk to school;
- Smaller schools and smaller class sizes;
- Increase in family practitioners and nurse practitioners;
- Increases in levels of education, job skills and life skills among the population;
- Invite universities and colleges to open local satellite schools;
- Reduced university costs;
- Increased sustainable living practices;
- Increased and improved linkages between seniors and youth;
- Increases in paid holiday time;
- Improved architecture to better promote a sense of community;
- Less stress placed upon children (e.g. performance expectations);
- Easier access to E.I. benefits.
- Teachers themselves should be setting the example for some of what they recommend for the folks of tomorrow;
- Increased and improved park spaces for residents to gather at and better create a sense of community;
- Increased forest cover of the land;
- Improved math skills among students;
- Reduced personal debt;
- More diversified local economies.

Looking back over the last five years of Ontario's first Poverty Reduction Strategy, what worked well? What can we do differently moving forward?

Table Group 1

Worked Well

Kids went to school earlier reducing the amount of child care required thereby saving dollars and helping with the provincial budget.
Child tax benefit
Access to early education allowing the development of socialization skills in young children.
Allowing awareness for the development of community initiatives in identified areas of learning weakness and detection of required intervention in learning
Universal child care has really been a benefit
Community health centres focus on the social determinants of health and this is helpful

Do Differently

Not enough money for families and single moms
Class sizes need to be small to allow a better learning environment for the children and also so that they can receive the nurturing they need
Based on the stats from Dr Paul we need to have funded programs to provide pre-natal and infant stimulation
We need an increase in parental leave to 24 months for new born or adopted child re Dr. Paul's stats on the importance of the first 27 months of a child
We need affordable housing and cooperative housing "They have forgotten us here, those living in rural SD&G"

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Table Group 2

Worked Well

The introduction of the school nutrition programs
Having the focus on children
The Healthy Smiles initiative

Do Differently

Children are not learning life skills in school including socialization, budgeting, values etc.
Funding from the government should be used to complete the mandates i.e. poverty reduction
We need a government policy for everyone to have access to "real" food
Increase post secondary education opportunities for all
We need to address homelessness
The income disparity between rich and poor is widening every year

Table Group 3

Worked Well

Nothing to report

Do Differently

It is great to have school nutrition but we also need more education around more than just providing the food, how to shop, prepare, etc...
Ontario is not as engaged as in the past, the war on poverty is more of a "Silent War". The government has done nothing to have all Ontarians engaged because poverty affects us all.
We need to reassess the poverty line level. Minimum wage should be a living wage, having a permanent full time minimum wage job leaves you below the poverty line.
People living on assistance need to have 100% of their basic needs for nourishment covered
We need more funds for day care provided "I don't think teachers should have to raise a child"
There is a lack of transportation in the rural areas
"Ontario used to be a have province but now we have become a have not province"
"Our provincial wealth is not invested well" we are missing the preventative component
Healthy smiles is limited in access and therefore the program funds are not being spent.
There is a huge gap in services for those over 18 in the area of dental health
Poverty is more than just about money. What else should be considered? Poor in relationship is the key - for many the important relationships are largely paid services (agencies, therapists etc.)

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Table Group 4

Worked Well

nothing to report

Do Differently

Increase minimum wage
Bring a program like Bridges out of poverty to the area to provide education and support
Providing funding for post secondary education in colleges and universities will also give the opportunity for people living in poverty to develop social skills
Encourage rural kids to come back after they are educated by having employment opportunities available
We need more community awareness on what resources are available locally and how you can access them
Awareness in the community re: we may have to pay higher taxes, contribute more financially and in other ways (volunteer) so everyone is better off.

Table Group 5

Worked Well

Initiative for the young kids in school e.g. the 15 year program Healthy Babies, Healthy Children that was working very well was flat lined (funding)
The Healthy Smiles program is great but it offers minimal dental care
The Early Years Centres - getting kids linked to school

Do Differently

Independent studies are needed to capture accurate and independent statistics
We need to listen to the facts and be willing to look at the big picture (impact on future generations) to have a plan that looks at 5-25 etc years into the future
Profile of the people (EDI) on mental health, disadvantaged to identify the need and how they can best be cared for
Look at all the wait lists and see what they are for - this is a big part of the problem
Banks need to be more helpful to seasonal workers and independent business owners
Need to continue preschool programs up to 4 years old
Focus on practical education- life skills plus. Build on peoples strengths
Focus on both parents to care for the children
Access to health care (lack of transportation)
Poverty should be on the agenda all the time for all levels of government
Get rid of bureaucracy
Meaningful jobs have gone away - all we have left is part time or contract work
The government doesn't trust that which it does not control School Boards, municipalities, hospitals - the government wants control, we need to better understand the government infrastructure.
We need to bring back extracurricular activities at schools to give kids a more rounded experience including sports and music, life skills etc. and keep schools open longer to fully utilize this community resource
We need local purchasing policies
Ask those living in poverty about their experience and bring it forward
We need more advocacy groups that are specific
Rural community pockets need to be approached individually (Culturally different)
All decisions need to be flexible to administer either in rural or urban areas.

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Looking back over the last five years of Ontario's first Poverty Reduction Strategy, what worked well? what can we do differently moving forward?

Table Group 1

Worked Well

Full Day Kindergarten - stimulation, socialization, cheaper re day care -class sizes
Awareness - Education - Early intervention
increase in minimum wage
tax benefits for sports
Oral health care re Healthy Smiles

Do Differently

More funds for single moms (parents)
More support for single parents
Need more prenatal care for the first 27 months per Dr. Paul's stats
It will be 25 years before we see a difference if we start today
Increase Parental leave to 24 months
Need Housing that is : co op; affordable; appropriate - Housing is Toronto centric
Increase OW so all basic needs are covered

Table Group 2

Worked Well

Increase in Minimum Wage
Post secondary school access
Access to day care

Do Differently

Lack of rural transportation
Oral Health - access for low income; lack of access for 18 and over
Increase minimum wage
Need to know more about the Family History - link to poverty- education - relationship experience - goal setting
Gen. of Relationships with paid PQL - Bridges - Circle of Care
Access to post secondary education - local university and colleges development
Outreach - Rural - Young PRL back home - awareness of resources
Housing
Need a long term awareness

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Table Group 3

Worked Well

School nutrition programs - $ for extras
Focus on children

Do Differently

Why only provincial?
Not engaged as people of Ontario - in the media - on the agenda
Access to healthy food - as a priority
Minimum wage = still in poverty - need a living wage index
More Engagement - not everyone CAN work
Life skills needs to be addressed
Funding linked to poverty reduction strategy - how will your activities lower poverty

Table Group 4

Worked Well

Early Child Care - Early years centre - Healthy Babies
Dental care
Before 4 - early intervention

Do Differently

Access to post 2nd ED
Housing affordable and decent - safe, clean - FEALDNC?????
Income disparity
Access to family doctor - good doctors
Get real numbers (stats)
Listen to people - take it seriously
Wasted $ in Politics - Provincial and Federal
E.D.I. level - profile of population at social services
Need a long term plan - education - awareness of poverty
Get rid of Us VS Them thinking
What are the solutions? - Wait lists - where are they- E.G. Community Living - look at programs that need help
Focus on practical education - life skills

Table Group 5

Worked Well

Early Years - before 4 years of age - Healthy Babies program
Dental care for young

Do Differently

What's next - What have we missed?

