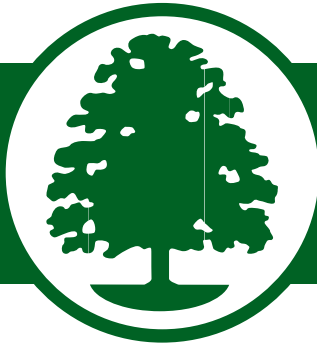


Ottawa's
Vital Signs[®]
2009

The City's Annual Checkup





The Community Foundation of Ottawa

Created by and for the people of Ottawa, the Community Foundation of Ottawa is a public, non-profit organization that has been serving the community since 1987. Our role is to connect people who care with causes that matter, enabling generous citizens to enhance the quality of life for all. As a respected community convenor, we provide local leadership by bringing people from all sectors together to identify and address issues in a proactive manner.

Our Vision

Inspired by our donors, grantees and partners, we make a vital difference in our community and our world. The Community Foundation of Ottawa is a powerful force to engender a strong, positive and caring community.

Our Mission

The Community Foundation of Ottawa nurtures philanthropy and works with partners to have an enduring impact on communities.

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This report is also available at www.ottawavitalsigns.ca.

Aussi disponible en français.

Checkup 2009

Welcome to the fourth edition of Ottawa's Vital Signs, the Community Foundation of Ottawa's annual checkup on the health of our city. Measuring indicators in 11 areas critical to Ottawa's quality of life, the report assigns grades and identifies significant trends and issues that may require attention.

As an objective body, the Community Foundation provides statistics and information throughout the report for members of the public to use in order to formulate individual conclusions and explore opportunities and potential solutions as a community. It does not offer commentary or opinion, nor does it reflect a particular point of view. Instead, we invite and encourage you, the reader, to raise the issues presented in the report to the level of debate and public discourse.

In keeping with that goal, the Community Foundation of Ottawa will present the first in a series of community conversations on Tuesday, October 20th at the Ottawa Public Library from 2 – 4 p.m. Do you have your finger on the pulse of our community? Come and have your say about the things that matter to all of us who make Ottawa our home. Together with our panel of experts, we will discuss some of Ottawa's most pressing issues and explore the many opportunities our city has to offer.

Thanks to everyone who has participated in the making of this year's Ottawa's Vital Signs report, including our

Advisory Committee of expert volunteers, as well as the many youth leaders who took part in the Foundation's *Youth Taking Action* event earlier in the year. We are also grateful to the many individuals and organizations who took the time to consult with us, and to the graders who completed the survey, the results of which provided the grades and priority-setting for this report.

Grades and Priorities

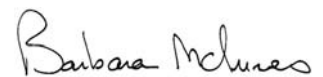
With the help of a wide cross-section of graders, we have assigned each indicator in the report one of the following grades:

- (1 icon) = Very poor
- (2 icons) = Poor
- (3 icons) = Neither poor nor good
- (4 icons) = Good
- (5 icons) = Very Good

Graders chose **Health and Wellness** as the community's highest priority for action. **Housing** and the **Gap Between Rich and Poor** tied in second place, followed by the **Environment**.



Scott A. Wilson, FCA, TEP
Chair, Board of Governors



Barbara McInnes, CM
President & CEO

Context

Many of Ottawa's distinctive characteristics support its ongoing success as a community. As Canada's federal capital, Ottawa has a unique bilingual and bi-cultural makeup, with a vibrant artistic and cultural milieu. The city is affluent, with a population that is notably better educated than average, as well as more economically active and participatory in community life. Situated at the confluence of three great rivers, Ottawa enjoys a spectacular natural setting, and includes both urban and rural areas within its boundaries.

Growth has been decelerating, with the city's population increasing just over 1% last year to 898,150 compared to 888,882 in 2007. In 2008, it was estimated that slightly less than 1.2 million persons lived in the Ottawa-Gatineau Census Metropolitan Area, the country's fourth largest urban agglomeration after Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

Residents are younger and healthier on average than in Canada as a whole, but the population is aging rapidly. Over 144,000 people live with physical or mental conditions that limit their activities. As in other major urban areas, Ottawa is becoming much more ethnically diverse, with 156 ethnic groups identified in the 2006 Census.

While it has a healthy private sector, Ottawa's economy has traditionally been led by the federal government, the region's largest employer. With its services-dominated economy, Ottawa has experienced less dislocation than communities dependent on natural resources and manufacturing. Despite the global recession, the local economy enjoyed a moderate 0.3% real growth last year.



Nevertheless, as in the rest of the country, the recent economic environment has been challenging. Growth was down sharply in 2008, with output per worker falling almost 4%. However, employment in the region expanded by 2.4%, well above the national and provincial rates.

This year, retail sales are likely to fall more sharply in Ottawa-Gatineau than for the country as a whole. Although the economic impact of the 60-day Ottawa transit strike in 2008/2009 will become clearer over time, an economic analysis undertaken by Ottawa's Market Research Corporation estimates a loss of \$8 million per day, of which approximately \$5 million resulted from lost retail business.

Despite the recession, Ottawa has continued to experience tight labour market conditions overall. In 2008, the unemployment rate in Ottawa was 4.9%, well below both the national and provincial rates of 6.1% and 6.5%, respectively. The unemployment rates among visible minorities and the Aboriginal population, however, were notably higher.

Visible minorities account for approximately one-fifth of the population of the city, higher than the national average, but below the proportion for Ontario, numerically dominated by the Greater Toronto Area.



Foreign-born persons accounted for 22.3% of Ottawa's population, or 178,545 persons in 2006, compared to 21.8% in 2001. Persons born outside Canada tend to settle in the city core, with the Bay Ward being the census tract with the most concentrated foreign-born population in the region.

Not surprisingly, in assessing how their community is doing, Ottawans point to the gap between rich and poor, the availability of affordable housing, the quality of health care, and the environment as priorities for improvement.

