

$\frac{20}{200}$



1

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5

Sometimes the issues are hard to see.

BURLINGTON

**VitalSigns® 2012**

# BURLINGTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION: STRENGTHENING BURLINGTON WITH GIFTS THAT GIVE FOREVER

When people give, our community experts will help ensure their gift responds to Burlington's most pressing needs by supporting health and social services, arts and culture, education, recreation and the environment. Donors can have ongoing involvement with their gift or direct it to be distributed to specific charities. Funds can address needs in an area of personal interest or provide a local scholarship. An unrestricted donation can be used to support the Foundation's operations or a broad range of other charitable needs.

We create permanent community improvements through the expressed legacies of our city's generous donors.

We do all this to advance the quality of life in Burlington to be the very best in Canada.

Research & Design by PLAY Advertising

Cover photography by Carole Bozzato Timm and Roy Timm

# INTRODUCING BURLINGTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S VITAL SIGNS® 2012

Poverty, mental health and youth issues deeply affect people in Burlington. But, because we are a prosperous community, these problems are not always visible. Vital Signs® is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada. It is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

Vital Signs builds on partnerships with a broad range of community members and organizations who have contributed to the development of this report. Burlington's Vital Signs is an initiative of the Burlington Community Foundation.



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# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CHAIR

## Welcoming. Growing. Safe.

A passionate group of 800 Canadians who worked in the grain and lumber trades and lived on the shore of Lake Ontario first came together almost 140 years ago. These neighbours rallied to have their fledgling community of Burlington incorporated as a village. Many of these pioneering community advocates were immigrants, some old and many young. What brought them together was an enthusiasm for the lives they'd built and the community they'd established, a veritable jewel on the lake. As a public foundation created by and for the people of Burlington, we help people, corporations and agencies accomplish their charitable goals and address our city's most pressing needs. Together with our volunteers, donors and supporters, Burlington Community Foundation works to make our city more vital, welcoming and supportive. To accomplish our mission, we first need to better understand the community: our strengths as well as areas of need. This is why we have created our first-ever community report. Vital Signs is a community check-up that evaluates Burlington as a place to live, work, learn and grow by identifying trends that are critical to our quality of life.

Across Canada, more than 180 local foundations are members of Community Foundations of Canada and, each year, a growing number of foundations measure the quality of local life, identify trends and share action opportunities in this format. Using data from local agencies, business leaders and community members, this report documents key indicators including the gap between rich and poor, where we stand with health and wellness, arts and culture, the environment, youth, newcomers, and much more.

Vital Signs represents our largest mobilization effort to date – with in person and virtual gatherings of citizens and community leaders through 1:1 interviews, agency round tables, a telephone survey of 300 residents and an on-line survey. Researching both quantitative and qualitative insights, we've uncovered current trends and vital information that is critical to addressing Burlington's highest priority needs.

This milestone in community engagement would not have happened without the support of many generous individuals, agencies and corporations who gave of their time and support. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity with which people, corporations and agencies have shared their expertise and resources to make this report truly the work of many. In particular, our thanks to those who completed face-to-face, on-line and telephone surveys, and to the community agencies staff participating in our three roundtables. A sincere thanks goes to FirstOntario Credit Union, our Vital Sponsor, Hamilton Spectator, our media sponsor, the Burlington Post for their continued support of all our initiatives, and to both Strategic Direction and OraclePoll Research Ltd. for the quantitative and qualitative research. Community Foundations of Canada and our colleagues at a number of foundations shared their insights and best practices. The entire team at PLAY Advertising has been inspiring in their dedication to this initiative.

Burlingtonians have much to take pride in. From 2008-2011, Maclean's named Halton Region as the safest place to live in the GTA. And this year, MoneySense magazine ranked Burlington as the second best place to live in Canada. Even within our community of relative affluence, security and safety, there is hidden disparity and people in need. Which is why with Vital Signs we've started a conversation to help make our city an even better place for the young, the old, newcomers and everyone in between.



