

# COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING IN ONTARIO

*A Snapshot of Local Voices*

*Booklet 2*





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# Message from the Minister



Local involvement and input from Ontario communities is critical for successful community safety and well-being practices across Ontario and is the foundation of this snapshot.

Throughout 2013, staff from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services travelled across the province and visited with a number of different communities to build upon current crime prevention dialogue and to learn about locally-identified promising practices, as well as community challenges. My sincere appreciation goes out to those communities who participated.

During the engagement process it became evident that a shift has occurred in the way organizations and communities look at crime prevention. More than ever, different sectors are advocating for collaboration and integration across all human service sectors to effectively and efficiently address the root causes of crime and social disorder, and increase safety and well-being in Ontario.

I am pleased to see meaningful collaboration on community safety and well-being initiatives taking place across the province, and I encourage all sectors to continue working together to build a stronger and safer Ontario.

Honourable Yasir Naqvi  
Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services



# Message from the President of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police



Building safe, healthy communities is a goal that all Ontarians share. Individuals from all walks of life agree that when we work together to prevent crime and victimization and increase community safety and well-being, the result is a better quality of life for everyone. That is why Ontario's police leaders are strongly committed to working with government and community partners to develop crime prevention, community safety and well-being practices that work for all Ontarians.

This document highlights dialogue among community members facilitated by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services in 2013. During these discussions, community members brought forward issues and priorities, and local promising practices in their communities. It is evident that Ontarians care deeply about crime prevention and having strong, healthy communities. Dialogue and collaboration are powerful tools, which is why this document is so important.

I hope you will take the time to read what members of the community had to say and consider how you can become involved in building a stronger Ontario. As police leaders, members of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police are acutely aware that our success in preventing crime and increasing community safety and well-being depends on our collaboration with Ontario's diverse communities. Police cannot do it alone, and together we can make a difference in the lives of the people of our great province.

Thank you for your interest in crime prevention and building strong and healthy communities. Let's continue to work together to build a safe and healthy Ontario.

Chief Jennifer Evans  
President, Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police

# Section 1 - Introduction

## Setting the Stage

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (Ministry) has been working with federal, provincial and municipal partners and local community stakeholders to develop a provincial approach to increase community safety and well-being.

The dialogue initially used the terminology “crime prevention” which has traditionally been seen as mainly a police responsibility. But it is clear that Ontario communities recognize the essential leadership roles played by a wide variety of sectors. Part of this clarity comes from the understanding that while those in the policing sector tend to use the phrase “crime prevention”, educators may identify “safe schools” and health professionals may focus on the “social determinants of health”. What these sectors are all referring to, in their own way, is community safety and well-being. As a result, the provincial dialogue has been refocused.

The Ministry encourages communities to move away from relying solely on reactionary and incident driven responses, and implement social development practices by identifying and responding to risks that increase the likelihood of criminal activity, victimization or harm, and working together to build local capacity and strong networks to implement proactive measures.

The provincial approach requires integrated community leadership and the flexibility to be responsive to local circumstances, needs and priorities. In order to plan for the future, community safety and well-being must be a shared commitment that is grounded in local leadership, meaningful multi-sectoral collaboration and must include responses that are community focused, rooted in evidence and outcome-based.

## Purpose

*Community Safety and Well-Being in Ontario: A Snapshot of Local Voices* has been written as a follow-up to the *Crime Prevention in Ontario: A Framework for Action* (Framework for Action), which was released broadly in 2012. The Framework for Action was the first booklet in this series, and was developed to raise awareness and promote the benefits of community safety and well-being among Ontario communities.

As local input from Ontario is a critical component to the success of the provincial approach, this second booklet is based entirely on information gathered from communities across the province.

This booklet is intended to act as an additional resource for local communities. It highlights locally-identified challenges to community safety and well-being that are shared across communities and locally-identified promising practices that respond to noted challenges. It also sheds light on Ontario’s way forward in strengthening community safety and well-being on a sustainable basis and introduces the Ministry’s third and final booklet in this series which will take the shape of a framework for community safety and well-being planning.

# Section 2 - Methodology

## Community Engagement Sessions

As community engagement is vital to the success of the provincial approach, the Ministry worked with its inter-ministerial, policing and community partners throughout 2013 to organize and facilitate over 30 engagement sessions in urban, rural, remote and Aboriginal communities across the province. Ministry staff travelled as far north as Eabametoong, as far south as Kingsville, as far west as Kenora and as far east as Cornwall.

As this booklet is based entirely on information gathered from the community engagement sessions it is important to note that the information included is a reflection of some of these community voices, and is not intended to represent the perspectives of all Ontario communities, or the policy or position of the Ministry or Government of Ontario. In addition, the locally-identified promising practices highlighted in this booklet have not been evaluated by, and are not endorsed by the Ministry or Government of Ontario.

## Structure and Design

The community engagement sessions were structured to provide an opportunity for the Ministry to inform participants on the Framework for Action and initiate open-ended dialogue to learn about community safety and well-being needs, challenges, gaps and locally-identified promising practices. The sessions were intended to engage community members about their roles in community safety and well-being, and identify the shared benefits that can be realized from undertaking multi-sectoral approaches. The Ministry's local policing and community partners volunteered, through various methods, to host a multi-sectoral community engagement session. Further outreach was conducted locally to allow for a wide variety of perspectives and feedback. Individuals in attendance included, but were not limited to, representatives from municipal governments, police services and police services boards, community and social services, schools and school boards, the academic community, health and mental health, corrections and youth justice, Band Councils and First Nations, the private sector and the general public. The number of participants varied from community to community, and ranged from 15 – 80 individuals, with an average of approximately 30 community members per session.

## Collecting and Selecting Information

The local challenges and promising practices identified by participants at the community engagement sessions were documented. Information regarding local challenges was reviewed and analyzed to identify common occurrences across sectors and communities. The promising practices were also reviewed and validated by community leads. Practices (including programs, strategies and initiatives) were qualitatively assessed for alignment with the following six foundational principles to achieve community safety and well-being, and those highlighted demonstrate strengths with at least one:

- Diversity;
- Community leadership;
- Integrated, multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary partnerships;
- Knowledge and information sharing;
- Evidence and evaluation; and
- Sustainable responses.