Charles Barrett
Chair, Ottawa's Vital Signs Advisory Committee

Note: The focus of Ottawa's Vital Signs is the city of Ottawa; however, where appropriate, and when only regional data is available, we report on indicators for the larger Ottawa-Gatineau Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). In some cases, the data presented are for the Ottawa CMA, which is the Ontario side of the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA. The differences between the Ottawa CMA and the city of Ottawa are not significant.



Gap Between Rich and Poor

Community graders ranked the gap between rich and poor, along with housing, as the **second-highest** priority for action in Ottawa this year.

In 2006, the overall poverty rate in Ottawa, based on the Low Income Measure (LIM), an indicator of relative poverty, was 18.6%, compared to 18.4% in 2000. The 2006 poverty rate was 12.3% lower than the provincial average and 13% lower than the national average.



According to the 2006 Census, 23.7% of people aged 15 to 24 in the City of Ottawa lived with incomes below the Low Income Cut Off (LICO), compared to 21.7% in the 2001 Census.



According to the 2006 Census, more than one in five persons reporting activity limitations lived on a low income in the City of Ottawa. The incidence of before-tax income below the Low Income Cut Off (LICO)

for this group in 2005 was 21%, compared to 21.9% in 2000.



From March 2008 to March 2009, an average of 43,800 people per month requested assistance from Ottawa Food Bank agencies. Food banks also reported a 9% increase in visits from March 2007 to March 2009.



During the 2008/2009 school year, the number of students being served by the School Breakfast Program in Ottawa was 9,880, with a total of 1,877,200 breakfasts served. The program has seen an increase of 7,445 students and 1,414,700 breakfasts served over the last 10 years.



Household Compositions for Ottawa Food Bank Agency Beneficiaries

Single-parent families = 30 %

Two-parent families = 27 %

Single people = 35 %

Couples with no children = 8 %

Source: The Ottawa Food Bank, March 2009

Nationally, in the 12 months prior to April 2009, the food price component of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 7.1%. Large increases were recorded for fresh vegetables (+26%), fresh fruit (+16.8%), cereal products (+9.6%), beef (+9%) and chicken (+9%).

Primary source of income for Ottawa Food Bank Agency Beneficiaries

Employment = 17%

Employment Insurance = 3%

Social Assistance = 46%

Provincial Disability Support = 22%

Private Disability Plan = 1%

Pension Income = 4%

Student Loan or Scholarship = 3%

No income = 2%

Other = 2%

Source: The Ottawa Food Bank, March 2009



Did You Know?

A common approach to measuring the income gap among the population is to compare the incomes earned by the top 10% of earners, representing the 90th percentile, to the incomes of the bottom 10% of earners, representing the 10th percentile. In 2006, the ratio of the 90th percentile income in the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA was 7.27 times higher than the 10th percentile income, a 2.6% decrease from 2005.



Safety

► *The Crime Severity Index, a national measurement used by police forces across the country, allows for the ranking of the seriousness of crimes by assigning a different weight to each type of offence based on court sentences. Using 2006 as a base year, this index gives more weight to more serious crimes and assigns a value out of 100.*

In 2007, Ottawa's violent crime rate was 890 offences per 100,000 people and its severity index for violent crimes was 77.4, the second-lowest violent crime rate out of nine cities with populations of 500,000 and more, and below the national rate of 96.5. 🛡️🛡️🛡️

In 2008, the Ottawa Police investigated 3,396 reports of domestic violence, resulting in 1,441 charges laid. 🛡️🛡️🛡️

As of March 2009, 17,330 charges were pending for adults in the Ottawa Region of the Ontario Court of Justice. 6,724 of these charges had been pending for longer than eight months. 🛡️🛡️

For the year ending March 2009, the average number of days to disposition in the Ottawa Region of the Ontario Court of Justice was 208 days, with an average of 9.8 court appearances to disposition. Of the over 35,000 charges disposed in the Ottawa Region for the year ending

March 2009, 59% were stayed or withdrawn. 🛡️🛡️

In a 2008 public survey conducted by the Ottawa Police Service, 64% of respondents felt "very safe" while walking alone during the day in their neighbourhood, while 23% felt "very safe" at night. Only 50% of females reported feeling safe walking alone after dark, compared to 70% of males. 🛡️🛡️

Ottawa Police Services aims to respond to Priority 1 calls for service city-wide within 15 minutes 90% of the time. In 2008, response times for Priority 1 calls were within



15 minutes 87.2% of the time, a slight decrease from 88.8% in 2007. 🛡️🛡️🛡️



Did You Know?

In 2007, 75.3% of high-school students between grades 9 and 12 in the Champlain Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN) area, including Ottawa, reported alcohol use and 36.4% reported using cannabis over a 12-month period. Among students in grades 10 to 12, 10.8% reported taking part in drinking and driving, and 16% reported driving while under the influence of cannabis.



Health and Wellness

Community graders ranked health and wellness as the **highest** priority for action in Ottawa this year.

In 2005/2006, 5.9% of babies were born with low birth weights in the Champlain LHIN area, including Ottawa, which was below both the provincial rate of 6.3% and the national rate of 6.1%.



From 2002 to 2007, an average of 1,305 visits per year were made to Ottawa emergency rooms (ERs) for self-harm incidents. Ottawa's rate of ER visits for self-harm incidents in 2007 was 148.1 per 100,000 population, which was higher than the provincial rate of 133.4.



In 2008, the Youth Services Bureau assisted 4,153 youth for mental health related issues, with most youth

accessing services more than once. Some of the most prevalent issues facing these youth were depression, anxiety, abuse, assault, persistent bullying, homelessness, violent behaviour, anger, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts and/or attempts.



In the spring of 2008, there were a total of 7,503 Long Term Care spaces across the Champlain LHIN with an occupancy rate of 99.6%. There were 2,748 individuals on the wait list.