Colleen Mulholland,  
Executive Director,  
Burlington Community  
Foundation



Tim Dobbie,  
Chair,  
Board of Directors,  
Burlington Community  
Foundation



## THE RESEARCH

The research contained in this reports was the result of a truly collaborative process with research experts at a variety of organizations, both locally, regionally and nationally; as well as our own local community agencies, organizations and community leaders. We thank all of you for your time and passion in helping us shape this report. The research process was unique and comprehensive:

- Roundtables with community agencies and organizations
- Interviews with community leaders
- Contact and visits to local organizations
- Review and analysis of Statistics Canada and Census data
- Review and analysis of research reports from local agencies and organizations\*
- On-line residents survey

Additionally, we conducted a survey of 300 Burlington residents. The “Taking Your Pulse” survey was conducted by OraclePoll Research Ltd. Results provide a snapshot view of the perceptions that Burlingtonians have of their community.

With respect to Statistics Canada, the 2011 data was limited and therefore in most circumstances we have used 2006 data.

**This report is also available on [burlingtonfoundation.org/vital-signs](http://burlingtonfoundation.org/vital-signs).**

*\*Sources reviewed and used are appended*



## BURLINGTON: THE JEWEL ON THE LAKE SHINES BRIGHTLY

Nestled on the shore of Lake Ontario and surrounded by stunning conservation lands and green spaces, Burlington is not only one of the most beautiful places in which to live, it also provides an unusually high standard of living. People in Burlington enjoy income levels that are 20 percent higher than the provincial average, and live in a community that is one of the safest. Burlington’s business community generates a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that is far better than the national average and provides a rich culture of employment. It is truly a jewel by the lake.

*“Burlington’s strengths include a high overall quality of life and high economic and education status, which affect so many health indicators...our satisfaction measures are among the highest in Ontario.”*

Dr. Bob Nosal, Medical Officer of Health, Halton Region

## The Face of Our Community

### GROWING BUT SLOWER

Burlington continues to grow, ahead of Ontario, but at a lower rate with less persons per household. It trails slightly behind Oakville, while Milton continues to see explosive growth. Consequently, our regional share of population is projected to decline, from 37% in 2006 to 29% in 2021.



### ONE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS ON THE RISE

Households with 3 or more persons are on the decline while **one person households have increased by 82%**, now accounting for 23% of all households. Two person households are still the dominant household type at 34% of all households. And **over 40% of the one person households were occupied by seniors.**

**ALTHOUGH SENIORS ARE LIVING LONGER, MOST FEMALE SENIORS OUTLIVE THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS – 2 OUT OF 3 SENIORS OVER 85 ARE FEMALE. 1 IN 10 BURLINGTON SENIORS LIVE IN POVERTY.**



There has been a slight **decline in married couples in 2006 at 56%**, but still higher than Ontario at 52%.

### BURLINGTON IS AGING

ALMOST 80,000 RESIDENTS ARE OVER THE AGE OF 45 AND THIS TREND IS GROWING. THE NUMBER OF BURLINGTON'S BABY BOOMERS (THOSE BORN BETWEEN 1946 AND 1964) IS INCREASING AT A GREATER RATE THAN ONTARIO AND NOW ACCOUNTS FOR 45.2% OF THE POPULATION.

### THOSE 80 YEARS PLUS IS THE FASTEST GROWING GROUP OF SENIORS

Like other cities, Burlington is aging. The number of seniors over the age of 80 has grown almost 60% since 2001. The City of Burlington now has a larger share of the low income senior population than other municipalities in Halton. In 2006 Burlington had 46% of the region's seniors, and 54% of low income seniors. According to Aging Actively in Burlington (2008), estimates show that 11% of all seniors are living in poverty – approximately 3,300 people in 2006.



### Residents Were Born in Other Countries

Recent newcomers with children are living primarily in the Millcroft and Orchard neighbourhoods or in downtown Burlington.

Correspondingly, since 2009, there has been a 57% increase in services provided to newcomers by the Halton Multicultural Council.

*"There will be a need for more child care services as many newcomers will not be able to sponsor their parents any more...many grandparents were looking after their grandchildren in order for the husband and wife to go to work."*

Hamadi Almasri, Manager, Halton Multicultural Council

## Work & Careers

Burlington is working and a majority work within Halton.

Two thirds of residents over the age of 15 years plus are employed, higher than Ontario levels at 62.8 percent.

66 % of working Burlingtonians work within the Halton region while 34% of workers are commuting.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is more than double the Ontario growth rate at 5.10 % versus 2.05%. The GDP per employed Burlington worker is 18% higher than the Ontario average.



### LIMITED AWARENESS OF REWARDING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

According to the "Taking Your Pulse" survey, despite the fact that **66% of residents are working within Halton, almost half simply couldn't answer or didn't have an opinion** about rewarding career opportunities in this community, with similar results for youth and newcomers.