## Methodological Limitations

The sample is limited. The locally-identified challenges and promising practices highlighted within this booklet are self-reported, time-limited and the amount of local information communicated at each community engagement session varied. The comments made by those in attendance at the sessions are not attributed to specific stakeholders, sectors or communities; rather, the information gathered is a reflection of some community voices. The information received and validated by community leads on their locally-identified promising practices varied in detail and complexity, and the qualitative assessment was based on this information.



## Section 3 - Locally-Identified Challenges

Participants at the community engagement sessions spoke about their local community safety and well-being challenges from a wide variety of perspectives. Some tried to capture the overarching needs of the community, while others spoke as individuals and identified specific challenges that impact them personally. Conversely, some participants spoke on behalf of the particular organization for which they work or volunteer and others from the perspective of the broader sector to which those organizations belong. Despite the wide variety of perspectives, many common challenges were highlighted by various participants, across multiple sectors and communities. More specifically, the challenges mentioned most often at the engagement sessions relate to the following four themes:

- Collaboration;
- Service gaps;
- Service accessibility; and
- Resources and sustainability.

This section includes references to some of the locally-identified promising practices noted at the community engagement sessions, as well as current Ontario government programs that may assist with addressing some of the above noted challenges.

### Collaboration

The benefits of collaboration were acknowledged by many communities at the engagement sessions, but not without mention of the following significant challenges they face when attempting to build and maintain effective partnerships:

- Silos;
- Information sharing; and
- Community empowerment.

Some communities noted that service providers often work in isolation, otherwise known as silos. This creates divisions not only between sectors, but also between providers working within the same sector. A few communities indicated that silos are often reinforced by funding systems that compel agencies to compete with one another, making them less likely to initiate partnerships or share information. Additionally, many communities identified difficulties building partnerships with specific sectors. However, the sectors identified differed across communities, indicating that a few key agencies or individuals representing these sectors may need to be engaged at the local level.

While the absence of a partnership does not necessarily prevent the flow of information between sectors, it may create additional challenges. It logically follows that when relationships are strengthened, collaborators operate as partners and tend to be more comfortable sharing information. Even in instances where established partnerships exist, other factors may still prevent sectors from sharing information.

Ontario communities have implemented community safety and well-being practices that work within the existing legislative framework and one such example includes the Rapid Mobilization Table. This is an example of a Situation Table that uses a four-filter approach to share information. More information on this approach is described in detail on pages 25 and 26.

A few communities suggested that legislative amendments are needed in order for sectors to effectively collaborate and share information, while others have found innovative ways to work within the existing legislative framework. In some instances, legislation may appear to prohibit sectors from sharing information among themselves and/or across sectors in order to protect their clients' privacy rights. However, some pieces of legislation are specifically designed to enable sectors to share information in order to avoid risk-driven incidents from occurring. The inconsistencies sometimes result in sectors choosing to simply err on the side of caution when it comes to privacy.

The Ontario Working Group on Collaborative, Risk-Driven Community Safety (OWG), a co-operative effort of the Ministry, various Ontario police services and their community partners, have developed *An Interpretive Guide to Information Sharing Practices in Ontario...within the Context of Collaborative, Risk-driven Community Safety and Well-being*. It focuses exclusively on some of the challenges inherent in exchanging personal and confidential information to address the immediate needs of those at risk of harm or victimization. The guide was made available through the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) in July 2014, as part of a collection of documents entitled *New Directions in Community Safety: Consolidated Lessons Learned about Risk and Collaboration*. The entire collection is available online at the following website: <http://www.oacp.on.ca/news-events/resource-documents/ontario-working-group-owg>.

While partnership building and information sharing are concepts often associated with a more formalized level of collaboration, the need for informal collaboration among community members and groups was also acknowledged at many community engagement sessions. It is generally understood that members of a community should not simply report a crime once it has occurred, but should also be actively engaged in its prevention. It was noted that some of the most successful community safety and well-being initiatives are often led by community members and groups. A few communities indicated, however, that their members do not feel empowered to make a difference in their community and sometimes rely on professionals such as the police and other service providers to assume responsibility for the community's safety and well-being. Additionally, some community members that become engaged may find it challenging to make the time to volunteer on a consistent, ongoing basis. Other communities identified their successes and highlighted the emergence of grassroots initiatives in which mobilized community members seek to encourage and empower other citizens to engage in positive community-building activities.

Shifting the dialogue from preventing crime to achieving community safety and well-being certainly makes the conversation more accessible to a broader audience. But, with more voices and perspectives, come new challenges. After identifying respective roles in achieving community safety and well-being, community members and local service providers are encouraged to consider how their roles relate, overlap and complement one another to ensure meaningful collaboration. The engagement sessions provided the opportunity for the Ministry to build new relationships with, and between, multiple service providers, and helped to increase collaboration at the local level. While recognizing these challenges, communities continue to work together to address these barriers and some are finding great collaborative success.

East Side Pride and Our West End Initiative are two examples of grassroots organizations currently in operation in Ontario. More information can be found on page 16.

## Service Gaps

Participants at the community engagement sessions identified service gaps particular to their needs; some of those mentioned were highly specific and not shared across communities. Common service gaps were also identified in several locations, often by multiple sectors, including:

- Mental health;
- Poverty, homelessness and economic opportunities; and
- Youth.

The local priority most frequently identified at the community engagement sessions was mental health. Communities identified mental health issues as a significant risk factor that can lead individuals to either engage in crime, social disorder incidents or activities and/or become victims of crime. Some communities noted that a significant service gap exists in this area. In addition, some communities also highlighted the need for more services, such as enhancing emergency response by ensuring the presence of trained mental health specialists, for individuals with mental health needs. A few communities specifically spoke about the need for additional resources for youth with mental health needs, to provide services early on in life. Some communities also noted that addictions and substance abuse create additional challenges for those with mental health needs.