Follow the Data -Get real data - E.D.I. Dr. Paul's speech
Focus on young moms and dads
Access to health care - Provincial and rural
Look at new issues in Lens of Province
People in Poverty move to urban areas where there is support
Bring down the Silos - work on the issues across the ministries (problem with trust between government and ministries)
Employment opportunities that help young people stay in their communities
Cooperation between Government and levels of government and agencies

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Question #2:Our first strategy focused on children. Going forward, should we continue to have a specific focus? If so, who or what should be our focus?

Table Group 1

Focus on mothers/parents health (In combination with children)
Not finished with focus on kids, haven't quite got to where we need to be
Long term program
Figures (Dr. Paul) – need to focus on the first 27 months
Rural – incl. transport issues
Focus on prenatal Important time
Parents need soft skills
Are we only capable of one focus?
Do need to intervene with children earlier
Can do more
Issues so interdependent
Don't want to limit ourselves.
Rural: Lack of jobs/ opportunities/ housing
Preventative care? (example: Risk factors like smoking)
Basic needs need to be assured (food/housing) ex: access to income/jobs
Potential for economic development
Children born into situations less likely to be detrimental
No specific focus, foundation started with child. Need to follow data = focus.

Table Group 2

Children right- Need to pinpoint first 27 months and prenatal.
Can't drop kids from focus
Can ON afford?
Conclusion on kids = less of a problem in future, but also need to address people and issues now.
Determinants of health.
Full day kindergarten, but need smaller classes.
Breakfast and lunch provided in schools
Feed kids to give nutritious lunch
Universal means no stigma
Education for nutritious lunches on budget (provided meal does not include this education)
More community gardens (Provide cheap nutritious food)
Availability/ access to money for schools to provide lunch programs.
Green food box
Make weekly program?
Open to everyone
No choice on veggies. Might not like, know how to prepare.
In home programs for those without transportation (particularly rural areas)
Need to be aware who communicates?
Issues, seniors, fixed income
Focus on health of family/ individual (particularly before kids)
Focus on education for women on taking care of themselves.
Home economics for everyone

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Table Group 3

Continue focus on child
Expand to / boosting opportunities for higher education.
Break cycle of parents who didn't get to college/university
Ex: program in NYC for low-income parents, bring to school, and learn to get your child there.
Affordable/good housing. Sustainable, healthy environment, able to plan/ use money for your child's education.
Minimum income.
If eligible for social services, include education (Can this be required?)
Improve home skills
Sewing, meals, etc.
Teach in schools right from beginning
*Families paying more for prepared food, etc…)
Support having one person at home to support family, particularly during the early years
2 year mat. leave?
Get rid of stigma/ shift in thinking (would need)
Acceptance of those with disabilities/disadvantages.
Special needs is for a lifetime, not just as kids (insufficient resources for adult support, other than emergency)
Recognition of connection between child and adult.
Emphasis on family responsibilities (and costs)
Sex education (pre-teens)
Choices
Availability of free birth control.

Table Group 4

Reduce poverty, focus on children
Continue focus
Meager effort, meager outcome
Data indicated we should continue focus (Health outcome)
Children unable to determine their own circumstances. Need assistance.
Use existing yardsticks
Health as it relates to poverty.
Focus does not mean forget about all in poverty
Helping kids will help parents
Longer-term, 25 year plan to really see and measure results.
Children are our future, but need to help present-day.
Everything is inter-connected.
Focus on changing attitudes about poverty, removing stigma (educate ON)
Strategy : Getting message out about guaranteed income
Poverty affects all, many areas.
Poverty should be a social issue, not a charitable cause.

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Table Group 5

Focus on preschoolers and prenatal
Find a group, follow them through their life for 15-20 years.
Start with parents, but care is child like focus on kids, involve parents, schools and community groups.
Long term strategy-continuous
Enshrine in legislation.
Raising poverty bottom-level
Minimum wage
Guaranteed income.
= Improved living, care for kids/ family.
Invest in programs to serve everyone
Ex: Transportation
How:
Communication and education
Impact on society and individuals
(How will his help me?)
Educating on:
Parenting (high school) mandatory
Communications/Problem-solving/ Stress management skills.
Strategy/ approach shifted to empower people and wean off social system
"Teach to fish"
Societal shift: focus on all, instead of me
Goal of a healthy society
Respect for each other.

Question #3 What is the most important thing The Government of Ontario can do to help reduce poverty? Is there an initiative we implemented as part of the first strategy that we should revisit?

- Reducing tuition fees by 30%
- Full time kindergarten
- Freeing up people to do work
- Free daycare
- People to get into workplace as quickly as possible
- Employability
- ODSP- OW complex system
- "We are setting them up for failure, these people are not wanted." JobZone (Joanne Hickley)
- Adjust overall attitude
- Cooperation of all government
- "We are not at a point where we care about everyone" (Steven Byvelds)
- "As a baby boomer society, we are not looking at the future, we are looking at ourselves" (S. Byvelds)
- Pump money into the system
- $14 an hour should be minimum wage-living wage
- Government needs a strategy to get to the living wage
- "Poverty is reduced when people in their community are connected." (Blair Patterson)
- Education
- Have a (page?) of good jobs available
- Job creation
- Employment growth

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- Income supplements for families with disabled children
- Build skills
- Learning communication skills
- Problem solving skills
- *Before they are ready to be employed.
- Funding to institutions
- Rural areas (No access to stores)
- “Good fuel makes for good bodies” in Europe- in N.A, good food is the first thing we eat.
- On the job training for the parents to be able to access better jobs
- Create programs
- Double up on minimum wage
- Increase income tax
- Increase take home pay- give people more money for themselves and their families.
- Increase full time jobs with extended health coverage.
- More manufacturing is needed our gov. needs to be more competitive
- Local government
- Government needs to spend in Ontario/Canada e.i.-passports
- Continue to increase the minimum wage
- Housing
- Invest in good quality subsidized housing- more coops.
- Ministries need to keep talking together.
- More cross-level work, caution re: downloading.
- There is a disconnect between what Ontario works on and the municipality works on.
- Universal oral health programs for those under 18 years- over 18 years?
- Family income $20 000 is very low compared to other provinces.
- Education for those with disabilities
- Poor people cannot afford private tutors
- Smaller class size, tutors
- Not cut the funding for special needs children and EAs
- Ministry of Ed. Should be accountable for children who do not fit into the box
- Need help to navigate the system
- “Client-focused” or “not”
- Student grants should continue
- Threshold should be lowered
- Have a more rounded view of the threshold
- Alternate forms of education
- Education closer to home (Cornwall University), increase opportunities
- High school: more options for students
- Fair living wage other than minimum wage
- Student loans are bigger because tuition costs keep getting higher
- Criteria for OSAP
- Students do not qualify for OSAP loans and second career funding.
- Applications create barriers
- Simplify the process
- Ontario govt. staff needs to be more sympathetic.
- Student nutrition- improved behavior and knowledge outcomes.
- Look at social assistance, more money
- Re-look at student loan
- “When we graduate, we are not going to get a job in our field.” (Carilyne Hebert)
- Guaranteed income creates fair and equal- whether you are working, not working or disability
- Happiness- Well being
- Work with dignity- people won’t feel that they are contributing

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- "People who are poor are not non-people" (Etienne St Herbert)
- Reach out to the past to get to the future
- Food banks are looked at as a charity, or a cause, not a right.
- Right to housing, look at United Nations Declaration of Human Rights
- "We have lost the connection of people helping neighbours" (Alyssa Blais, Agape)
- Private sector people are not here
- People like us need to get into govt. to make changes

Table Group 1

- Education
- Reducing tuition fees
- Low and middle income (past)
- Add all families
- Horizontal based
- Full day kindergarten
- Free daycare
- Complexity of system application for social assistance
- Overall attitude, adjustment (Gov. and society)
- Collaboration of all society
- No (teeth?) in legislation
- More into system (Living wage and strategy)

Table Group 2

- Pool of good jobs
- Income supplements for families with kids with disabilities
- Skills building for people in party
- Living skills: Longer range focus, marketing program
- CSUMB funding reestablished
- Calculating community attitude
- Minimum wage/living wage (Indexed?)