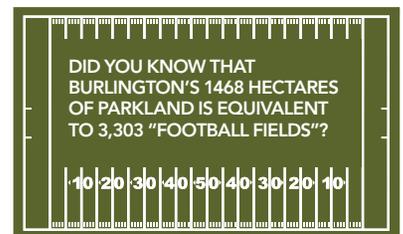
### "I feel there are rewarding career opportunities in Burlington"



## Environment

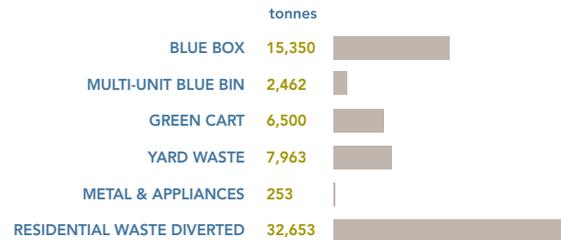
### A CITY OF PARKLAND JUST A WALK AWAY

Burlington boasts 117 parks and 1468 hectares of parkland; houses the internationally acclaimed Royal Botanical Gardens and is surrounded by numerous Conservation Halton Lands and private lands with public access, such as the Bruce Trail. Almost all children and youth live within walking distance of a public park and 1/3 walk, bike or rollerblade to school every day.



## BURLINGTON IS TOPS AT DIVERTING WASTE

Halton collects 1.18 tonnes of waste\* per household (2008) and diverts more from landfill than any of the other reporting municipalities at 58%.



## Housing



### HOUSE PRICES HIGH BUT LESS THAN OTHER HALTON CITIES

**THE AVERAGE PRICE OF A HOME IN BURLINGTON IS NOW \$446,189 – 9% HIGHER THAN THE ONTARIO AVERAGES AT \$409,500.**

Despite the housing prices in Burlington, 8 out of 10 residents own their own homes, with 20% renting. Although ownership costs are higher than provincial costs, Burlington is more affordable than the other Halton cities.

There is more financial pressure on single households who spend a greater proportion of their household income on housing than couples.

Although renting in Burlington is affordable compared to most Halton cities, vacancy rates are low at 1.3% which makes finding a home difficult.

**HAMILTON HOMES SALES ARE INCREASING, AND THE AVERAGE HOME PRICE IS \$298,108 – 33% LESS THAN BURLINGTON.**

*“Our biggest issue in Burlington is that we have to fight to find land and it is difficult to build an affordable home. With an average house price of around \$400,000 young people are moving to Hamilton—they have a vibrant young adult community because rent and housing prices are so much lower. This is why our sons and daughters are leaving Halton.”*

Judy Worsley, Director, Partnerships and Planning, Habitat for Humanity, Halton



## Safety

### WE'RE ONE OF THE SAFEST IN ONTARIO

Halton is one of the safest regions amongst 15 Ontario municipalities. According to the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative 2009 Police Results, Halton has the lowest rate of crime and highest rate of solving crimes.

**93% of residents feel very safe** or safe in their home, work, school and in public places around the community.

**95%** of residents have at least one neighbor they know well enough to ask for help.

*“Burlington is clean and safe with access to arts and environmental recreation options, and easy to get around by car.”*

Burlington Resident, On-line Survey July 2012

## Health & Wellness

### WE HAVE GOOD QUALITY HEALTHCARE

In the “Taking Your Pulse” survey, 71% of Burlington residents agree/strongly agree that Burlington provides quality health care services to its residents.

When asked “Burlington provides seniors with good access to support services and care”, 62% agree/strongly agree, with 25% of respondents really not knowing.



### OBESITY LEVELS HIGH

While obesity and overweight levels in Halton are slightly below Ontario levels they still represent 50% of all Halton residents. The pattern of obesity though, starts as young as 5 years old, where 1 in 5 of all 5 years olds are considered overweight or obese (2006 and 2009).



### EMERGENCY ROOM FACTS

According to the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital (JBMH) National Ambulatory Care Reporting System report, the following Emergency Room (ER) statistics are revealing:

Total ER visits to JBMH have increased by 2% (10/11 versus 11/12) at 47,390 visits.

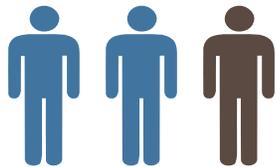
ER visits for mental health issues for children and youth under 18 years have increased by 31% (10/11 versus 11/12).