To address the priority of mental health, one Ontario community has established a multi-disciplinary Community Outreach and Support Team to provide integrated and coordinated responses to individuals with mental health needs who are in crisis. The sectors involved include police and mental health. More information about this team can be found on page 20.

The Ministry has used this information to select “Prevention Through the Promotion of Mental Health” as the theme for the 2014/15 – 2015/16 Safer and Vital Communities (SVC) Grant. This grant provides funding to community-based, not-for-profit, incorporated organizations and First Nations’ Chiefs and Band Councils to develop and deliver community safety and well-being initiatives. More information about this grant and other grants can be found at [www.ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca).

Many communities also identified poverty and homelessness as contributing factors to crime and victimization, and recognize the need for adequate, affordable and stable housing. It was suggested that more services are needed, and should be targeted to those who face the greatest risk of homelessness. Some communities identified their vulnerable, at-risk populations as youth, people newly released from custody/jail and individuals with mental health needs. Individuals falling into more than one of these groups, such as a youth in conflict with the law with mental health needs may face even greater challenges with achieving adequate housing. In addition, some communities highlighted a lack of employment related opportunities and/or a need for more education and employment programs for youth and people newly released from custody/jail.

In recognition of the fact that many individuals and families experiencing homelessness often face complex and co-occurring challenges related to mental health, addictions and poverty, one Ontario community has implemented a Community Addiction Response Strategy. This strategy uses a collaborative community-based approach to assist individuals and families experiencing homelessness to achieve stable housing. More information about this strategy can be found on page 24.

Overall, the most common priority group identified at the community engagement sessions as requiring additional services was youth. A few communities noted the negative impacts of social media, including cyberbullying, and other communities expressed concern with the issue of youth suicide. Some communities indicated that more programming is required to support positive parenting and preventative counselling services related to domestic violence and healthy relationships, as well as early childhood development. Other communities made reference to the need for more programming for seniors to provide opportunities to connect with youth in an attempt to reduce intergenerational gaps.

A community has responded to the need for healthy relationship programming by assisting school boards to implement an interactive classroom curriculum specifically for youth called The Fourth R. The Fourth R aims to reduce dating violence by teaching youth about healthy relationships. Further details about this program can be found on page 33.

Some communities have responded to the need for early childhood development by implementing a program for children in their early years called Stop Now And Plan (SNAP), which helps to regulate angry feelings by getting participants to stop, think and plan positive alternatives before acting impulsively. For additional information on this program refer to pages 27 and 28.

The provincial government also offers funding through the Seniors Community Grant for projects that encourage greater social inclusion, volunteerism and community engagement for seniors across the province. This grant is open to non-profit seniors' organizations, local service boards, municipalities, Aboriginal groups and individuals representing seniors groups. More information about this grant and other grants can be found at [www.ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca).



Some Ontario communities have also responded to the need for parenting programs and have implemented:

- Strengthening Families for the Future, which aims to facilitate change within the family, and can be found on pages 30 and 31;
- Caring Dads, which seeks to improve fathers' parenting skills, and can be found on pages 22 and 23; and
- the Triple P - Positive Parenting Program (Triple P), that aims to prevent and treat problems in the family, school and community before they arise, and can be found on page 28.

The provincial government offers Parents Reaching Out Grants to support parents in identifying barriers to community engagement, and to find local solutions to become more involved in supporting student achievement and well-being. Grant recipients may include school councils, parent organizations and involvement committees, publicly funded school boards, non-profit organizations and post-secondary institutions operating in Ontario. More information about this grant and other grants can be found at [www.ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca).

Although it is important for communities to assess their own specific service gaps to help identify local priorities, by sharing common service gaps communities have an opportunity to work together and learn from one another when attempting to address common gaps.


## Service Accessibility

Service accessibility is an important consideration in addressing a community's priority service gaps. At the community engagement sessions, many communities identified a lack of access to existing programs and services as a significant challenge. Communities acknowledged the following reasons for their accessibility issues:

- Lack of knowledge, awareness and coordination;
- Waitlists;
- Location and transportation; and
- Low uptake of services.

One reason that creates service accessibility challenges that was noted by many communities is a lack of knowledge and awareness about existing programs and services. In many instances, up-to-date information is not readily available, making it more difficult for people to access services on their own and impacting the ability of agencies to make referrals to other available services. This lack of awareness may be a contributing factor to the overall lack of coordination

Some Ontario communities have acknowledged the need for better coordination among human service providers and in response have implemented community safety and well-being practices with that intention. Some examples include New Opportunities and Hope Supportive Partnerships Advocating Community Empowerment (page 17) and Situation Tables (pages 19, 20, 25 and 26).



among services that was referenced by several communities. It was suggested that better coordination among human service providers would make it easier for people to connect with the supports they need, and help to avoid service duplication across agencies.

Many communities also identified lengthy waitlists as a significant barrier to accessing existing programs and services. In some instances, it was noted that programs and services may be reactive rather than preventative, meaning that, for example, priority may be given to those who have already come into contact with the law. Additionally, a few communities indicated that the limited hours during which some services are available (e.g., weekdays and during standard business hours) can affect an individual's ability to access the appropriate services when they are needed. It was suggested that extending and expanding service hours to include evenings, weekends and/or holidays could help to improve service accessibility.

One community has implemented an innovative program that aims to address the issue of lengthy waitlists, specifically for at-risk youth. Youth Outreach Under 18 Response Services provides short-term support for youth aged 12 to 18 years old who exhibit risk factors often associated with crime and victimization. More information about this program can be found on pages 18 and 19.

Generally, communities also cited location as a barrier to service accessibility. Many communities indicated that people must travel out of the region to access certain programs and services. Often services exist in central, urban locations, leaving parts of the community un-served or under-served. This can be of particular concern when the under-served areas overlap with the high risk areas of the community, which are home to vulnerable individuals and groups who most need the services. Many communities also indicated that there are challenges related to accessing transportation to services. In some communities there is a lack of available transportation to service locations, while in other communities transportation is available, but too costly. A few communities suggested partnering with local service clubs to respond to local transportation needs.