Table Group 3

- Full day kindergarten
- Early year initiatives
- Increase teacher education
- Mental health services addressed
- Access to nutritious food (Funding to institutions who provide)
- Create/fund (training/education programs)
- Minimum wage (Cutting taxes for "poverty")
- Increase taxes
- Jobs and increased benefits
- Gov. support center
- CSUMB funding returned

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Table Group 4

- Continue to increase minimum wage
- Housing
- Invest in good quality homes
- Subsidies
- Coops
- Grants, not loans (Lower threshold)
- Cross-ministry approach
- Cross levels of government.
- Universal oral health for under 18
- Why separate from “health”
- Over 18?
- Look at maximums
- CSUMB restored
- Education
- Alternate delivery
- Smaller class sizes
- Tutors and EAs (Especially for special needs)
- Accessibility
- Funding for options
- Client focused? Does $ meet this?

Table Group 5

- Fairer living wage
- Focus on reduction of tuition costs rather than loans and grants
- Relook at university costs and loans
- Open up criteria for programs for people living in poverty
- Complicated- application programs
- Create banner
- Simplify process
- Student nutrition programs
- Social assistance (More money)
- Guaranteed in (Game?)
- Happiness index
- Well being

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Question #4: How can all levels of government, community groups, the private sector, and other sectors work together to better address the barriers that keep people from getting out of poverty (e.g. access to employment, education, child care, supports, etc?)

Table Group 1

Definition of poverty agreement
Stakeholders making contact
People in poverty knowing about services
Holistic approach
Access to info by those living in poverty
Life skills
Educate private sector
Communication
Clear message on value of lifting people out of poverty
Agree on message why poverty hurts everyone
Stereotypes
Thinking ahead- helping those in poverty pays off later
Stakeholders working together to fund solutions.

What are the barriers?

Working in silos, We need to address working together
Definition of what does poverty mean (define it). Perhaps look to Quality of Life index instead of wage/income levels.
You can't have people at different levels all doing something different.
Communication-Difficult to find/access services
Working in silos and disconnected
Strategies need a holistic approach
Programs to gain, nurture life skills
"Food banks are great, but do not solve the problems"
Education is so important with regard to the reality of the data
Research
Need to promote the EOHU data info
We need to start with simplifying the wording and promote health and wellness.
Difficulty disconnected reality between socioeconomic realities
Private sector- Ignorant/blind to the realities
Private sector- Always thinking of the bottom line financially
Different VALUE systems
Private
Non-profit
Awareness and public education needed to educate both
Private
Non-profit
Education / Values
A collective effort is needed
Clash in values
We need a clear message from leaders in integrity to deal with poverty and bring the socioeconomic value clashes together
Agree on a message, why does poverty harm everyone?
Educate the region with leaders to back it.
Address the stereotypes of who lives in poverty and why they live there.

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Forward thinking is needed
Poverty reduction band aids are not working- Pool the resources and shift the paradigm
Discuss the costs re: delivery and pathways to fund the whole solution
There is a gap of services for people leaving the CAS system at the age of 16 who are incapable of applying for Ontario Works until the age of 18.

Table Group 2

More volunteers involved
Get information to community volunteers
Credentials create barriers
Community based broad based helping each other.
Collective support more than volunteers
Three levels of government- take party politics out
Identify barriers
Education- everyone in one room to solve problems
Learn from what works in other societies.
Longer terms in political office
Close loop holes- get rid of bad leaders who abuse their position
Successful policies should be kept- protect programs that work
Barrier- poverty must fit government criteria
Empowerment
Trade union movement

What are the barriers?

Increase volunteer groups "We give back, we get back." (Screening process required)
Credentials create barriers. Community based education is required. Applied learning with a variety of demographics.
Be careful, we are burning out volunteers. Work toward citizenship. Strength based. System wide contribution is needed.
Once we work with 3 levels of government, we work together.
In theory:
Educate everyone collectively.
Bring folks together.
Look to solutions
Central education based on Dr. Paul's data
Public awareness
Longer terms in office- more time with government in place
Close the "loop-holes" with regard to politicians who fraud. Accountability to get rid of bad leaders.
Everyone has a different idea about how to deal with poverty. Where is the middle ground? Is there an approach = common sense dictates?
If we have a good program, why do we change it every 4 years?
Fix programs, don't throw it out.
We need to define Poverty, understand that poverty crosses many experiences. Some criteria, government is very limiting
Move some of the criteria
Losing middle class- losing benefits/ losing wages

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Table Group 3

- Community forums
- More open strategy sessions
- Open communication
- Once a month community forums
- More private sector voices
- Changing attitudes
- Schools teaching core values
- Consistent messages on poverty by stakeholders

What are the barriers?

- Housing
- Partnerships: private/ government
- Transportation
- Private services should be supported to offer services
- Mixed messages on what we need to live well.
- Message: Okay to live within your means
- Community forums- bring everyone together
- Open communication:
- What has changed?
- What is new?
- What is different?
- Established on a regular basis
- Educate- awareness is crucial
- School boards
- Industry
- Hospital
- Health care
- What about the private sector? (Include members)
- How do we assess the attitudes/ values and educate?
- How do we educate/ train REACH THE PEOPLE
- How do we change the attitudes in SD&G
- Rural folks: making due vs. over-spending or spending on unhealthy issues.
- UCDSB- Character always program
- School based program
- How do we integrate students? (Consistent message)
- Sharing the data from Character always program and other programs.

What are the barriers?

- Housing
- Transportation
- (Who supports the initiative? Continuance is needed)
- To be a successful business, you need to create a business process to use the least trained person… integrate processes in place… keep labor costs under control. Go get an education… Through them an upper class message… bring them back and pay $16.00 per hour.
- Teach people “Live within your means”
- Savings/ budgeting/ life skills
- Keeping up with consumer driven attitudes vs. priorities
- Barrier= Value and perception.
- Look at the folks who need the help.

