

COUNCIL CLIPS

THE SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF CAMBRIDGE AND NORTH DUMFRIES



Local anti-poverty work is progressing

We know that locally there are too many people with insufficient income to meet their basic needs. Despite local economic growth, poverty is not decreasing. In Cambridge alone, there are over 15,000 people living in poverty (Census Canada, 2005). We also know that approximately 1 in 6 children live in poverty, the poverty rate is stuck at 15-17% and that there is an increasing income gap. The health of low income people and our community as a whole is negatively affected by poverty. It is time to take action!

The Social Planning Council has been working with local and provincial partners to raise awareness and begin to tackle some of the poverty-related issues. The following is an overview of some of the work we have been involved in:

- We have held a **Poverty Symposium** the last few years and have committed to this as an annual event as long as poverty continues to be a serious issue. Please mark your calendars as our next symposium is being planned for **June 6th** and we are in the process of seeking a speaker from the Newfoundland poverty reduction experience to share from their lessons learned.
- We facilitate the **Community Response for Fair Income Group** which is a community group building awareness and strategy related

to fair income issues. This Fair Income Group will be hosting several **mini-townhall meetings** in several diverse community areas during February and March to gain input on local poverty issues and priorities for poverty reduction strategy development. The output from these sessions will be shared at a broader community townhall meeting where politicians and local stakeholders will be invited to hear the information. Please watch for more details on these events and plan on attending!

- The Social Planning Council was asked to Chair the **Poverty Reduction Strategy Roundtable** that was struck by The City of Cambridge. This group consists of local politicians (City, Region, MPP, MP), the Chamber of Commerce and a few other stakeholders to look at what can be done locally to address poverty. This group has just convened and will be looking at several areas where they can collectively work to address poverty.

We have worked with Campaign 2000 and the Social Planning Network of Ontario to support their poverty reduction efforts. As part of this, we made presentations to all local levels of government (North Dumfries Township, City of Cambridge, Region of Waterloo) recommending that they request the provincial government

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We actively and impartially participate in building and strengthening our communities through social change, innovation, research, analysis and facilitation

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Information Cambridge and North Dumfries has a new manager

Information Cambridge and North Dumfries is pleased to announce the appointment of Reva Devendran as our new manager of information and referral services. Reva will be taking Information Cambridge and North Dumfries through the next phase of its development as the online database continues to be updated and improved in the coming months.

Reva has a passion for helping non-profit organizations to achieve their goals in their marketing, finance and IT fields. She is an MBA gradu-

ate from WLU (Fall 2006) with extensive experience in supporting, managing, and developing systems and databases for medium to large companies and providing technical training to adults. In some of her recent work, Reva acted as a consultant and provided strategic marketing plans and created a forecasting budget model for the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery in Waterloo.

Some of Reva's other achievements include an award for her social services project during her graduate studies in

Madras University, India. Reva also has raised a family and has two daughters who are currently studying abroad.

In her spare time, Reva manages to volunteer for fundraising events for organizations such as the Women's Crisis Shelter in Cambridge. She is also a dedicated board member and serves as treasurer at 'Hindu Samaj of Hamilton' (a non-profit religious organization in Hamilton, Ontario).

Reva is excited to be bringing her expertise to this valuable service in our community.

SIGN ON TO SIGN POSTS



Mahatma Gandhi said:
"You must be the change you want to see in the world".

What would you like to change in your community? You could change something related to housing, arts and culture, environment or public safety.

Step 1: Make a Plan - What are you hoping to achieve and what activities will you undertake?

Step 2: Track your Progress—How will you track progress and know if you are successful?

Step 3: Celebrate your success.

Check out the website:

www.signposts-cnd.org

Local anti-poverty work is progressing (continued)

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to develop and implement a poverty reduction strategy. All three local government bodies agreed to take action and letters were sent.

The Social Planning Council is encouraged by recent events and actions appearing to demonstrate some political will at various political and community levels to begin to ad-

dress poverty issues. Poverty is a complex issue requiring a multifaceted approach where all levels of government and community stakeholders work together to ensure that appropriate

consultation takes place, effective strategy is developed, sufficient resources are dedicated, action takes place and accountability is ensured.