In 2007, the rate of ER visits for falls in Ottawa was 2,446 per 100,000 population, which was lower than the Ontario rate of 2,897 per 100,000 population. The rate of hospitalization for falls in Ottawa was 248 per

From 2002 to 2007, elderly women aged 85 years and older were most likely to visit an ER for a fall at a rate of 14,571 per 100,000 women of this age group. Elderly women of this age were also most likely to be seriously injured from a fall, resulting in hospitalization at a rate of 5,080 per 100,000, while the rate for elderly men aged 85 years and older was 3,614.5 per 100,000 men of this age group.

100,000, compared to the Ontario rate of 252.

In 2008, the Seniors Health & Caregiver Support team from Ottawa Public Health reached over 1,400 older adults through their education sessions on falls prevention, identifying risk factors for falls and areas of intervention. In addition, workshops were offered to more than 250 health professionals, service providers and university students on best practices for falls prevention.



Did You Know?

The City of Ottawa 2006 Health Status Report identified suicide as the leading cause of death for males aged 20 to 44 years

in 2002. The most recent data from 2004 indicates that the overall male rate of suicide was 8.6 deaths per 100,000 population, which is at least double the female rate of 3.9 deaths per 100,000 population.

Emergency Room (ER) visit rates for self-harm incidents were higher for females from 10 to 64 years old, with the highest rate for females aged 15 to 19, at a rate of 839 per 100,000 females in this age group, compared to the male rate of 220 per 100,000 males aged 15 to 19.

As a result of provincial legislation passed in 2006, 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) were established in Ontario. Each LHIN has the responsibility to plan, manage, and fund the health care system at the local and regional levels. The network that includes the Ottawa region is called the Champlain LHIN.



Housing

Community graders ranked housing, along with the gap between rich and poor, as the **second-highest** priority for action in Ottawa this year.

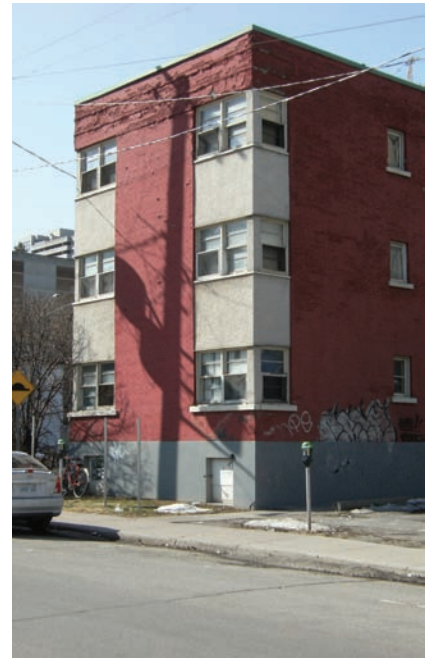
In 2008, there were 7,045 people using emergency shelters in Ottawa, representing a 7.2% increase from 2007. The average length of stay in emergency shelters in 2008 was 51 days, which was five days longer than in 2007. Youth remained in shelters 70% longer in 2008 than in 2007. 🏠 🏠

In 2008, the number of households on the social housing waiting list in Ottawa was 9,692, compared to 9,370 in 2007. Also in 2008, 1,895, or 19%, of households on the waiting list were housed within social housing. This was down from 2,116, or 22%, in 2007. 🏠 🏠 🏠

In 2008, the number of people on the waiting list for supportive housing was 2,600, compared to 2,000 in 2007. 🏠 🏠

In 2008, the rental vacancy rate of two-bedroom apartments in Ottawa was 1.6%, which was lower than the average for all Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) at 2.1%. Ottawa's rental vacancy rate for two-bedroom apartments was down from 2.4% in 2007. 🏠 🏠

Total housing starts in the Ontario portion of the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA from January to April 2009 was 1,259 units, down from 1,983 for the same period in 2008. 🏠 🏠 🏠



The average purchase price of a single, detached unit from January to April 2009 was \$407,200, compared to \$397,630 for the same period in 2008, representing a 2.4% increase. 🏠 🏠

Length of Shelter Stay in Ottawa

	2007	2008
Average length of stay in shelters (days)	46	51
Single men	48	48
Single women	43	46
Single youth	27	46
Families	46	53

Source: The Alliance to End Homelessness




Did You Know?


The Census captures household shelter costs for renters and owners across Canada, which includes the monthly mortgage payment for owners and monthly rent for renters, plus the costs of electricity, heat, and municipal services.

According to the 2006 Census, the proportion of renter households spending 30% or more of their income on shelter costs in Ottawa, as defined above, was 42.4%, which was 5.2% higher than the national average. The proportion of owner households spending more than 30% of their income on shelter was 15.1%, compared to the national average of 17.8%.



Learning

According to the 2006 Census, 74.2% of the Aboriginal population in Ottawa aged 15 years and over had completed high school, which was higher than the provincial rate of 62.4% and the national rate of 56.3%. 

In 2008, 61.2% of the population 15 years and over in Ottawa had completed post-secondary education (having earned a university degree, post-secondary certificate or diploma), up 17.3 percentage points from 43.9% in 1990. The rate for Ottawa was higher than both the national average (50.4%) and the provincial average (51.6%). 

The Pathways to Education program in the west end of Ottawa supports students from low-income neighbourhoods to successfully complete high school and move on to post-secondary education.

In 2008, 75% of students in the Pathways to

Education program in Ottawa received seven or more credits, compared to 64% of students from the comparison cohort (students from the same low-income communities who had not been involved with the Pathways to Education program). In addition, 75.6% of students in the Pathways to Education program missed less than 5% of school, compared to 57.8% from the comparison cohort.



In 2005/2006, children who attended an organized part-time preschool or junior-kindergarten program in Ottawa scored significantly higher in all five of the school readiness domains (physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge) than those who did not.