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Table Group 4

- Government to direct people to where jobs are to be found
- Communication across sectors
- University programs geared toward jobs
- Funding for addiction, mental help
- Rural areas- access
- Transportation
- Early prevention
- Addressing poverty for the elderly
- Banking experts (private) for budgets
- Keep seniors at home longer
- Private sector supporting seniors to stay in their home.
- More funding for students to access programs
- Business management requirement- must sit on a non-profit board
- Local businesses coming together with community
- Be aware not to raise the cost of doing business.
- People becoming responsible for their help but working together, supporting each other
- Make connections with new Canadians to resources
- Bring back play outside
- Teach people about budgeting
- Government get together, map out: Where are the jobs?
- Advertise it
- Study where the jobs are in Canada
- One stop place to go
- Where are the trends?
- Communication and marketing is needed with accurate information.
- Universities need to be realistic about job opportunities.
- More funding for addictions/ mental health
- Not enough facilities for follow-up and ongoing care
- Transportation and accessibility to services with an integrated approach.
- Use Dr. Paul's message to promote awareness and early prevention.
- Aging population- we need to address the aging population.
- Home care services
- Establish community based, strength based
- Students
- Volunteers
- Co-op
- Fund projects to access projects
- Fund programs (JobZone programs)
- Business: Management expected to sit on a (board of) charitable board
- Communication and awareness
- Bring the message back
- Share information back to employees
- Management transfer messages to staff. Spread the word.
- Private sector/social service- bring together.
- Networking/ sharing data
- People need to become responsible to take responsibility for their wellness
- Connect newcomers to Canada and educate/ awareness
- Play outside
- Have people learn/ teach life skills
- Budgeting/Saving
- Banking experts

Appendix B -The original Transcribed Notes

Table Group 5

- Bridges out of poverty program
- Working with people seeking to get out of poverty
- Get rid of “red tape” - Clear paperwork
- Agencies having a consistent message
- Circle of care
- Communication- community agencies more actively involved.
- Agencies providing extra time to work on addressing barriers for those in poverty.
- Strategic planning community wide.
- Ongoing community forums.
- Example of program:
- PPP (Positive Parenting Program)
- Example of agencies coming together
- PPP- program leads to empowerment
- Bridges out of poverty program offered across the community
- Poverty has to be raised on agenda at all three levels of government
- More awareness- especially municipal
- Make private sector part of the solution- not just for money
- Educate private sector
- Example: Mayor’s task force to end violence against women
- Remove RED TAPE
- Bridges out of Poverty
- Organic way to facilitate change
- Red tape between agencies with different protocols/ forms etc… (Legal Clinic, Tri County Literacy)
- Be consistent
- Embrace referrals
- Share informed consent
- Circle of care
- Privacy of information important
- Communication (connect the community all funders)
- Provincial/Regional
- Corporate
- Get community agencies involved to discuss/ share
- Complexities of agencies protocols
- Barrier to advocate/ link/share
- Extra time= priority
- Space/time
- Someone has to coordinate and pull the services together
- Strategic planning with communities is required, strong leaders needed
- Example Triple P parenting now a regional program, buy-in from the five counties (2 year process)
- Training other agencies is ongoing…
- We are giving parents the tools and empowering folks
- Agencies are on the same page
- Getting by in a just getting world -Community Circles-
- Higher agenda item on all 3 levels of government. Bring the politicians together for forums/ conferences for 2-3 days. Discuss.
- More representation from the municipal level- grand up level
- Municipal politicians have to embrace private sector folks as part of the solution.
- Not to always ask them for money
- Municipal politicians need to become aware… they are in need of awareness training.
- Life skill training

Appendix B -The original Transcribed Notes

Question #5: When it comes to reducing poverty in Ontario, what would success look like 15 years from now?

Table Group 1

- No more negative stats for our children.
- Increased test scores
- Increased number of high school grads, higher education, and full reach of potential.
- No need for food banks and other food programs. Families able to feed children.
- More healthy family dynamics , instead of unhealthy.
- Less crime
- Lower domestic violence.
- Lower divorce rate perhaps.
- Insightful, informed society- make better choices
- Increased preventative programs instead of reactive
- Less suicide
- Increased healthy behaviors (exercise, healthy food)
- Elimination of Ghettos
- Oral health programs accessible for all
- Ministries talk to each other, joint strategies and work together
- Space between poor and wealthy reduced.
- Increased focus on getting people into trades.
- Good housing programs.
- Day care access
- Would be great if one person could stay home with child while other works-less family stress- one income is OK!
- More accessible activity.
- Further decrease of children in welfare system
- OW really be emergency fund, not long-term.

Question #5 Group 2

- Thriving economy
- Education cost reduced to enable high education communities
- Everyone has a healthy place called home
- In an ideal world, free healthy food
- Health outcomes would improve
- Lower illiteracy level
- Everyone making a living wage
- Health care costs reduced (leads to lower taxes)
- Healthier population in general
- Everyone has life skills
- Decreased crime
- Expand school nutrition
- Universal retirement pension
- Universal eye care/ dental/ drug plan
- Decreased mental health issues
- Higher quality of life
- Lower levels of stress = less domestic violence, etc…
- Increased sense of community
- Increased family size
- Easy access programs for those first 27 months of life.
- Subsidized day care

Appendix B -The original Transcribed Notes

- More interest from feds and province to invest in social programs.
- Talking the truth, need to share more, contribute more
- Honest, informed discussions
- Rights that everyone deserves

Table Group 3

- EDI scores- disparity gone- rich and poor are same
- Less battered homes (men and women), less single parents, less mental health issues, etc…
- Happier society
- Access to services
- Free education
- Long term health costs down
- Smallest wage is livable
- A tangible, steady reduction = success
- Rich are rich but the gap is smaller or closed.
- Healthy level of income
- Realistic goals reached
- "Local solutions for local issues"
- Keeping what we have *post offices, schools
- Always revisiting the cycle and see how we are doing.
- "See ourselves as sustainable- support ourselves financially, environmental balance maintained" perhaps revise our priorities (social first, not financial)
- Realize that not everyone can go to university, finding ways to train everyone to develop individual potential.
- Take a hard look at licensing in trades.
- Teach those who are not self-sustaining how to be self-sustaining.
- Educating on life skills
- Beyond 21 programs for developmentally challenged further developed

Table Group 4

- Better health, reduced smoking, reduced violence, teen pregnancy
- Basic needs are met (food, health and housing)
- More jobs-better salary
- Sustainable economy needs to exist in our area
- Keep our industries in Canada
- Less dependence on food banks or more monetary support
- No need for food banks
- Lower number of high school drop outs
- People support, be part of, spend LOCAL
- Improved local transportation
- Inexpensive/ quality childcare.
- Access to doctors/ clinics/ health care
- More doctors to provide quality time
- Increased housing quality = more dignity
- Decrease bullying
- Activities for people and kids need to be less costly or free
- Ensuring inclusivity

Appendix B -The original Transcribed Notes

Table Group 5

- Health budget under used
- Less than 5% child poverty
- Access to healthy food
- Plenty of affordable housing/ quality housing
- More equality between rich and poor
- Back to nature/ off the cement
- Eat, buy, support LOCAL
- Food NOT lawns
- Kids walk to school
- Smaller satellite everything (schools, classes, etc…)
- Community Health Centers everywhere
- More nurse practioners
- More educated, trained, skilled people
- Invite universities to the area
- Life skills taught in school
- Make apprenticeship more accessible
- WORLD PEACE
- Services accessible to all for everyone
- 30% reduction for universities-good start
- Need to find ways to get people to go to school
- Stop being so much of a " throw-away society"
- "Sustainable way of life"
- Family values, pride in who you are
- Building community intergenerational
- Bring back the front porch
- Less dysfunctional families
- More connection between people
- Less stressed kids, lower performance anxiety
- No more long waits in hospitals
- More clinics open 24/7
- More focus on the elderly
- Good to have option of 1 income family
- Increase EI mat leave to cover 27 months
- More paid holidays
- Changes in pensions
- Universal dental care.