1 in 4 visits to JBMH ER are by seniors over 65 years of age. Visits have increased moderately at 5.7% (10/11 versus 11/12).

# 2/3

### MANY TOUCHED BY MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

**2/3 OF BURLINGTON RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN TOUCHED BY MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**



According to the "Taking Your Pulse" survey, in over half the instances family members are involved and 1 in 5 residents has friends who have had a mental health issue. Depression is by far the primary disorder mentioned, followed by anxiety.

## Leadership & Belonging



### BURLINGTONIANS ARE IN LOVE WITH THEIR CITY

Almost **97%** indicate they are very satisfied or satisfied with life in Burlington.

**85%** have a strong sense of community spirit and pride.

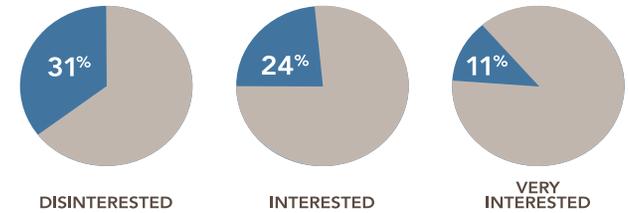
**85%** say they are well connected with others in this community.

Source: "Taking Your Pulse Survey", September 2012

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT INTEREST

Residents are polarized on interest in local government. **35%** of residents claim to be interested in the workings of local government while almost as many are not.

### HOW DO YOU RATE YOUR INTEREST IN POLITICS AT THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL IN BURLINGTON?



### GENEROSITY AND VOLUNTEERISM

Burlington residents tend to be generous, particularly with giving financially – and volunteerism has an opportunity to grow in this community.

### PAST 12 MONTHS



### AND THEY WERE GENEROUS IN THE AMOUNT THEY DONATED TO CHARITIES IN THE PAST YEAR WITH 30% DONATING \$500 OR MORE



### Arts and Culture

According to the "Taking Your Pulse" survey, 76% of residents agree that Burlington has a healthy arts and cultural base.



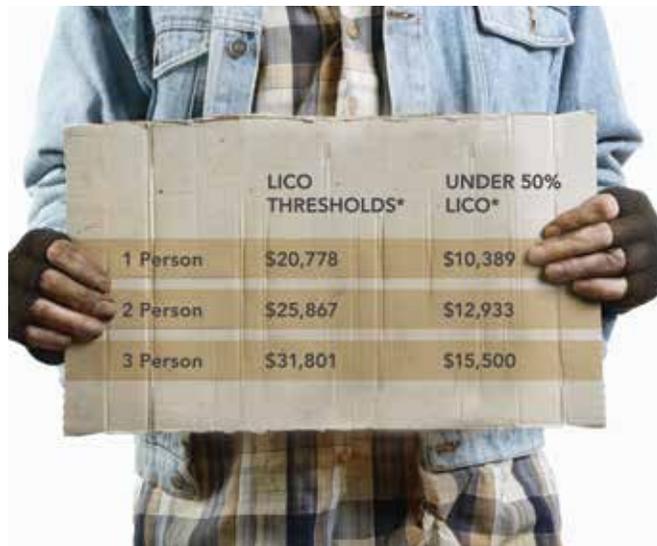
In fact, 9 out of 10 actively enjoy a variety of arts, cultural and entertainment offerings locally and in the region. High on the list are movies, music festivals and concerts as well as visits to libraries.

# GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR GROWING

Burlington is a prosperous and affluent community where its **individual, household and family median income is 20% higher than Ontario**. Family Median Income in 2005 was \$86,174.

## ANNUAL INCOME MEAGER FOR THOSE LIVING IN POVERTY

ACCORDING TO THE INCOMES AND POVERTY REPORT FOR HALTON, THE FOLLOWING IS THE AVERAGE INCOME THRESHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE.



	LICO THRESHOLDS*	UNDER 50% LICO*
1 Person	\$20,778	\$10,389
2 Person	\$25,867	\$12,933
3 Person	\$31,801	\$15,500

\*Defined as making this annual income or less, before taxes.



### POVERTY RATE PROJECTED TO GROW

Overshadowed by the affluence of the city as a whole, there are individuals, families and households living in low income or in poverty. In the 2006 census, there were over **12,000 low income residents in Burlington representing about 9.5% of the total population**. That number has increased by 25% since the 2001 census.