Early Development Index Domain Scores for Part-time Preschool Children

Ottawa 2005/06 non-special needs students (N=7578)

Domain	Preschool			No Preschool			Statistically significant?
	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	
Physical health and well-being	1311	9.12	1.10	3392	8.92	1.23	YES
Social competence	1313	8.78	1.56	3395	8.43	1.72	YES
Emotional maturity	1303	8.35	1.42	3350	8.07	1.45	YES
Language and cognitive development	1309	8.99	1.31	3391	8.47	1.72	YES
Communication skills and general knowledge	1312	8.44	2.10	3393	7.62	2.63	YES

n = sample size, SD = standard deviation
Source: Success By 6 Ottawa

HIPPY Ottawa is a program that provides “Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters”. This free program began in December 2008 and currently supports 45 culturally diverse families with three- and four-year-old children in Vanier, Overbrook, Lowertown, Centretown, Hunt Club and South Bank. HIPPY Ottawa partners with local schools, as well as the Vanier Community Service Centre, the “Friends of HIPPY”, the Inuit Children’s Centre, and the Vanier Branch of the Ottawa Public Library.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HIPPO OTTAWA



“Before, I felt lost. HIPPY helps me to know what to give to my kids.”

Home Visitors with the HIPPY program speak a variety of languages and offer weekly, hour-long home visits during which time they work with parents to role-play educational activities for their children. The role-playing technique helps to build parents’ confidence in a creative way while helping them to become their children’s best teachers. HIPPY Ottawa also organizes bi-weekly group outings and meetings that encourage families

to participate fully in their community.

Najat, mother of four-year-old son Bassil, says that HIPPY is a valuable and enjoyable program. “Before, I felt lost. HIPPY helps me to know what to give to my kids. It is organized; everyday I do fifteen minutes of activities with Bassil.” Bassil enjoys participating in group outings to the park by the river where he learns about his surroundings, creates arts and crafts, and plays games in English, French and Arabic. “I like to play with my mom everyday - colour some pictures, play and read books.”

The HIPPY program is succeeding in empowering families in our community by building on their natural strengths to create a solid foundation for their children. Parents, caregivers and children alike are benefiting from all the program has to offer.

Early Development Index Domain Scores for Junior Kindergarten Students

Ottawa 2005/06 non-special needs students (N=7578)

Domain	Junior Kindergarten			No Junior Kindergarten			Statistically significant?
	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	
Physical health and well-being	6745	8.98	1.15	559	8.54	1.48	YES
Social competence	6751	8.52	1.65	558	7.91	2.08	YES
Emotional maturity	6644	8.17	1.42	554	7.71	1.64	YES
Language and cognitive development	6725	8.66	1.59	559	7.94	2.06	YES
Communication skills and general knowledge	6751	7.86	2.45	558	6.93	2.97	YES

n = sample size, SD = standard deviation
Source: Success By 6 Ottawa



Getting Started

In 2006, the unemployment rate among recent immigrants (those who entered the country within the last five years) in Ottawa was 13.5%, more than double the non-immigrant rate. The rate was down from 13.9% in 2001. 🤝🤝

In 2005/2006, children with ESL (English as a Second Language) and FSL (French as a Second Language) status in Ottawa scored significantly lower than those without this status in all five of the school readiness domains (physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge). 🤝🤝

There were a total of 19,975 licensed childcare spaces and 6,895 children on the waiting list in 2008.

This represents an increase of 955 spaces and a decrease of 5,822 children on the waiting list from 2007. 🤝🤝🤝

There were 7,208 subsidized, licensed childcare spaces and 2,100 children on the waiting list in 2008. This represents a decrease of 273 subsidized spaces, as well as a decrease of 1,514 children on the waiting list for subsidized childcare from 2007. 🤝🤝🤝

In 2008, the unemployment rate for youth aged 15 to 24 years old in Ottawa was 9.3%, which was lower than both the national (11.6%) and provincial (13.8%) rates. The youth unemployment rate decreased by 1.3 percentage points from 10.6% in 2000. 🤝🤝🤝🤝

Early Development Index Domain Scores for Children with English/French as a Second Language

Ottawa 2005/06 non-special needs students (N=7578)

Domain	E/FSL			Not E/FSL			Statistically significant?
	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	
Physical health and well-being	1548	8.86	1.23	5958	8.97	1.17	YES
Social competence	1549	8.19	1.87	5962	8.53	1.66	YES
Emotional maturity	1518	7.94	1.47	5877	8.17	1.44	YES
Language and cognitive development	1542	8.02	1.96	5943	8.73	1.54	YES
Communication skills and general knowledge	1549	6.08	2.88	5961	8.21	2.22	YES

n = sample size, SD = standard deviation
Source: Success By 6 Ottawa

Zahide Yilbas arrived in Ottawa in 2005 with the goal of providing a better future for her daughters. Zahide has two PhDs and volunteers actively while she patiently awaits residency status and the permission to work in Canada.

Settling in a new country with a different language, culture and climate, and having no contacts and no driver's license was an isolating and frightening experience for Zahide and her girls. Although her husband joined them briefly, he had to go elsewhere in order to work and earn money for the family while they wait. Zahide's eldest daughter is a high-achieving pre-medical student and her youngest daughter is a gifted cellist. The most heartfelt wish for the entire family is to one day officially become Canadians.

Since graduating from an iSisters Technology Mentoring program offered in partnership with Immigrant Women

PHOTO COURTESY OF ISISTERS



The most heartfelt wish for the entire family is to one day officially become Canadians.

for iSisters, she is an active volunteer at her daughter's school. Zahide's story is just one example of the significant contributions being made on a daily basis by new immigrants as they work to build a future in our city.

Services Ottawa in 2007, Zahide has been volunteering as a teacher. The iSisters program was custom made for women new to Canada to gain technology skills, build self esteem, and prepare for work in Canada. It also introduces the participants to local networks in order to promote full and active community participation, as well as economic independence.