What have we missed? What has not yet been covered during today's event?

Group #1

Access to post curricular activities - have a late bus system
Local purchasing policies
Use infrastructure better in the community
What are people living in Poverty thinking -Linking livid experience to the decision makers
More Advocacy for lived experience
Address rural community - mind sets being different in community (rural culture)
Allow for adaption locally

Appendix B -The original Transcribed Notes

Group # 2

Enjoyable process
Discussion re: funding
How does public sector support?
Need public/private support.
Government investment instead of spending.
Wage subsidies should support living wage, not minimum wage.
Common sense, long-term investment
Take politics out.
Employment equity
Equal wages for women/minorities
Continue education on equality. It's working politics need to change.

Group #3

Well being
Work with dignity
Opportunities to contribute/vs. punishment for not working.
Food funding as a right and responsibility vs. charity
Focus on the declaration of human rights
Convention on the rights of children.
Engagement of private sector
More people engaged in government

Group #4

Communication
More representatives from agencies serving people with disabilities
More poverty reduction on agenda at all levels of government
Working groups in communities
Getting to the root cause of poverty
What criteria in the government using to make decisions about poverty?
How is strategy being evaluated?
Tax breaks or rebates
    Ex: for oral health
Tax breaks for volunteers
Many agencies know about the barriers. Developmentally challenged need to participate in forums, why aren't they here?
People with disabilities need a voice
We need to engage the people. .
Underline poverty needs to be moved up the agenda
What is the root cause?
Explore it and discuss it.
Do we have a mechanism in place via 3 levels of government to facilitate consistent messages?
Solutions with regard to poverty
How do we evaluate the mechanisms?
Strategies
Wellness breaks
Oral health tax break
Tax breaks for reduction strategies
The only people who get to invest are those who have money = Good!
But what about folks who live in poverty?

Appendix B -The original Transcribed Notes

Group # 5

Follow the Data -Get real data - E.D.I. Dr Paul's speech
Focus on young moms and dads
Access to health care - Provincial and rural
Look at new issues in Lens of Province
People in Poverty move to urban areas where there is support
Bring down the Silos - work on the issues across the ministries (problem with trust between government and ministries)
Employment opportunities that help young people stay in their communities
Cooperation between Government and levels of government and agencies

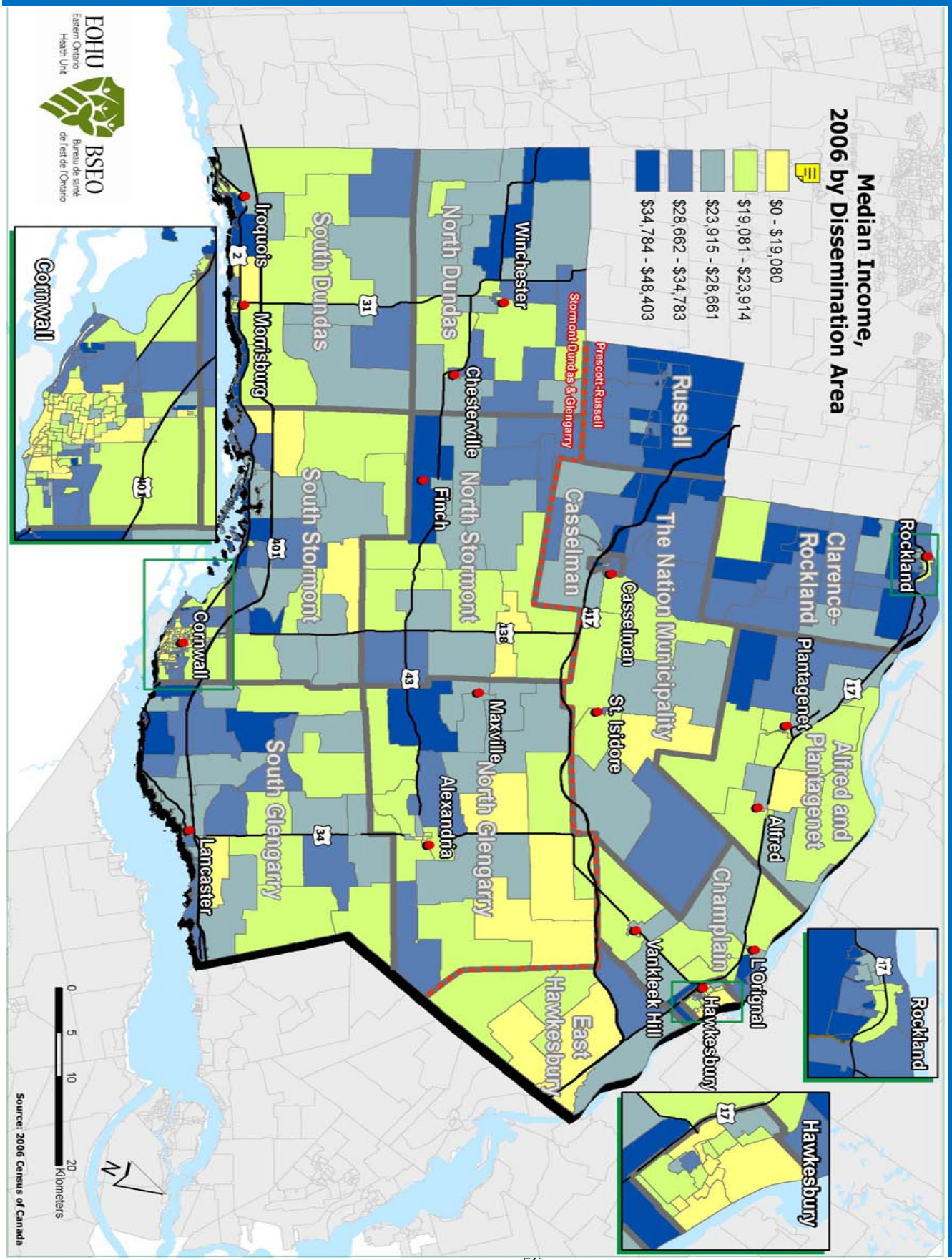
Appendix C - List of Organizations Represented

The following is a list of local organizations which had sent representatives to the consultation on January 21st 2014.

Note: There were several people who attended the session who did not have an affiliation with an organization however, we chose not to signal any individuals out in this report.