It was noted that even in instances where it appears that programs and services are both available and accessible, low uptake of services can present a significant challenge. People may not be accessing services on a consistent and/or continuous basis and, therefore, programs and services may not be achieving the intended results. This issue is of particular concern when uptake is low or infrequent among those who most need the programs and services being offered, such as high risk vulnerable populations. It was suggested that better outreach strategies are needed in some communities.

It is clear that simply establishing a program or a service is not enough to ensure that all members of a community who require the program or service can and will access them. Reasons for service accessibility issues are varied and the complexity of the causes suggests that multi-dimensional solutions are required.

## Resources and Sustainability

A contributing factor to the overall availability and accessibility of services identified by communities may be related to their challenges with ensuring the sustainability of the programs and services offered. Generally, communities indicated that current resources are either insufficient or unsustainable due to challenging:

- Funding structures;
- Funding criteria; and
- Limited evaluation.

Specific challenges were identified with the structure of grant funding. Grants often have specific criteria that outline the areas in which funding can be spent. In some instances, funding may only be used for program start-up costs, rather than for on-going operations such as staffing or evaluation. Other grant criteria can also make it difficult for communities to target funding towards locally-identified priorities if they are unrelated to the priorities of the funding organization. Failure to abide by grant funding criteria may result in a loss of funding. Many grants are short-term, which means that grant recipients must either develop programs that fit within the timeframe for funding, or find ways to adapt and continue the program with other resources once the grant has finished. Additionally, knowledge and awareness of some grants may be low and as a result, potential recipients may miss opportunities to access funding.

In response to the overwhelming sustainability concerns identified at the community engagement sessions, the Ministry extended the term of the SVC Grant from one to two years, for the period of 2014/15 – 2015/16, in order to support the sustainability of initiatives funded. More information about this grant and other grants can be found at [www.ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca).

Some communities also noted that it can be challenging to meet the expectations placed on grant recipients. If a program is funded through multiple grants from more than one source, reporting and other expectations are multiplied and can be difficult to manage for some community organizations. In a few instances, communities indicated that recipients are required to provide a substantial amount of information, sometimes related to the resources to be used to implement the program, or evaluation of the model upon which the program is based.

Fulfilling these requirements can be particularly challenging if recipients are utilizing the funding to initiate pilot projects that aim to test out an innovative, new approach. Overall, there is a significant need for a coordinated funding system which both streamlines administrative requirements and ensures the accountability of funding.

Communities' challenges related to resources and sustainability are very closely linked to their challenges related to program evaluation. It was recognized that conducting meaningful evaluations can be complex, time consuming and require significant resources. For example, it is difficult for police services and other community safety and well-being partners to prove that an individual did not commit a crime or become a victim because he or she was involved in a specific program. Similarly, it is difficult for a health care agency to prove that an individual did not develop a disease because he or she followed a particular diet and exercise routine, or a school to prove that a student avoided expulsion because he or she participated in a specific extra-curricular program. Generally, prevention initiatives are simply more difficult to evaluate. Because finding a way to demonstrate the social value of an investment is essential to illustrating societal savings, and validate funding decisions, some communities have acknowledged the opportunity to leverage their local academic community to assist in conducting evaluations.

Although some communities are finding challenges with obtaining resources and ensuring sustainability, many others are using existing resources in an innovative and collaborative way to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in their community safety and well-being practices. Communities are encouraged to partner with others, and learn from those who have developed new ways to ensure the needs of their community are being met on an ongoing basis.

The OWG has also developed a guidance document that identifies examples of effective and appropriate performance indicators for measuring community safety and well-being. The performance measures are derived from the applied research and evaluation efforts of municipalities, university departments, provincial agencies and offices. The measures have been shown to work and be of value to those who are interested in strengthening community capacities to develop and care for the safety and well-being of Ontarians. The guidance document, *Performance Measures...for Community Safety and Well-being*, was made available through the OACP in July 2014, as part of a collection of documents entitled *New Directions in Community Safety: Consolidated Lessons Learned about Risk and Collaboration*. The entire collection is available online at <http://www.oacp.on.ca/news-events/resource-documents/ontario-working-group-owg>.

Two Ontario based programs mentioned at the community engagement sessions, SNAP and Triple P, have had return on investment evaluations, and have shown positive results in obtaining value for money spent. More information about these programs can be found on pages 27 and 28.





## Conclusion

The local involvement and input received at the community engagement sessions shed light on many common challenges experienced by multiple participants, across various sectors and communities when aiming to increase community safety and well-being. The sessions have shown that communities are working together in partnership to shrink service gaps, increase service accessibility and use existing resources in a more innovative way to create sustainable responses. When developing community safety and well-being practices, communities are encouraged to be proactive in considering the challenges outlined above in order to mitigate and/or avoid them if possible. Encouragingly, and perhaps most importantly, the sessions also gave communities the opportunity to share and celebrate their successes, and identify the following local promising practices.

# Section 4 - Locally-Identified Promising Practices

It is evident from the community engagement sessions that there is a tremendous amount of great work happening in local settings across Ontario to increase community safety and well-being. Although there were many community safety and well-being promising practices mentioned at the community engagement sessions, the following section represents a snapshot of those practices that exhibit an assessed strength with at least one of the following six foundational principles of achieving community safety and well-being:

- Diversity;
- Community leadership;
- Integrated, multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary partnerships;
- Knowledge and information sharing;
- Evidence and evaluation; and
- Sustainable responses.

This section is organized by the above noted principles and the practices are highlighted underneath the principle that represents its greatest assessed strength. The Ministry encourages communities to consider the foundational principles, and learn from one another when developing and implementing local community safety and well-being practices.

The locally-identified promising practices highlighted in this section do not reflect a full compendium, and have not been evaluated by, and are not endorsed by the Ministry or Government of Ontario. The practices highlighted below identify the communities which mentioned and validated the information, and those communities referenced below also do not represent a conclusive list of where the engagement sessions were held.