Over the next decade **the poverty rate is projected to grow by 24%** to 15,909 residents and 4,136 families.

Source: Projection developed from LICO and Stats Canada 2006. See Definitions for details.

*“Generally good picture and so many positives, but with a significant number of residents who are hurting and in pain...we need to take everyone into account and provide the health and social supports required.”*

Dr. Bob Nosal, Medical Officer of Health, Halton Region

**OVER 42% OF BURLINGTON FAMILIES MADE OVER \$100,000 A YEAR, COMPARED TO 30% OF THE FAMILIES IN THE PROVINCE.**

## CITIZENS UNSURE ABOUT POVERTY AND THOSE IN NEED

When asked “Do you feel the gap between the rich and poor in Burlington is getting larger, smaller or staying the same”, views were polarized, suggesting there are varying degrees of knowledge about poverty.



*“We need more dialogue around the common good, we’re an affluent community so people don’t see clusters of low income and poverty, people struggling to make ends meet...what are our expectations as a community?”*

Joey Edwardh, Executive Director, Community Development Halton

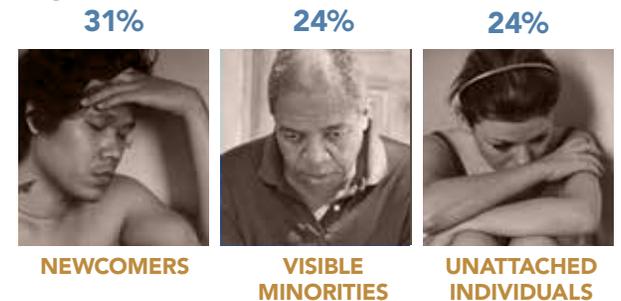
According to the “Taking your Pulse” Survey, residents have varying levels of concern about poverty in youth, seniors, newcomers and single mothers. It would appear that there is more concern with seniors and single mothers in poverty than poverty in youth and newcomers.

### “TELL US HOW CONCERNED YOU ARE ABOUT POVERTY AMONGST YOUTH, SENIORS, SINGLE MOTHERS AND NEWCOMERS.”

	YOUTH	SENIORS	SINGLE MOTHERS	NEWCOMERS
Very Concerned/ Concerned	35%	57%	44%	32%
Neither	36%	26%	28%	22%
Completely Unconcerned	34%	13%	15%	29%
Don’t Know	4%	4%	15%	17%

## The Face of Poverty

In reality, the impact of poverty is felt particularly with the following groups:



**1 IN 3 PEOPLE IN POVERTY IS LIVING IN EXTREMELY CONSTRAINED CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY EARNING \$10,000 – \$15,000 PER YEAR.**



### SINGLE MOTHERS STRUGGLE

Female single parents earn **less than 50 cents** for every dollar made by their two-parent counterparts. This creates additional pressure on the percent of income spent on housing costs – with female single parents spending over 50% for housing versus married couples at 30%

We also see how higher income drives higher participation levels in children’s extra-curricular activities such as team sports, music, dance and art. This is especially true for activities which require out-of-pocket expenses such as sports equipment and summer camp fees. Our Kids Network 2006 survey of parents captures this data:

Licensed Childcare expenses in Burlington are highest in Halton and represent a major family expense for both single working parents and couples in Burlington. These are the full day rates from 2006.

### BURLINGTON LICENSED DAYCARE EXPENSES

	BURLINGTON	HALTON*	DISPARITY	ANNUAL**
Infant (12—7 mos)	\$64.51	\$47.40	+\$17.11	\$12,371
Toddler (18—36 mos)	\$60.80	\$40.73	+\$20.07	\$10,630
Preschool (3—5 yrs)	\$52.80	\$36.46	+\$16.34	\$9,516

\*Region average | \*\*Based on 261 days annually at Burlington licensed childcare centres



**10% WERE USING A FOOD BANK FOR THE FIRST TIME**  
**45% DEPENDED ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**  
**15% OF THE FOOD BANKS RAN OUT OF FOOD DURING THE SURVEY PERIOD**



### FOOD BANKS STRUGGLE WITH DEMAND

There are pressures on Burlington food banks to meet increasing demand. Many report difficulty keeping up and some have been forced to close. Every March a “Hunger Count” survey of unduplicated users is conducted at all distribution points across Ontario. The March 2012 survey showed that more new people are clearly in need and supply is at peril.