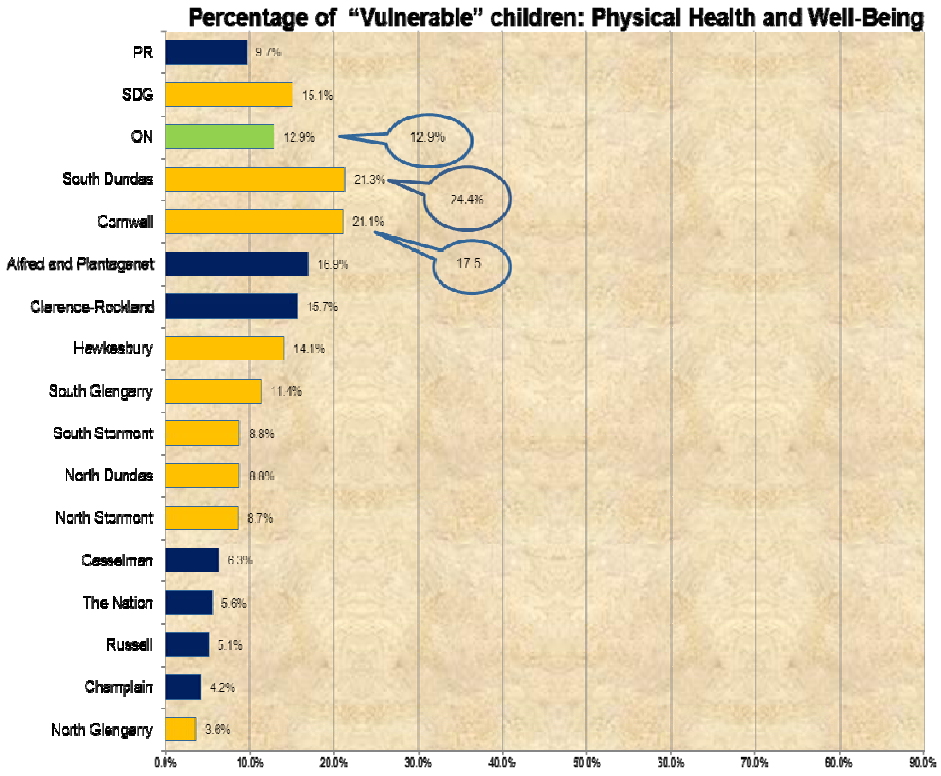
- Agape Centre
- Canadian Mental Health Assosiation
- Centre de Sante Communitaire de L'Estrie
- Community Living Dundas
- Contact North
- Cornwall Daily News
- Counselling Support Services
- Eastern Ontario Health Unit
- Eastern Ontario Training Board
- L'Equipe psycho-social
- Glengarry Inter Agency Group
- House of Lazarus
- Jim McDonnell's Office
- Labour Council
- Legal Clinic
- Linking Hands
- Maison Interlude House
- Naomi's Family Resource Centre
- North Dundas Township
- Ontario Early Years Centre
- SD&D Library
- Seaway Valley Community Health Centre
- Sexual Assault Support Services
- Social Development Council
- South Dundas Lutheran Church
- South Dundas Township
- South Glengarry Township
- South Mountain-Hallville Pastoral Charge
- St. Lawrence College
- TR Leger
- Upper Canada District School Board
- Winchester Press

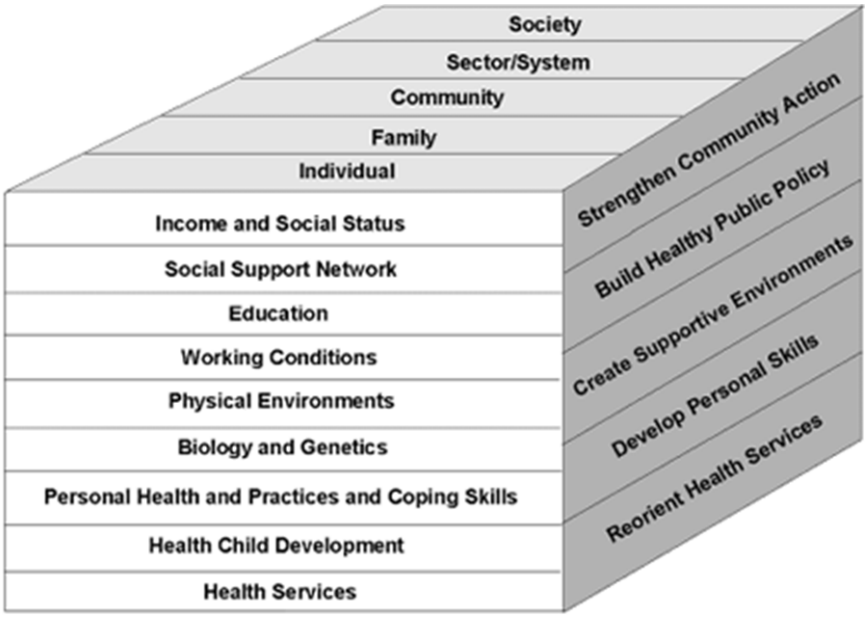
Appendix D - Map of S.D.G. - P.R.
with overlap of median Income

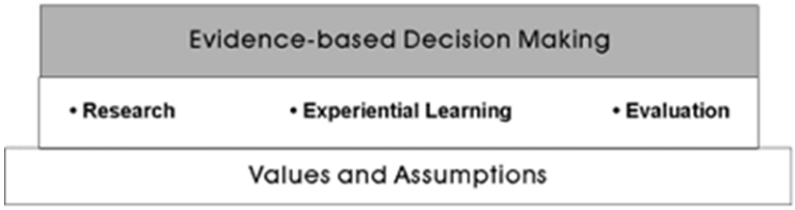


Appendix E - Charts

In Order of appearance

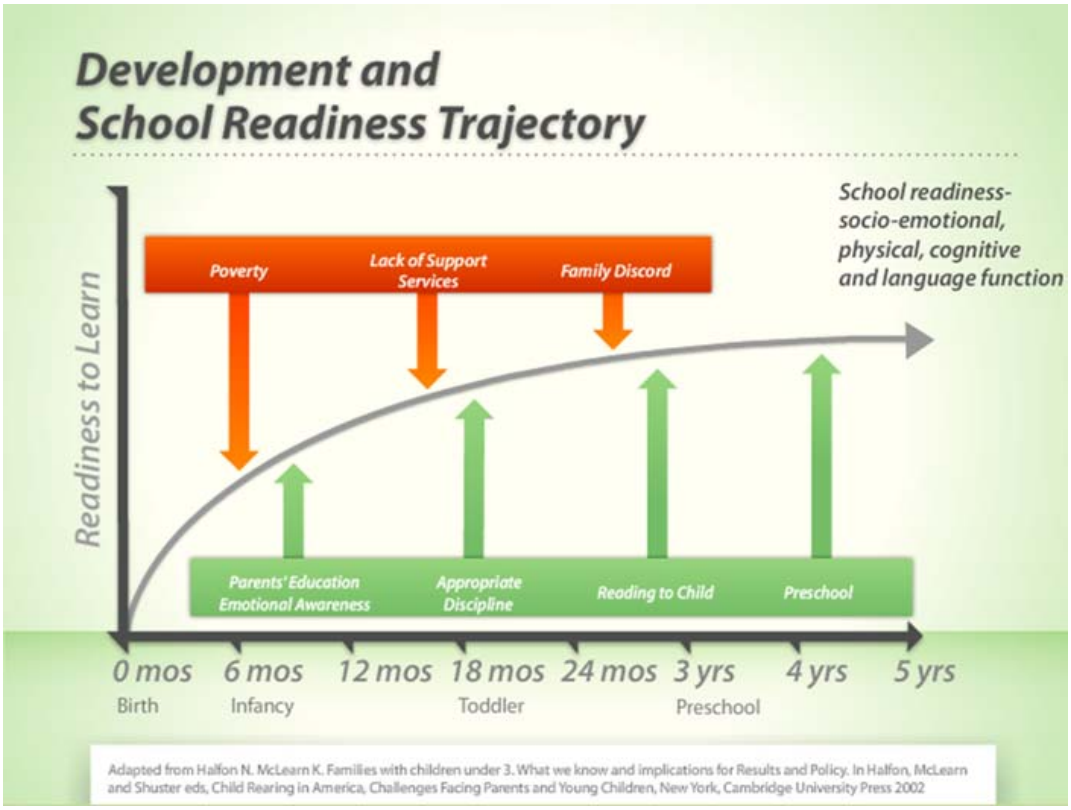






Population Health Promotion Model

Appendix E


Development and
School Readiness Trajectory
School readiness-
socio-emotional,
physical, cognitive
and language function
Readiness to Learn
Poverty
Lack of Support
Services
Family Discord
Parents' Education
Emotional Awareness
Appropriate
Discipline
Reading to Child
Preschool
0 mos
Birth
6 mos
Infancy
12 mos
18 mos
Toddler
24 mos
3 yrs
Preschool
4 yrs
5 yrs
Adapted from Halfon N. McLearn K. Families with children under 3. What we know and implications for Results and Policy. In Halfon, McLearn and Shuster eds, Child Rearing in America, Challenges Facing Parents and Young Children, New York, Cambridge University Press 2002