For more information on the following practices please conduct research and you may also contact [SafetyPlanning@Ontario.ca](mailto:SafetyPlanning@Ontario.ca). To determine whether these practices are suitable to respond to local circumstances and needs within your community, it is encouraged that a thorough examination be undertaken.

## Diversity

Ontario's demography is diverse in many ways and continually changing. Community safety and well-being practices should be developed and delivered to recognize and respond to the diverse needs of the regions, populations and groups in Ontario as a one size fits all approach is not appropriate. It is imperative that practices demonstrate an understanding of how people are excluded and marginalized, acknowledge cultural appropriateness and reference research regarding the local demographics to understand community needs. As such, each of the promising practices identified in this section respond to the diverse needs of the communities in which they were mentioned.

## Community Leadership

Community safety and well-being is a community-wide responsibility and it requires dedication and input from everyone. Communities are in the best position to accurately identify risk factors and as a result, can best create responses to address their specific needs. It is through strong community leadership that everyone can identify their role and take ownership and responsibility for helping to create safe and healthy communities.

The following initiatives are examples of community mobilization at the grassroots level. These initiatives demonstrate that when community members work together to address local issues, they can have a positive impact on their respective neighbourhoods.

### **East Side Pride**

East Side Pride, created by a group of citizens in Chatham-Kent in 1999, is a grassroots organization with a mission to build and maintain a safe and healthy neighbourhood. It was established by a group of volunteers who wanted to take a stand to reclaim their neighbourhood and continues to be run by volunteers who develop programs that proactively address crime and promote community engagement. Collaborating regularly and with multiple sectors, including police, the municipality, various non-profit organizations, a community centre, a local women's centre and several local businesses, they engage in activities to better their community and encourage positive behaviour in their neighbourhood.

### **Our West End Initiative**

Our West End Initiative is a grassroots organization located in Windsor that is made up of community members committed to making their neighbourhood a safe place to live, work and play. They work with and empower residents through collaborative roundtable discussions to identify local assets and community needs. As a result of these discussions, Our West End Initiative is able to support residents by providing the tools and opportunities necessary for the development of programs and creation of additional resources. Supplementary research and focus groups are on-going and will be used in the development of a multi-dimensional plan for improvement, driven by the needs of the neighbourhood and local residents.

## New Opportunities and Hope Supportive Partnerships Advocating Community Empowerment

New Opportunities and Hope (N.O.A.H.) was formed by Sudbury residents interested in working together to make their neighbourhoods healthier and more productive places to live. Through N.O.A.H., it was determined that a ‘one stop shop’ offering a number of different supportive services through a single point of access under one roof would be beneficial for the residents living in the involved neighbourhoods. As a result, the concept of ‘The Neighbourhood Resource Centre’ was born, which has since evolved into N.O.A.H.’s Supportive Partnerships Advocating Community Empowerment (S.P.A.C.E.).

N.O.A.H.’s S.P.A.C.E. is a collaborative partnership among more than 40 different community agencies working together to create hope and provide inclusive services to community residents. This includes educational and cultural workshops, community barbeques, flu vaccine clinics and other community events. Core partners of N.O.A.H.’s S.P.A.C.E. include community organizations, a child welfare organization, police, a district health unit and an Aboriginal organization. Through N.O.A.H.’s S.P.A.C.E., community partners come together under one roof to share knowledge, meet residents with identified needs, provide accessible resources and referrals, develop opportunities and implement sustainable solutions that will create healthier outcomes for all.

These community leadership practices primarily target the following risk factors and enhance the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• crime in the area;</li><li>• social disorganization – e.g., high poverty and residential mobility; and</li><li>• neighbourhood characterized by poor housing, lack of recreational, health and educational facilities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• access to resources, professional services and social support;</li><li>• positive cohesive communities; and</li><li>• strong police/justice system engagement/partnership with the community.</li></ul>

## Muslim Family Support Service

The Muslim Family Support Service is designed to assist individuals, couples and families in the Muslim community in London in their efforts to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties. This is done through culturally sensitive outreach to the Muslim community and mainstream services, with the aim to build bridges of understanding and to facilitate connection. This service encourages agencies to be more flexible and provides



information to assist in understanding cultural appropriateness. This service is sensitive to language and religious differences, and recognizes that the needs of one group may be different from another. It is oriented to short-term crises and assists families in learning about and accessing mainstream services.

The Muslim Family Support Service was developed to meet community needs identified during a Family Safety Project. An advisory committee consisting of members of the Muslim community and representatives from social service organizations was established to support and guide the work of the service.

The Muslim Family Support Service primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• feeling of powerlessness;</li><li>• sense of alienation; and</li><li>• limited attachment to the community.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• integration of families into the life of the community;</li><li>• access to resources, professional services and social support; and</li><li>• positive cohesive communities.</li></ul>

### Integrated, Multi-Sectoral, Multi-Disciplinary Partnerships

Everyone plays a role in community safety and well-being. Therefore, it is essential for these practices to be a coordinated and integrated effort between relevant human service providers and sectors at the local level.

The following programs include meaningful multi-sectoral partnerships that address risk factors associated with crime, victimization and harm from various angles.

### Youth Outreach Under 18 Response Services

Youth Outreach Under 18 Response Services (YOURS) was created in 2005 to help eliminate the service gaps for youth who are on waitlists by providing them with short-term support and referrals until other services may be accessed. Specifically, YOURS targets unattached or disengaged male and female youth in Port Hope between the ages of 12 and 18 who exhibit behavioural issues, desperation, frustration, anger management issues, eating disorders, sexual abuse, substance abuse, are involved in the criminal justice system and/or are at risk of dropping out of school.

YOURS is an example of multiple sectors working collaboratively to coordinate service delivery. Program referrals are provided by local school boards, health organizations, youth justice participants and families of youth, or the youth themselves. In addition, child and family services, counselling centres, community mental health and child welfare organizations provide supportive services to youth involved in the program to ensure the youth receive the assistance they require.