### FEEDING OUR HUNGRY

According to the local food banks and food distribution agencies, the need for food continues to grow. Partnership West Food Bank, is seeing an average increase of 25% of individuals being served every year at over 7,000 served. The Salvation Army estimates that about 3,000 families are being served, accounting for over 12,000 in need. Almost 60% are adults, 13% (1,560) teens and 29% (3,480) children.

For many the use of food banks has become a way of life and a life cycle difficult to break - with over 69% using a food bank 3 years or more.

### FOODBANK USAGE:



*“There’s work to be done to bring visibility and voice to poor people who are invisible since we’re affluent as a community...we’re not paying attention so their struggles are even greater, such as housing and we don’t feel we need food banks.”*

Dr. Will Letts, Associate Professor, Charles Sturt University



### PROFILE OF POVERTY IN HALTON

Food bank users across Halton completed questionnaires (102 sample) about their personal and family characteristics, which were published in 1999 by the Halton Social Planning Council and Volunteer Centre. The Halton Food Bank Survey: Alternatives to Dependency, clarified the basic demographics of people who need assistance – and, paints the picture of those in our community who are significantly socio-economically disadvantaged:

- 87% women
- 80% have children
- 77% are unemployed
- 70% are on social assistance, General Welfare, Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support
- 66% have been on assistance for 3 years or longer
- 66% high school or less education
- 41% have household monthly incomes between \$500-\$999
- 39% are in subsidized housing
- 34% have disabled person in family
- 19% are in poor health

THOSE WAITING FOR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING ARE WAITING UP TO 2 YEARS



### POVERTY IS PERSONAL

*“I’ve resorted to stealing at times, when the choice has been between buying medication or milk.”*

*“I have to water down milk, liquid soaps; I cut toilet paper in half, keep heat turned down, and shower three times a week instead of seven.”*

Halton Food Bank Study:  
Alternatives to Dependency

## Getting Started: The Face of Newcomers

Between 2001 and 2006 more than 4,000 newcomers settled in Burlington, and those born in other countries now account for 1 in 5 residents.

Many have United Kingdom and Asia origins, with recent newcomers coming from Spain, the Middle East and India. There are over 60 languages spoken, with increases of Spanish, Punjabi, Arabic, and Korean.

Before 2001, many newcomers settled North of the QEW and in recent years in the Millcroft and Orchard neighbourhoods, and in downtown Burlington.

The majority of recent newcomers are under 40 years of age, many with small children. Conversely, there are few newcomers that are seniors.

Newcomers are well-educated compared to Burlington residents with very strong academic accomplishments including a university degree, masters and/or doctorate training.



THE MEDIAN INDIVIDUAL INCOME FOR NEWCOMERS IS ABOUT **50 CENTS TO EVERY DOLLAR** EARNED BY ALL BURLINGTON RESIDENTS.

	NEWCOMERS	ALL RESIDENTS	SHORTFALL
Total	\$17,504	\$34,379	\$16,875
Male	\$24,536	\$45,225	\$20,689
Female	\$14,381	\$26,761	\$12,380