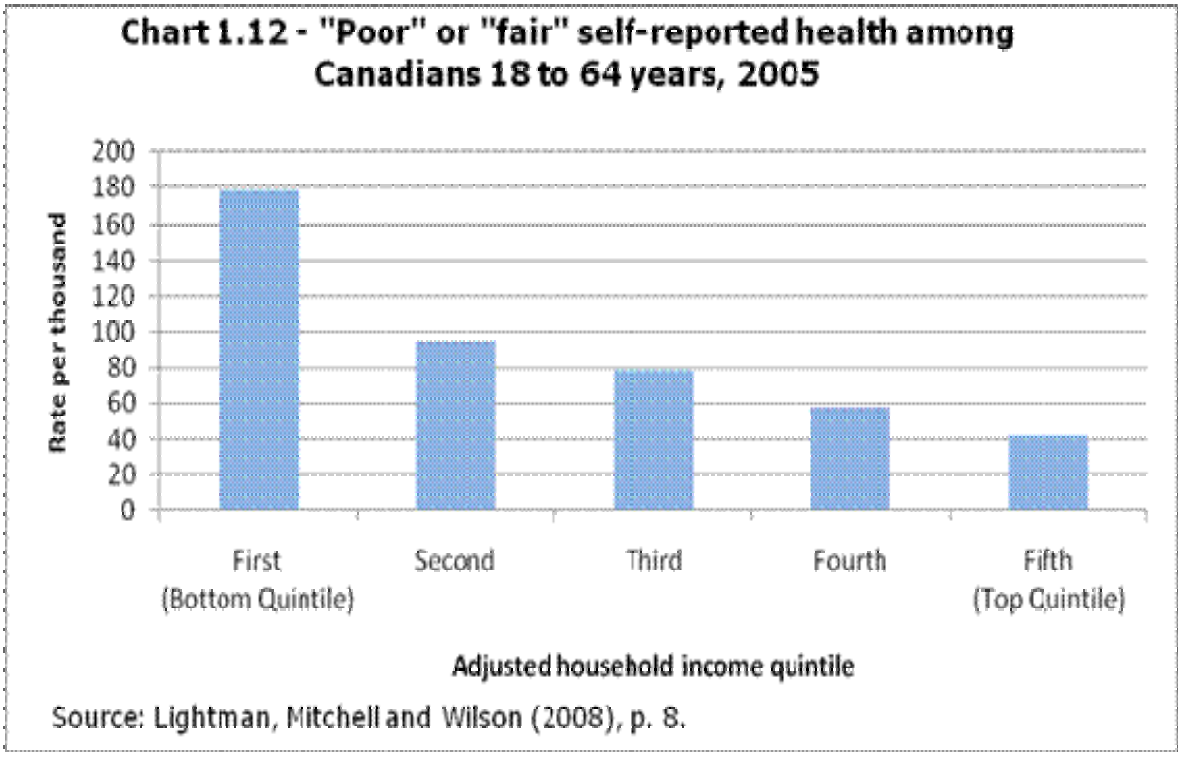
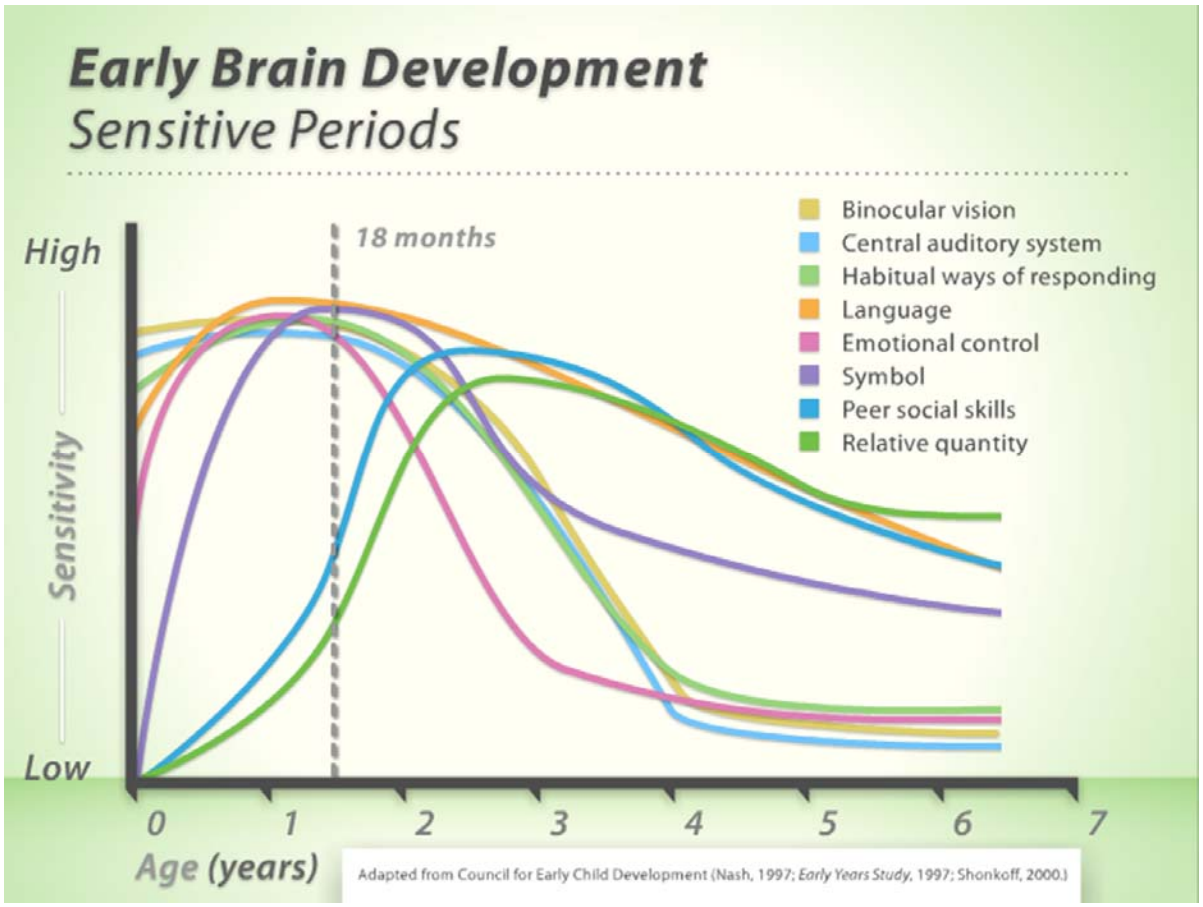
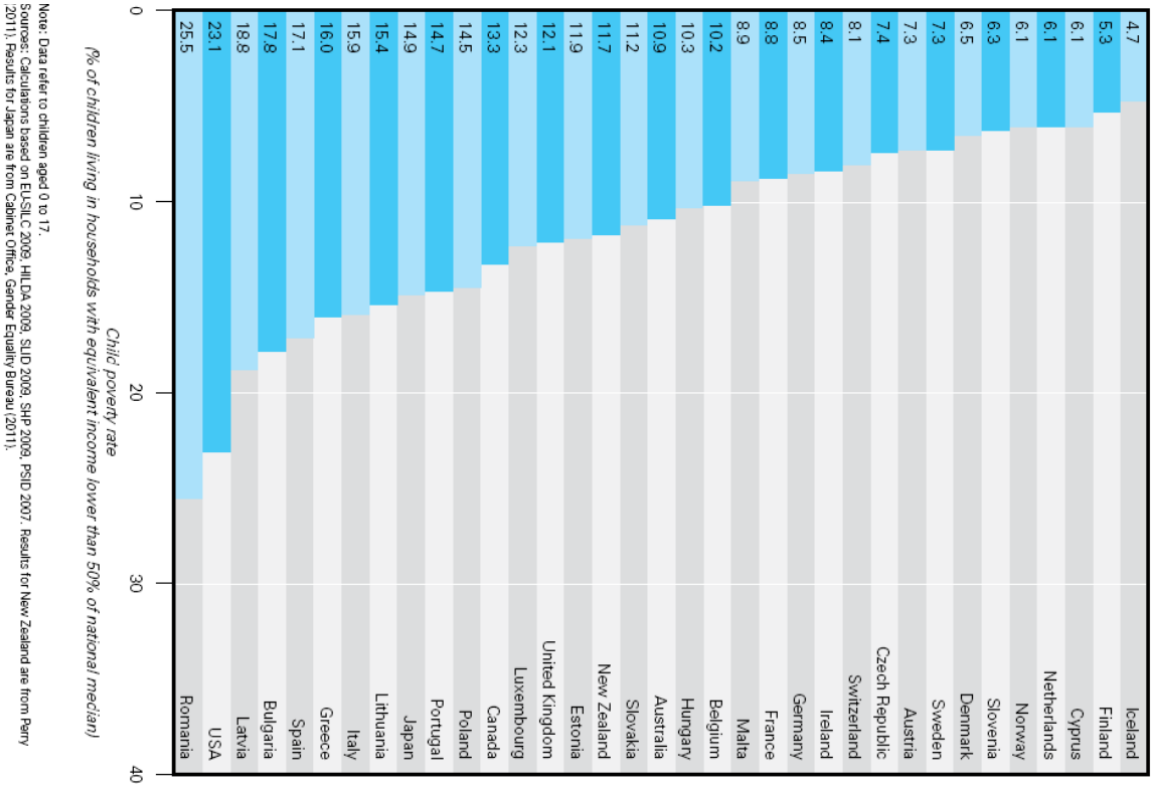