As a teacher, Zahide creates a safe, inclusive and professional learning environment and has earned a great deal of respect from her students. When not volunteering

Unemployment Rate of Recent Immigrants and Non-Immigrants, 1996, 2001, and 2006

	1996		2001		2006	
	Non-immigrant population	Entered country within the last 5 years	Non-immigrant population	Entered country within the last 5 years	Non-immigrant population	Entered country within the last 5 years
Canada	9.9	18.0	7.4	12.7	6.4	12.3
Ontario	8.6	17.9	5.9	11.8	6.2	11.9
Ottawa	7.6	24.3	4.9	13.9	5.4	13.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 1996, 2001 and 2006

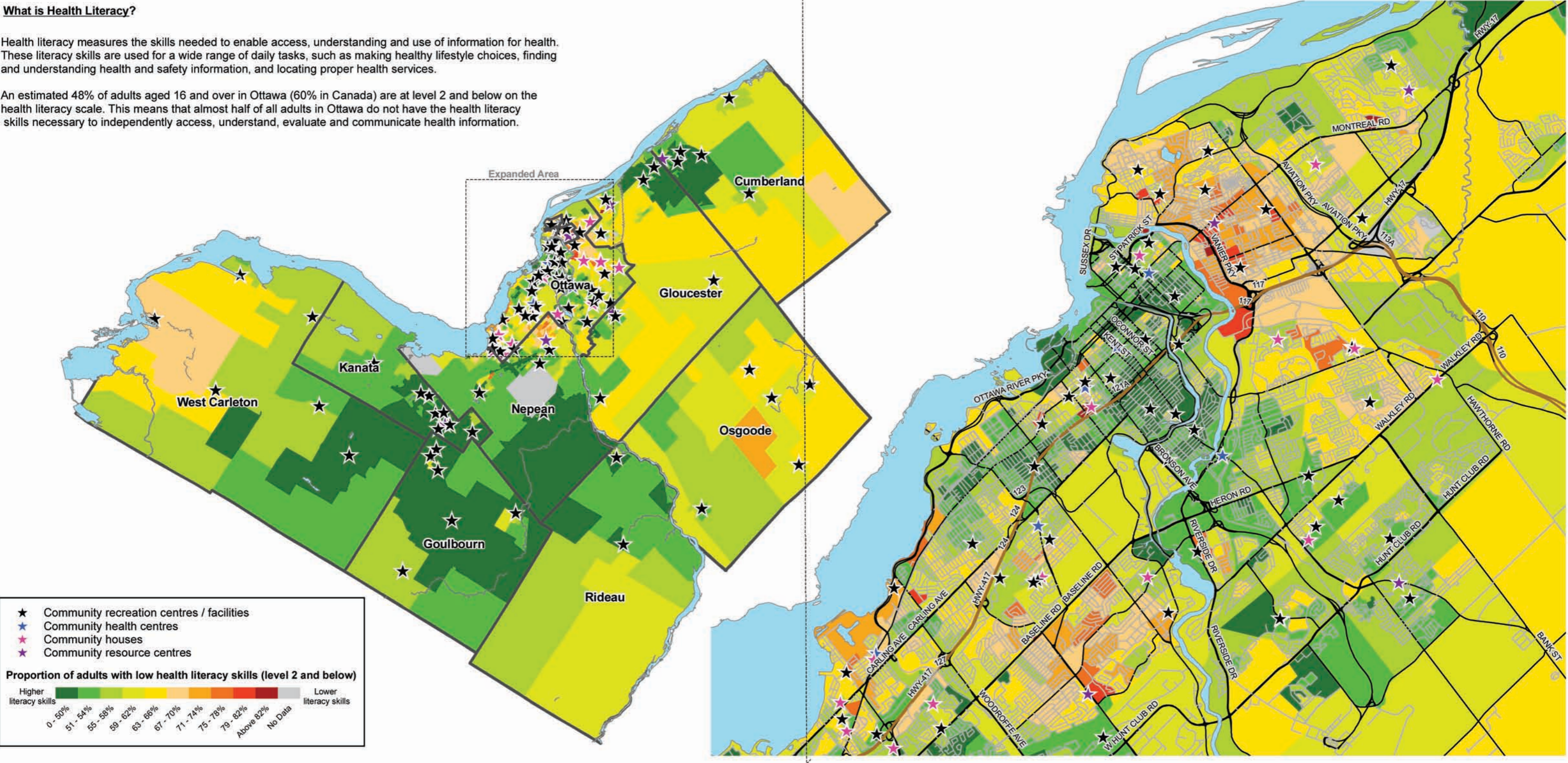
Distribution of Health Literacy in Ottawa

Proportion of adults with low health literacy skills (level 2 and below) and community health supports

What is Health Literacy?

Health literacy measures the skills needed to enable access, understanding and use of information for health. These literacy skills are used for a wide range of daily tasks, such as making healthy lifestyle choices, finding and understanding health and safety information, and locating proper health services.

An estimated 48% of adults aged 16 and over in Ottawa (60% in Canada) are at level 2 and below on the health literacy scale. This means that almost half of all adults in Ottawa do not have the health literacy skills necessary to independently access, understand, evaluate and communicate health information.



Source: These results are derived from estimates for a geographical area based on the 2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS). The estimates are achieved by combining an area's results with those from neighbouring areas. They also factor in several characteristics of the area, from the 2001 Census, such as education and income. The geographical unit used in the map is Statistics Canada's dissemination area (DA), which is the smallest standard geographic area for which all census data are disseminated. DAs have a population of between 400 and 700 people.



Arts and Culture

In 2008, the total amount of municipal operating and project funding invested in the local arts, festival and fair sector was \$5,460,537, or \$6.08 per capita, up from \$5.47 per capita in 2007. 🍃🍃🍃🍃

A 2008 revenue-income study revealed that the local arts, festival and fair sector leveraged \$9.60 for every \$1.00 of City of Ottawa investment.