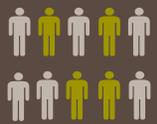


## Portrait of Youth: Our Future

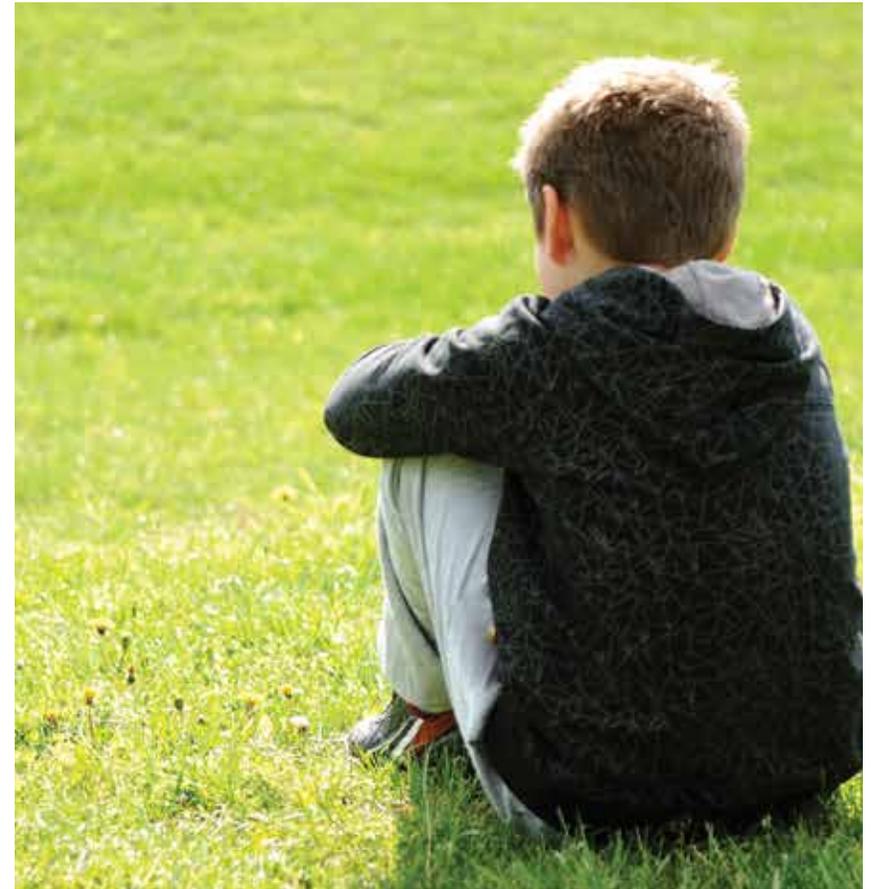
Children in Burlington are connected, engaged, learning and have strong family ties. At school age they are active, happy participants in school, recreation and sports activities. Generally speaking they excel in math and English achievement, which has seen strong rates of improvement.

However, as our children reach their teenage years (15 years) there are noticeable changes as they begin to develop into teenagers. In this group we see decreases in eating breakfast, school engagement, physical activity, self-esteem and increase in bullying. We also see increases in obesity, depression, drinking, smoking, criminal behaviour and cannabis use.

INCIDENTS OF BULLYING ARE A SERIOUS CONCERN FOR BOTH 12 AND 15 YEAR OLDS, ALTHOUGH THE RATE OF BULLYING DECREASES AS KIDS BECOME TEENS.



**4/10 TWELVE YEAR OLDS EXPERIENCE BULLYING.**



**BOTH 12 YEAR OLDS AND 15 YEAR OLDS HAVE THOUGHTS ABOUT SUICIDE AND ABOUT HURTING THEMSELVES. THESE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE VULNERABLE AND NEED TO BE REACHED AND HELPED.**

	AGE 12	AGE 15
Have too many problems in their life	19%	27%
Thoughts of harming themselves	11%	15%
Thoughts of suicide	6%	11%

## PERCEPTIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH SEVERITY AMONG CHILDREN & YOUTH

According to "Taking Your Pulse Survey" 40% of residents believe mental health issues are severe amongst children and youth, almost half have no opinion. Despite the gap in understanding there is a tremendous need in Burlington and Halton at large.

**THE REACH OUT CENTRE FOR KIDS (ROCK) HAS EXPERIENCED DRAMATIC CASE LOAD INCREASES WITH A WAITING LIST OF APPROXIMATELY 1.5 YEARS.**



*"I know I look like a tough guy on TV and that I have it all together, but in my late teens and early 20s I suffered from anxiety. Despite my confident smile and public career path, I spent a few years in a very dark place dealing with severe anxiety and agoraphobia... It's something I hope no one ever experiences, but if they do it's important to know there are people and services available to deal with it."*

Bryan Baeumler, Fundraising Spokesperson Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK) and host of HGTV's House of Bryan and Disaster DIY

## THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT TELLS A SIMILAR STORY AS BURLINGTON

According to Community Foundations of Canada, overall health of youth seems to be slipping. In their recent national study of youth between 12-19 years, there was a 20% decline of youth reporting to be in "excellent or very good health". Sports participation rates have also declined while obesity rates have tripled in the past 25 years. Mental disorders in youth are ranked as the second highest hospital expenditure in Canada.

In Burlington, we face a similar pattern and with it many challenges. Our youth are more sedentary, they are high users of technology for social interaction and they are showing the effect of stress and bullying as never before. With these additional pressures, it's apparent that many are not coping as well as they should and are at risk. These new realities and symptoms need to be better understood and addressed, in order to make our community healthy and supportive to our children, now and into the future.





## Together. Inspiring an even brighter future.

On behalf of the Burlington Community Foundation, we hope that our inaugural Vital Signs report provides you with a deeper and more thoughtful understanding of our city, current issues and opportunities.