Chart 1.12 - "Poor" or "fair" self-reported health among Canadians 18 to 64 years, 2005
Rate per thousand
200
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
First
(Bottom Quintile)
Second
Third
Fourth
Fifth
(Top Quintile)
Adjusted household income quintile
Source: Lightman, Mitchell and Wilson (2008), p. 8.

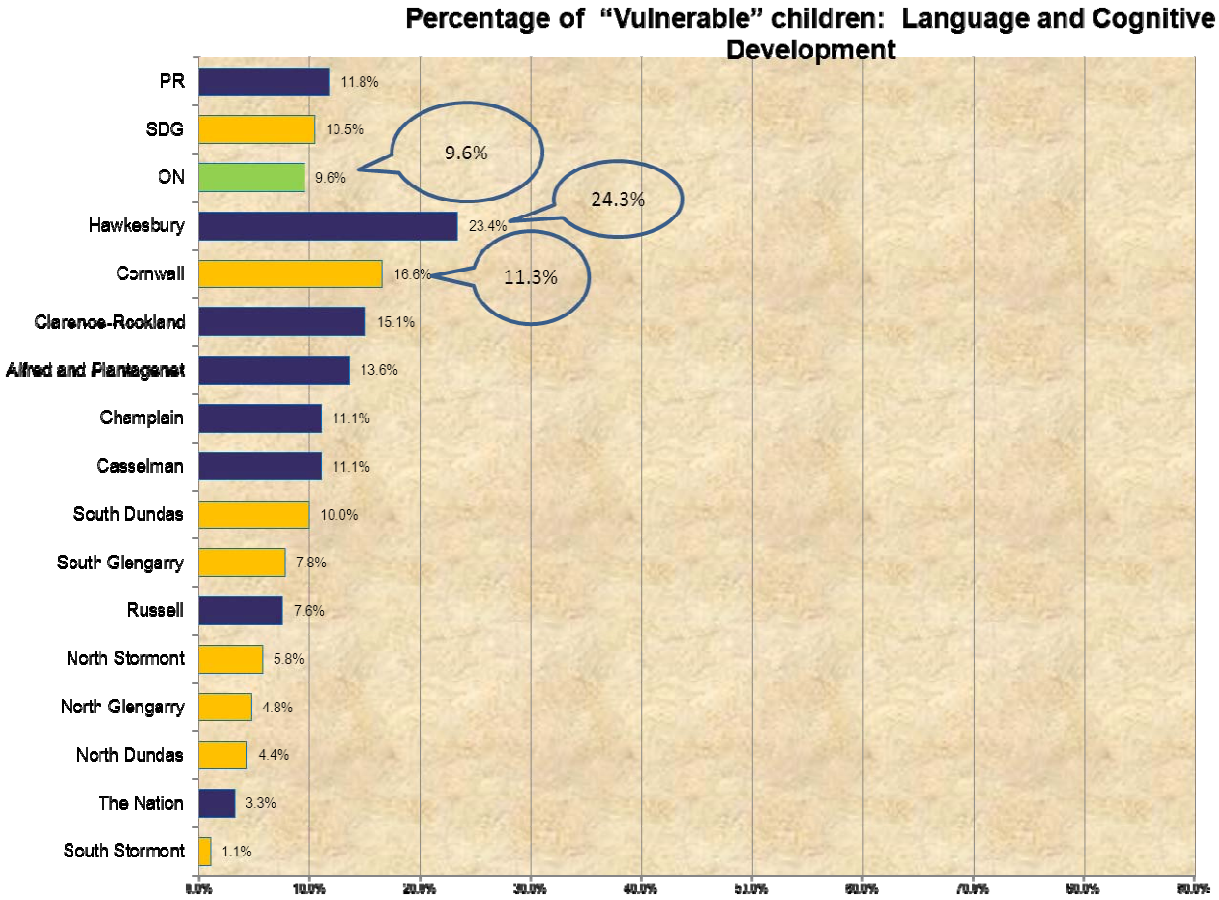
Appendix E





Note: Data refer to children aged 0 to 17.
Sources: Calculations based on EUSILC 2009, HILDA 2009, SLID 2009, SHP 2009, PSID 2007. Results for New Zealand are from Perry (2011). Results for Japan are from Cabinet Office, Gender Equality Bureau (2011).

Appendix E



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