In 2006, there were more than 15,000 volunteers involved in supporting and producing festivals, special events and fairs in the Ottawa region during the festival season. 🍃🍃🍃🍃

The 2008 Labour Force Survey estimates that 9,900 persons were employed in cultural industries

in Ottawa, which accounted for 1.98% of total employment in Ottawa, compared to 2.18% of total employment in Ontario and 2.03% of employment in Canada. 🍃🍃

According to the 2006 Census, the median earnings of Ottawa professionals employed in full-time, full-year occupations in arts and culture was \$57,864, representing a 3.2% growth in earnings since 2000. The median earnings in Ottawa were higher than both the provincial (\$46,717) and national (\$44,010) figures. In this context, professional occupations in arts and culture refers to librarians, conservators, curators, archivists, editors, journalists, translators, terminologists, interpreters, occupations in public relations and communications, as well as visual and performing artists. 🍃🍃🍃🍃



For 20 years the Council for the Arts in Ottawa has hosted the Annual Sweetheart Lunch to celebrate the achievements of Ottawa’s arts and culture community. This year, Paulette Gagnon was honoured by her peers as the recipient of the Victor Tolgesy Arts Award.



Madame Gagnon’s entire career has been dedicated to building appreciation for French theatre and francophone artists.

Madame Gagnon’s entire career has been dedicated to building appreciation for French theatre and francophone artists. A shining example of her success was her significant contribution to the establishment of La Nouvelle Scène ten years ago, the artistic and cultural hub for Ottawa’s francophone audiences,

as well as other residents who embrace our bicultural riches.

Through innovative partnerships between artistic groups of various disciplines at La Nouvelle Scène, francophone artists have found a welcoming and nurturing space to create, grow and engage new generations of audiences. The vision

and determination of Madame Gagnon and her past and present collaborators has contributed to our community’s appreciation of arts and culture as a vital part of a healthy and vibrant community.

Employment in Cultural Industries for 1987, 2000, and 2006–2008

	1987		2000		2006		2007		2008	
	Per cent of Total Industries	Employment in Cultural Industries	Per cent of Total Industries	Employment in Cultural Industries	Per cent of Total Industries	Employment in Cultural Industries	Per cent of Total Industries	Employment in Cultural Industries	Per cent of Total Industries	Employment in Cultural Industries
Canada	1.99	244,900	2.00	295,600	1.95	321,600	2.06	338,600	2.03	347,900
Ontario	2.26	110,500	2.13	124,100	2.20	142,800	2.21	145,900	2.18	145,500
Ottawa CMA	2.03	7,100	2.40	10,300	2.65	12,800	2.70	13,200	1.98	9,900

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



Did You Know?

The 2008 Ottawa’s Vital Signs report measured a subset of professional occupations in arts and culture, specifically related to the visual and performing arts (weighted by occupation). By using this measurement, the average income for artists in Ottawa was \$28,114.



Environment

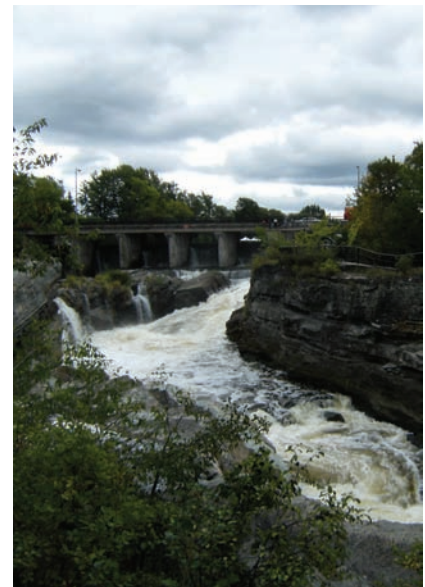
Community graders ranked the environment as the **third-highest** priority for action in Ottawa this year.

In 2008, 35 hectares, or approximately 85 acres, of agricultural land was lost due to the expansion of the Village of North Gower, a significant reduction from the 433 hectares, or approximately 1,070 acres, of agricultural land lost in 2006. There were no losses of agricultural land in 2007. 🌿🌿🌿

The Ottawa River valley is home to at least 24 species that are at risk of becoming endangered due to such causes as habitat disturbance or

destruction (e.g. urbanization and shoreline alterations), dams that act as migration barriers to aquatic species, the introduction of invasive species, and the limited tolerance of some species to environmental changes (e.g. acid rain and pollutants). 🌿🌿

In 2006, 97% of households living in the Ontario portion of the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA had access to recycling programs. 98% of these households used these programs for recycling materials such as glass,



paper, plastic and metal cans. 🌿🌿🌿🌿

In 2008, there were 19 community gardens in Ottawa, and in the first half of 2009, the number of community gardens had increased to 22. There were also 11 farmers' markets in the Ottawa area in 2009. 🌿🌿🌿🌿


In the City of Ottawa, our urban core is serviced by combined sewers that carry both sewage and storm water. These combined sewers release varying quantities of untreated sewage into the Ottawa River during moderate and heavy rainfall events. From 2005 to 2008, this combined sewage overflow happened over 100 times on average each year. 🌿


PHOTO: MATTHEW CLAYDON






Work


In 2008, Ottawa had an employment rate of 70.3%, which was more than six percentage points higher than both the national and provincial rates of 63.6%. The employment rate for Ottawa has increased from 67% in 1987. 


In March 2009, the number of beneficiaries receiving regular employment insurance (EI) benefits in the Ontario portion of the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA was 8,990. This represented an increase of 44.5% over the March 2008 figure, which was significantly lower than the increase across Ontario (69.4%), and marginally lower than the national increase of 46.1%. 


According to the 2006 Census, the labour force participation rate for people with disabilities was 43%, which was significantly lower than



the rate for the general population in the Ottawa CMA of 69.6%. 

In 2008, the average hourly earnings in Ottawa was \$22.68, up 11.4% since 1997. By comparison, Ontario's average hourly earnings was \$19.41, up by 6.8% since 1997, and Canada's average was \$18.68, up 8.3% since 1997. These rates of hourly earnings have been adjusted for inflation. 

From March 2008 to March 2009, there were 5,078 personal bankruptcies filed in the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA, compared to 4,451 bankruptcies filed during the previous year, representing a 14.1% increase in consumer bankruptcy filings. 

From March 2008 to March 2009, there were 270 bankruptcies filed by businesses in the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA, compared to 277 bankruptcies filed during the previous year, representing a decrease of 2.5%. 