We hope that this report will get you talking, inspire you to take action and help us build an even better city. Most importantly, we hope to spark collaboration and address the needs, which can be hard to see, identified in this report.

Looking to the future, together with United Way of Burlington & Greater Hamilton, in the late fall of 2012, we're launching a new Community Leadership Collective. Every three months, we will bring leading charitable agencies together to discuss issues, opportunities, priorities, and best practices as well as determine how we can collectively better serve our community. Consistent with the theme of building brighter futures, *innovateburlington*, an initiative launched by Mayor Goldring and managed by the Burlington Economic Development Corporation, is connecting recent graduates to local businesses where they can gain meaningful work experiences and support growth. These are just two examples of inventive collaborations already underway.

Burlington Community Foundation is committed to keeping the conversation going. We will be regularly reviewing and reporting and will post surveys on specific areas on our website. We will share stories with individuals and organizations. Our website will be a portal for updates and insights, in all areas of both issues and celebration. Vital Signs is our source document for change.

With Burlington's 150th anniversary less than 10 years away, we have built a community that our 800 founders would surely be proud of. We continue to welcome new neighbours to a safe and growing city on the shore of Lake Ontario. And, through Vital Signs and the action it inspires, we invite all Burlingtonians to imagine our community becoming an even brighter jewel on the lake.



3380 South Service Road  
Burlington, ON L7N 3J5  
905 639 0744

[info@burlingtonfoundation.org](mailto:info@burlingtonfoundation.org)

[burlingtonfoundation.org](http://burlingtonfoundation.org)



Follow @BurlingtonFDN on Twitter  
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# GLOSSARY

**BABY BOOMERS:** A baby boomer is a person who was born during the demographic Post-World War II baby boom between the years 1946 and 1964. In 2012, a baby boomer would be someone who is between 48 and 66 years of age.

**FOOD BANK:** An organization that provides food and other associated services to individuals and families.

**FOOD BANK USER:** A person who has received food from a food bank on one or more occasions.

**FOOD SECURITY:** Being 'food secure' means that people have access to sufficient, nutritious food that meets their needs.

**GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP):** This is a measure of the unduplicated value of all goods and services produced in a year measured at market prices. It is the standard measure of the overall size of the economy. The growth in real GDP – that is, GDP after inflation has been taken into account – is often used as an indicator of the general health of the economy. An increase in real GDP is interpreted as a sign that the economy is doing well, while a decrease indicates that the economy is not working at its full capacity. Real GDP is linked to other macro economic variables, such as employment, economic cycles, productivity, and long-term economic growth.

**LICO:** The "Low Income Threshold" established by Statistics Canada is a widely recognized approach to estimating the low income threshold below which a family or individual will likely spend 20% or more than the average on food, shelter and clothing. This threshold is generally accepted as measures of economic hardship, ie: poverty.

**MEDIAN:** This is the number which divides data into two equal groups, half having a value above that number, and half having a value below that number.

**NEWCOMERS:** Statistics Canada defines newcomers as landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years prior to a given census year. Some may have lived elsewhere in Canada before coming to Burlington.

**ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BENCHMARKING INITIATIVE (OMBI) MUNICIPALITIES:**

These are 15 municipalities in Ontario, representing 9.6 million citizens or 73% of the population of Ontario, that collaborate for an annual report that measures, shares and compares performance statistics and operational practices. Eight municipalities are considered single-tier municipalities (the City of Barrie, City of Greater Sudbury, City of Hamilton, City of London, City of Ottawa, City of Thunder Bay, City of Toronto, and City of Windsor) and seven are upper-tier (Region of Durham, Halton Region, Niagara Region, District of Muskoka, Region of Peel, Region of Waterloo, York Region).

**SENIORS:** Burlington residents who are 65 years and older.

**UNATTACHED INDIVIDUALS:** Non-family persons aged 15 and over living alone or with others to whom he or she is unrelated, such as roommates or lodgers.

**VISIBLE MINORITIES:** A person or group visibly not part of the majority race of a given population.

**YOUTH:** Several studies in this report focused on different age groups - 5 year olds, 12 year olds, 15 year olds, with the Community Foundations of Canada analysis covering 12 to 19 year olds.

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3380 South Service Road  
Burlington, ON L7N 3J5  
905 639 0744

[info@burlingtonfoundation.org](mailto:info@burlingtonfoundation.org)

[burlingtonfoundation.org](http://burlingtonfoundation.org)



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