Workshop provides help for using community data effectively

On December 13th, the Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries held their first “How to Use Community Data” workshop in which participants learned how to use the Trends Report effectively in their agency. Topics of discussion included the importance of data, definitions of research concepts, and how to read the Trends Report. In addition, a case exam-

ple helped participants work through the steps of problem identification, collecting existing data, how to gather and analyze primary data, how to present a final product or report and advocating to raise awareness.

Participants were given a worksheet, “Community Agency Research Action Planning Sheet”, that can be used to determine next steps when one would like



to find out more information about a problem being encountered. Contact the Social Planning Council if you would like a copy of the worksheet or if you would like to find out more information about this process. The Social Planning Council plans to offer a similar workshop later this year after the release of the 2008 Trends Report. Community agencies will be welcome to attend.

Plan to attend the Regional Transportation Master Plan Workshops in February

Consider attending one of three workshops to help develop a vision for the future of transportation in Waterloo Region.

We will discuss how walking, cycling, transit, roads and highways will fit into our vision, and we will talk about the Regional Transportation Master Plan process and your role in it. Your input is essential, so please plan to attend.

To view the official invitation, click here: <http://www.movingforward2031.ca/downloads/RTMP%20Workshop%20InviteR.pdf>

Canadian Health Network needs help to fight closure

The Canadian Health Network (CHN) is slated for closure on March 31, 2008. The CHN is a web-portal delivered in partnership by non-profit health organizations with the Public Health Agency of Canada. Every resource on the site has been vetted by health specialists, and searches are easy. The site was used by over 5 million

unique users last year. It is feared that the cut to the Canadian Health Network will end up stranding Canadians to rely inappropriately on the numerous for-profit health info sites on the web. As many of us know, it is difficult to figure out what information on the web is trustworthy, and this is especially con-

cerning when we are dealing with health issues. If you are concerned about this loss of service, please sign the web petition and write a letter if possible. Friends of the CHN is a group of health promoters and librarians from several provinces who have organized to oppose this funding cut to the

health network. A petition will be submitted to Prime Minister Harper and Minister of Health Tony Clement on February 14th, so please add your voice NOW. (It only takes about two minutes). Check out the following website for more information: www.friendsofchn.ca

Is there a Leadership Deficit in Volunteer and Non-Profit Agencies?

A new report entitled *Exploring the Looming Leadership Deficit in the Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector* (Toupin & Plewes, *The Philanthropist*, 2007) provides some excellent insight into the future human resource issues that could be felt by the non-profit sector.

There has been much discussion around the issue of leadership in the non-profit sector. This report suggests that the impending baby boomer retirement will leave the work force with a deficit in numbers of employees; however, of more concern is the prediction that the non-profit sector will be especially hard-hit in terms of losing leaders and senior managers when the exodus strikes.

One American study suggests that the leadership deficit is being caused by the retirement of boomers, the large growth

in non-profit organizations and a tendency for leaders to leave the voluntary sector for other industries. One Canadian study focused in Quebec noted that leadership roles in non-profits are currently filled by a predominantly female, aging and not very diverse population, and there is concern that young people who could eventually fill these gaps will be lured away by better paying jobs with better working conditions than the non-

profit sector offers.

The report suggests two strategies to address the problem.

The first strategy is ongoing support and encouragement of people who are currently in leadership positions. The second strategy is the promotion of the sector as a viable career destination to a new generation of diverse leaders. To read the full report, click on:

http://www.thephilanthropist.ca/feature/2102_128.pdf

Join Imagine Canada's Ethical Code

Imagine Canada is inviting non-profit organizations in Canada to join the New Ethical Code. The Ethical Code is a donor assurance program for charitable organizations. It gives a set of standards for fundraising and financial accountability. Your compliance with these standards tells donors that your organization values their contribution and will steward their donations to ensure they have the greatest impact. Check: www.imaginecanada.ca for more details.



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The SPC promotes the "democratization of data" to build a healthy community with active citizens involved in multi-sector networks and accessible organizations that work together.

The role of the SPC is to collect, analyze and openly share data on: community trends; demographics (current and projections); and best practices (local and beyond).

The Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries is located in downtown Cambridge. Our office hours are Monday to Friday, 9:00 to 4:00.

www.socialplanningcouncil-cnd.org



Information Cambridge and North Dumfries is committed to providing accurate and timely information to our community members. For information on human and social services in Cambridge and North Dumfries please call:

(519) 740-3030