Employment Rate (%) for 1987, 2000–2008

	1987	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Percentage point change 1987-2008	Percentage change 1987-2008
Canada	60.6	61.3	61.1	61.7	62.4	62.7	62.7	63.0	63.5	63.6	3.0	4.9
Ontario	64.9	63.2	63.0	62.9	63.8	63.8	63.5	63.5	63.6	63.6	-1.3	-2.0
Ottawa	67.0	66.2	66.4	64.7	67.2	66.5	66.2	68.3	68.6	70.3	3.3	4.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



Belonging & Leadership

The 2008 federal election had a voter turnout rate of 68.1% in Ottawa. This turnout was 9.3 percentage points higher than the national average (58.8%), and 9.5 percentage points higher than the provincial average (58.6%). In addition, all five electoral districts in Ottawa had voter turnout rates higher than both the provincial and national averages. 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻

The Canadian Community Health Survey found that 59.9% of Ottawa residents aged 12 and over reported a somewhat strong or very strong sense of belonging to their local community. Among the youth sub group (12 to 19 years of age), the rate was found to be 68.9%, which was the highest rate for any age group. 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻

In 2008/2009, a total of 300 corporate volunteers through OCRI (Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation) initiatives were working as tutors and mentors with students from kindergarten to grade 12. 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻



PHOTO COURTESY OF CRISTINA PULIDO-VIELMA, CMM

Federal Election 2008 – Percentage of Voter Turnout (including Electoral Districts in Ottawa)

Canada	58.8%
Ontario	58.6%
Ottawa	68.1%
Ottawa Centre	69.1%
Ottawa-Orléans	71.3%
Ottawa South	66.8%
Ottawa-Vanier	64.0%
Ottawa West-Nepean	66.4%

Source: Elections Canada

PHOTO COURTESY OF NO COMMUNITY LEFT BEHIND



Up until three years ago, Randy Elias, a 33-year-old electrical engineer, only ever opened a book related to his schoolwork or his job. Since taking a speed-reading course while studying for his MBA, that has all changed. Not only did it help with his studies, but it allowed Randy to discover the joy of reading.

Upon returning to work as a project manager with a large communications technology company, Randy learned that several of his colleagues were volunteering with OttawaReads, an early literacy initiative. This program, delivered by OCRI (Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation) partners corporate and public sector volunteers with kindergarten and grade-one students for one-on-one reading each week.

Randy initially believed that volunteering with the program would be an ideal way to share with young children his new-found enthusiasm for reading. He quickly realized that the experience was even more rewarding than he had anticipated.

“The business world is such a demanding and stressful environment that we often lose sight of other important aspects of our lives, such as family, friends



“Volunteering has enabled me to find balance in my life. I’m absolutely re-energized when I return to work after spending time with the students.”

and neighbours,” he says. “Volunteering has enabled me to find balance in my life. I’m absolutely re-energized when I return to work after spending time with the students.”

Given his positive experiences as a volunteer, it is not surprising to learn that Randy is now encouraging his friends and colleagues to consider volunteering.

“I started volunteering because I felt that I had something to offer others,” he says. “I never imagined that I would receive so much pleasure and satisfaction in return.”



Did You Know?

In 2007, the proportion of tax filers that declared charitable donations in Ottawa was 29.9%, compared to the national rate of 24% and the Ontario provincial rate of 25.7%. There was a 4.2% decrease in charitable donations in Ottawa from 2001 to 2007.





Getting Around


In 2008, the total number of applications for Para Transpo service was 3,526. The number of successful applicants registered with Para Transpo was 3,386. The number of new registrations for Para Transpo in the first quarter of March 2009 increased 14.2% compared to the first quarter in March 2008.



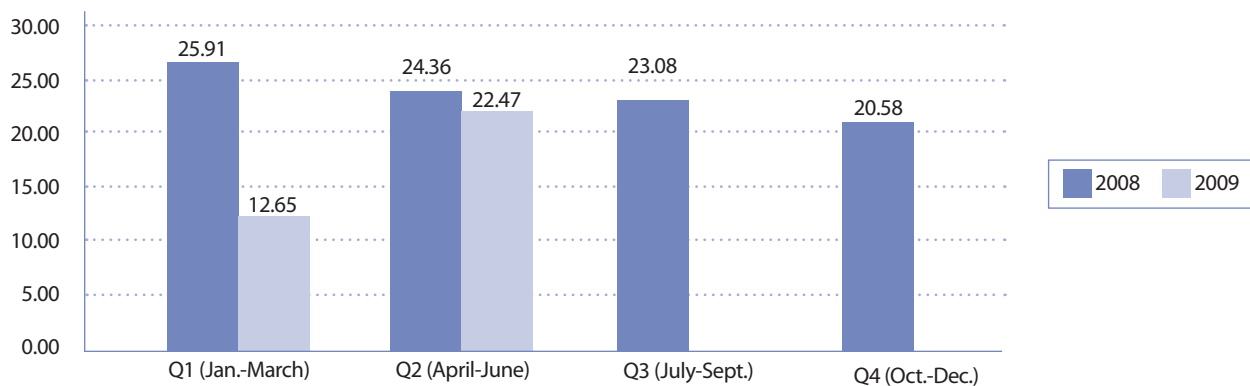
In November 2008, the month before the Ottawa transit strike, there were a total of 8,999,000 linked passenger trips (one-way trips including transfers on either an OC Transpo Bus or O-Train). In April 2009, following the end of the transit strike, ridership was at 7,777,000 trips. The decrease in trips between November and April can be attributed to both the effects of

the transit strike and seasonal variations in transit ridership. 

The total number of transit passes sold in March 2009 was 106,718, representing a decrease of 9.5% from the 117,893 transit passes sold in March 2008. The largest decrease in sales during this time period was among student passes at 10.4%. 