YOURS primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• feelings of hopelessness;</li><li>• behavioural issues; and</li><li>• prior delinquency.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• access to resources, professional services and social support;</li><li>• personal coping strategies and optimism; and</li><li>• positive expectations for the future.</li></ul>

**Furthering Our Communities Uniting Services**

Furthering Our Communities Uniting Services (FOCUS) was implemented in Toronto in 2013 and aims to reduce/prevent crime and social disorder and increase community safety and well-being, while building meaningful collaborative, multi-sectoral partnerships. FOCUS is an example of a Situation Table that is being implemented across Ontario. A Situation Table consists of human service providers from different sectors working together to provide immediate, coordinated and integrated responses to address situations facing individuals and/or families at acutely elevated risk, as recognized across a broad range of service providers. Situation Tables convene to discuss acutely elevated risk situations that have been brought forward by an agency sitting at the table and within 24 to 48 hours, the relevant service providers stage an intervention to help connect that individual and/or family with the appropriate supports and services to address their acute needs.

FOCUS involves multiple sectors coming together once a week, including but not limited to, housing, social services, health, justice and education. Participants may vary depending on the community. Each partner has a different expertise and brings with them knowledge of resources, programs and services that are available in the community. After a situation has been identified, the group determines the most appropriate agency to provide assistance. FOCUS aims to connect individuals and/or families to resources before they are victimized and/or engage in criminal activity, thereby reducing the likelihood for solely emergency response.

Situation Tables primarily target the following risk factors and enhance the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• marginalization;</li> <li>• lack of accessibility to a continuum of services; and</li> <li>• ineffectiveness of police/justice system in engaging/mobilizing/partnering with the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to resources, professional services and social support;</li> <li>• strong police/justice system engagement/partnership with the community; and</li> <li>• effective/efficient delivery of police/justice system services.</li> </ul>

### Community Outreach and Support Team

Community Outreach and Support Teams (COAST) provide an integrated, community-based response to individuals aged 16 and over who are marginalized, vulnerable and experiencing mental health and/or addictions issues. Located in Halton, COAST aims to reduce the amount of time police officers spend dealing with calls that would be better handled by the health care system, and divert individuals experiencing a mental health crisis from emergency rooms and the criminal justice system. COAST also enables individuals in crisis who have a serious mental illness to remain safely within their own environment where management plans can be developed to diffuse a crisis situation.

COAST involves a partnership between the justice and health sectors. It generally consists of a plain clothes police officer and a mental health crisis worker. In other communities, patrol officers respond to calls and, based on information obtained, determine if reaching out to a COAST is appropriate. Some provide follow-up and outreach to family members and support agencies.

COAST primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poor mental health;</li> <li>• feelings of powerlessness; and</li> <li>• ineffectiveness of police/justice system in engaging/mobilizing/partnering with the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to resources, professional services and social support;</li> <li>• effective/efficient delivery of police/justice system services; and</li> <li>• high awareness of determinants of well-being.</li> </ul>

## **Niigan Mosewak**

Niigan Mosewak, mentioned in Orillia, is an Ojibway phrase meaning “Walking Forward” and is used as the descriptor for an Aboriginal youth diversion program developed in 2008 that targets at-risk youth aged 13 to 17 from Aboriginal communities in Nipissing, Manitoulin, Parry Sound and Sudbury. This program is delivered as a summer camp that includes youth and adult mentors and provides youth with the tools they need to develop into healthy and contributing citizens in their community. Following the traditional teachings of the Medicine Wheel, this program encompasses a holistic approach and incorporates physical, emotional, spiritual and mental aspects of being.

## **Walking the Path**

With its inception in 1996, Walking the Path, also mentioned in Orillia, teaches youth across Ontario in kindergarten to grade 12 about the history, beliefs and cultural traditions of Aboriginal people. Based on Anishnawbe cultural teachings, the program can be altered to suit the needs of various communities and is designed to provide students with insight into indigenous culture and to instill pride in Aboriginal youth by teaching them about where they came from. In ten modules, Walking the Path includes youth empowerment strategies, promotes self-concept, self-esteem and respect for others, and also deals with issues including healing from trauma, abuse, racism and combating stereotypes, prejudice and biases.

### ***Niigan Mosewak and Walking the Path***

Youth are referred to Niigan Mosewak by the police, courts, probation and parole services, local schools and community and health organizations. In addition, Walking the Path was developed in partnership between a local police service, the provincial police and a local school board. Families, teachers, police and communities are also involved in planning and delivering educational initiatives to youth. Elders are engaged in the development and delivery of both programs, ensuring that Aboriginal people’s needs and capabilities are recognized. It is important for programs to acknowledge the diverse needs of Aboriginal people in particular, as First Nation and Aboriginal communities face unique challenges with respect to crime, violence and victimization. Acknowledging these challenges and their unique history by involving the public and elders will help to ensure that Aboriginal communities are receiving assistance that is culturally appropriate.



Niigan Mosewak and Walking the Path both primarily target the following risk factors and enhance the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• victimization/abuse;</li><li>• isolation; and</li><li>• impact of assimilation policies.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• personal coping strategies;</li><li>• positive relationship with an adult; and</li><li>• access to resources, professional services and social support.</li></ul>

Caring Dads

Caring Dads is a specialized program for men seeking to improve their parenting skills through counselling and educational sessions. Implemented in Halton, the goal of Caring Dads is to create healthy parenting and eliminate family violence by prioritizing the needs of children and ensuring men understand the impact of their behaviour on their children and partner. On a weekly basis, men are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, while being taught how to engage with their children in an empathetic and nurturing way. Caring Dads includes a mother contact component, where mothers of the men’s children are contacted on a minimum of two occasions and provided with referrals, supports, advocacy services and, if necessary, immediate safety planning. Program facilitators also spend considerable time communicating with referral agents to share information about the men’s progress and potentially ongoing risk to their children or their children’s mothers. This program acknowledges gender differences, as men and women often do not have the same experiences and face different challenges. Participants in this program develop skills for interacting with their children in healthy ways, including learning to recognize and avoid the use of controlling, intimidating and abusive actions.

Caring Dads was developed in collaboration by university professors, community organizations, child protective services, batterer intervention programs, children’s mental health agencies, women’s advocates, centres of children and families involved in the justice system, family resource agencies and probation and parole services. The partnerships between academia and community organizations in the development of this program created a strong foundation of theory and practice. In addition, referrals to the program are provided by a local child welfare organization, courts, probation and parole offices; family and self-referrals are also accepted.

Caring Dads primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• parental attitudes that support violence;</li><li>• mistreatment during childhood; and</li><li>• neglect.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• adequate parental behaviours and practices;</li><li>• stability of the family unit; and</li><li>• positive support within the family.</li></ul>

## Knowledge and Sharing Information

A lot of information already exists on community safety and well-being efforts. Facilitating the sharing of this knowledge and information allows communities to build capacity using existing resources, ideas and practices and avoid the duplication of services. It is also important to share information within the existing legislative framework with relevant partners about individuals who are at risk of victimization or offending, as this creates a greater likelihood that individuals will be connected with the appropriate services.

The following practices highlight various ways of sharing knowledge and information between partners, stakeholders, clients and the public, including formal protocols, public meetings and informal sharing agreements that align with the existing legislative framework.

### New Directions Treatment Program

The New Directions Treatment Program was created in 2010 and provides counselling services to youth aged 12 to 18 in Barrie who have been convicted of a sexual offence or related charge. It aims to reduce risk factors for sexual offending among youth and strengthen their families by educating parents and increasing their level of pro-social engagement with their families, peers and the broader community. The program includes a comprehensive risk assessment, and individual and family counselling. It is delivered in partnership between a community organization and probation services. While this program is generally only provided to youth for the duration of their probation order, if they have not completed their treatment, their involvement in the program may be extended.

The New Directions Treatment Program has developed policies and procedures for the sharing of client's personal information with other service providers. For example, release of information forms must be signed by participants before program staff can contact certain professionals. At the beginning of the program, youth are required to

sign consent to service forms that outline the organization’s practices regarding confidentiality. Program staff also have conversations with participants regarding information that needs to be shared with their parent/guardian (e.g., safety concerns about themselves or towards others) and information that can be kept between them.

The New Directions Treatment Program primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prior delinquency;</li> <li>• aggression; and</li> <li>• poor emotional regulation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sense of personal responsibility;</li> <li>• adequate parental supervision; and</li> <li>• positive support within the family.</li> </ul>

## Community Addiction Response Strategy

The Community Addiction Response Strategy (CAREs) was implemented in London in 2008 and aims to improve the housing and health outcomes of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. CAREs seeks to alleviate demands on the health, social and criminal justice systems by using a collaborative, community-based approach to achieve housing stability when assisting those experiencing homelessness or those at risk of being homeless. Recognizing often complex and co-occurring challenges associated with addictions, mental health, trauma and poverty, responses are provided based on the results of an assessment and individual priorities. CAREs is funded by the municipality and delivered in partnership with a local public health organization, addiction centre and a homeless shelter.

To ensure that community partners, stakeholders and the public are aware of CAREs, updates are provided at quarterly community committee meetings. Community members and organizations that provide services to people experiencing homelessness and have shared goals are invited to attend the meetings where they will receive status updates on CAREs programming, activities and emerging community trends.

CAREs primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of affordable housing;</li> <li>• poverty; and</li> <li>• poor mental health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to resources, professional services and social support;</li> <li>• positive cohesive communities; and</li> <li>• effective/efficient delivery of police/justice system services.</li> </ul>

**Violent Threat Risk Assessment Protocol**

Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocols aim to reduce violence, manage threats of violence and promote individual, school and community safety through early intervention, support and the sharing of information. The VTRA Protocol has been implemented in Belleville, Cornwall, Halton, York and Sarnia, and support collaborative planning among schools, community partners, families, children and youth, and the development of safe, caring and restorative approaches. Specifically, they promote the immediate sharing of information about a child or youth who pose a risk of violence to themselves or to others.

The foundation upon which the VTRA Protocol rests, is that schools, police, health and community agencies will work together and identify/develop strategies to mitigate potential threats of violence. While information sharing practices vary between communities, in most circumstances formal information sharing protocols are signed between partners in order to facilitate the process.

VTRA Protocols primarily target the following risk factors and enhance the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• negative influences in the youth’s life;</li><li>• sense of alienation; and</li><li>• cultural norms supporting violence.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• caring school environment;</li><li>• positive relationship with an adult; and</li><li>• access to resources, professional services and social support.</li></ul>

**Rapid Mobilization Table**

The Rapid Mobilization Table (RMT) is another example of a Situation Table that has been operationalized in Ontario. Implemented in Sudbury, it consists of human service providers from different sectors collaborating to provide immediate, coordinated and integrated responses to support individuals, families, groups or locations that have been identified by partners to be at acutely elevated risk. RMT convenes twice a week to identify and discuss situations that place community members at a high risk of harm. Once a situation is identified, all necessary agency partners participate in a coordinated, joint response ensuring that those at risk are connected to appropriate, timely and effective supports. RMT data is used to identify trends, common risk factors and

potential gaps in community services. This information, including potential opportunities and recommendations, is shared with community leaders to inform community planning and decision-making.

In order for Situation Tables to be successful, they require participating agencies to share the most basic and limited personal information about individuals or families at acutely elevated risk, to best address their needs and offer the appropriate support services. Obtaining consent to share personal and confidential information is the first priority of a Situation Table. In cases where consent cannot be obtained at the outset, RMT uses a four filter approach to ease the flow of limited personal information, working within existing legislation. This approach sets parameters on what information is being shared and with whom to guide each discussion and limit the disclosure of personal information. The following four filter approach was developed and refined by the Community Mobilization Prince Albert team in Saskatchewan and was quickly adopted by all operational Situation Tables across their province:

**1. Filter One - Preliminary Screening**

- Agencies understand they can only bring forward a situation for discussion once they have exhausted their means to be able to appropriately handle the situation within their own agency.
- If the agency determines the risk factors are beyond their scope to mitigate, and could be better handled by a larger discussion across multiple human service sectors, then the situation is brought to the table.