During the Ottawa transit strike in 2008/2009, the City of Ottawa spent \$700,000 in emergency funds, mainly to support transportation for people in need, and provided in the form of over 30,000 taxi chits. These taxi chits and other forms of assistance were disbursed through Ottawa's 14 Community Health and Resource Centres. 

Transit Ridership: Number of Linked Passenger Trips per Quarter (millions)*



* Numbers include school transit routes, which account for approximately 2% of overall transit ridership
 Source: City of Ottawa, Transit Services

The Impact of the OC Transpo Bus Strike on the Health of Local Residents

On Dec. 10, 2008 the Amalgamated Transit Unit (ATU) Local 279 went on strike. With the strike into its second month, Ottawa Public Health conducted a telephone survey to assess the potential health impacts on the population.

Most residents reported being in very good or excellent health (84%), and when asked how was their health compared to the month of November before the transit services were stopped, 77% of respondents reported that their health had either improved or remained the same. However, some respondents reported that their health had become worse (22%) since November 2008, and 87% of these residents reported that the decline in health had been influenced by the bus strike. Among low-income individuals, fewer reported good or excellent health (75%), and 35% reported that their health had become worse since November. Among these individuals, 88% reported that their health worsened as a result of the bus strike.



The bus strike had a more serious impact on increasing the levels of day-to-day stress (77%). Residents reported that the strike negatively impacted on their employment (47%), participation in social and recreational activities (47%), access to medical appointments (37%), school attendance (29%), access to basic needs such as food (29%), and access to community services (26%) and day care (10%). Vulnerable populations such as low-income households were more adversely affected because of their dependence on public transit to carry out their daily activities.

In response to the transit strike, the City of Ottawa and community agencies provided support and taxi chits to vulnerable populations. Most residents surveyed (73%) were aware of these services, but only 3% sought these services from the City of Ottawa or from health and social services agencies.

Prepared by Ottawa Public Health, Population Health Assessment and Knowledge Management Division

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Youth Taking Action

During Ottawa's school break in March 2009, the Community Foundation of Ottawa and its Youth Advisory Committee hosted a city-wide 'Youth Taking Action' event. The main purpose of the event was to bring together a diverse group of youth leaders from across the city and provide them with the opportunity to meet and network with each other, while focusing on their priority issues and discussing how they can work together to make a difference in their communities. The following ideas, suggestions and comments are taken directly from the youth at this event in relation to various discussion questions.

What are the most important things affecting youth today?

- Homelessness
- Safe and accessible housing
- Students unable to pay for school programs
- Bullying
- Access to harm reduction programs - not much for youth under the age of 18
- Horrible poverty
- Not enough youth treatment centres
- Mental health (suicide and depression)
- Teen pregnancy
- Lack of understanding and acceptance of all types of sexual identities

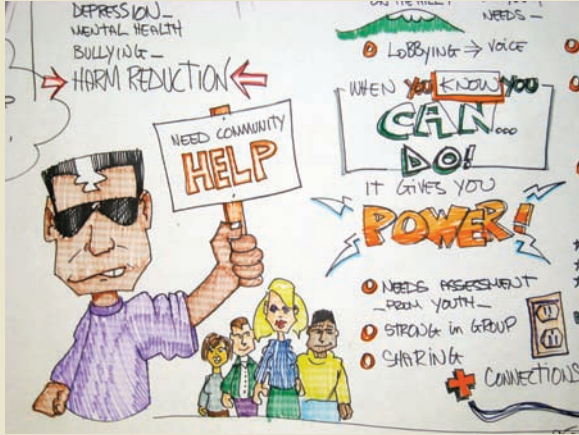
- Poor body image; negative effects from the media
- Lack of help before things become a crisis; more focus on prevention.

How can we work together to help make a difference?

- Educate parents, teachers, and service providers on youth issues
- Improve youth engagement philosophy in schools
- Organize rallies to request improvements for youth issues and supports, and hold politicians to their promises
- Operate more community youth camps

GRAPHIC FACILITATION PROVIDED BY GERARD BÉLEC, OTTAWA SCHOOL OF ART





- Offer youth a platform and resources to implement their ideas
- Give support over the long-term
- Create more opportunities for youth to access knowledge and resources (education)
- Provide more extra-curricular programs and safe spaces to hold activities
- Focus on youth leaders and supports for today, not just for the future
- Create more effective youth-led groups/initiatives that are well supported by organizations
- Find or become strong and healthy role models for other youth
- Organize an annual breakfast with the Mayor to discuss youth issues and ideas to change things
- Continue networking and sharing resources
- Create a website for free youth activities, programs, events, etc. across the city
- Evaluate youth programs more effectively and learn from mistakes
- Increase youth input with organizations, politicians/the government – ask youth what they want!!!

What is one of the things that matters most to you?

- Being there to help other youth through a rough time
- Family
- Balancing acceptance with self respect
- Diversity in our society
- Good friends

- Alternative methods of education so many don't fall through the cracks
- Unity.

What pops into your mind when you hear the phrase "Youth Taking Action"?

- Change
- Making a difference
- Getting together and starting something
- Allowing youth to have responsibility to change things
- Having fun
- Tremendous potential
- Youth as 'action heroes'.

What is one hope that you have for the future?

- That the community betters itself
- More women in Canadian politics
- Better programs for the physically disabled
- More options for the homeless
- That we can make a difference.



Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Community Foundation of Ottawa, we sincerely thank all the individuals and organizations who provided information, assistance and guidance in the development of Ottawa's Vital Signs 2009.

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Vital Signs is based on a project originated by the Toronto Community Foundation and is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada. The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation provided critical support for the national expansion of the Vital Signs program, which will see 16 cities publishing reports across Canada this year.

We would like to thank Community Foundations of Canada for its leadership and support of this project.

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Vital Signs is an annual community checkup conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our cities, identifies significant trends, and assigns grades in at least 10 areas critical to quality of life. Vital Signs is based on a project of the Toronto Community Foundation, and is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada. The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation provided critical support for the national expansion of the Vital Signs program, which will see 16 cities publishing reports across Canada this year.



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