**2. Filter Two - Identifying Acutely Elevated Risk**

- When a situation is brought forward to the table it is first presented in a de-identified manner.
- After a brief discussion around the table, a consensus decision-making process is used to determine whether or not the situation meets the threshold of an acutely elevated risk.

**3. Filter Three - Limited Information Shared**

- If there is consensus at the table that an acutely elevated risk exists, limited personal information is shared about the individual and/or family, including but not limited to, a name, date of birth and address.
- This provides an opportunity for the agencies around the table to see if they already provide services to the individual and/or family as well as identify which agencies should be involved in the intervention stage.

**4. Filter Four - Full Discussion with Relevant Agencies**

- Agencies named as a result of filter three take the discussion offline at the end of the meeting and share further information amongst each other as needed to determine the appropriate next steps.

See page 20 for the risk factors and protective factors that Situation Tables primarily target and enhance.



## Evidence and Evaluation

Developing community safety and well-being practices based on evidence helps to validate their significance and ensure investments are yielding benefits to the community. It is also important to identify and understand the needs of the local community and use practices that will meet those needs, based on research. Intended outcomes must be identified in the development stage in order to measure performance and progress made towards addressing identified issues both during and after implementation. Outcomes should be used to measure the impacts or changes the practices are expected to make in the community. Monitoring and evaluation should be ongoing as some outcomes may be evident immediately after practices are implemented and some may take more time to achieve. When performance measurement focuses on the achievement of outcomes, as well as completion of activities, it presents opportunities for ongoing learning and adaptation to proven good practice.

The following are examples of community safety and well-being practices that incorporate research and/or evaluation in their development, implementation and/or refinement.

### Stop Now And Plan

Utilized in several communities, including Barrie and Toronto, Stop Now And Plan (SNAP) is a gender sensitive, cognitive behavioural family-focused program that provides a framework for effectively teaching children and their parents how to regulate emotions, exhibit self-control and use problem-solving skills. It was developed for children between the ages of six and 12 who have come into contact with the law and/or show early signs of serious anti-social, aggressive or delinquent behaviour.

Over the course of the intervention, SNAP helps to regulate angry feelings by getting participants to stop, think and plan positive alternatives before acting impulsively. Training manuals have also been developed to help Aboriginal communities implement this program, recognizing their unique challenges. In order for an organization to offer SNAP, they must obtain a license from the originating organization and complete a training and consultation agreement.

SNAP primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>poor self-control and problem solving;</li><li>aggression; and</li><li>impulsivity.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>effective problem solving skills;</li><li>sense of responsibility; and</li><li>pro-social behaviours.</li></ul>

## Triple P - Positive Parenting Program

Triple P - Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) is a parenting and family support system run by an accredited Triple P practitioner and delivered to parents with children up to 16 years of age in communities including Barrie, Windsor and York. It aims to prevent and treat problems in the family, school and community before they arise and create family environments that help children realize their potential.

This program draws on social learning, cognitive behavioural and developmental theory, as well as research into the risk factors associated with the development of social and behavioural problems in children. Triple P provides parents with the skills and confidence they need to be self-sufficient and independently manage family issues by teaching them effective parenting strategies, including how to promote child development and manage common child behavioural problems.

Triple P primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• family violence;</li><li>• parental attitudes that support violence; and</li><li>• few or no positive role models.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• personal coping strategies;</li><li>• pro-social behaviours; and</li><li>• adequate parental behaviour and practices.</li></ul>

### *SNAP and Triple P*

SNAP and Triple P are evidence-based practices that were developed more than 25 years ago with ongoing research. They have each been evaluated extensively by the central agencies (and others) that originally developed the practices and issue licences to implement them in communities across Ontario. Through ongoing pre/post/follow-up evaluations, random control trials and cost benefit-analysis with participants, results of SNAP evaluations are positive. Some successes include that SNAP has been found to have positive impacts on a parent's ability to use effective child management strategies, reduced child behaviour problems and the likelihood that a child will become involved in the criminal justice system. Third party external evaluations have also been conducted to ensure successes are repeated and return on investment is obtained. Evaluation results for Triple P are also promising and have shown positive effects on observed and parent-reported child behavioural problems and parenting practices at the family and community level. Triple P has also demonstrated positive influences on population-level child maltreatment indices.

Positive Alternatives to School Suspension Program

The Positive Alternatives to School Suspension (PASS) Program began in 1999 as part of an endorsed progressive discipline intervention plan of the local boards of education. It is an alternative to student home suspension offered to youth in grades four through 12 in Sarnia that aims to reduce the number of school suspensions, increase their focus on school, help youth feel comfortable in seeking support and improve their coping and social skills. Students are required to complete school work and engage in practices to help develop social competency skills. Participating schools provide youth with academic materials to ensure they make progress in their studies at their grade level. This program is a collaborative partnership between the local school boards, college placement students and a community organization.

The PASS Program was developed in response to community research that identified a need for structured suspension based supports and re-integration plans for youth with complex needs and/or involvement in the criminal justice system. In the early stages of development, a detailed logic model was created to outline the program goals, short, medium and long-term outcomes and on-going activities that would be implemented to help achieve the noted outcomes. In addition, on-going evaluations of program content and delivery are conducted by asking youth and their parents/guardians to assess the program at the end of each suspension. Results to date have been reported as positive and the majority of participants and their parents/guardians have indicated that the PASS Program has helped them deal with the reasons they were suspended. Youth have also suggested that going forward they are more likely to think about the consequences of their actions. The program continues to evolve based on emerging trends and evaluations received.

The PASS Program primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>low academic inspirations;</li><li>low self-esteem; and</li><li>sense of alienation.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>effective problem solving skills;</li><li>positive school experiences; and</li><li>sense of responsibility.</li></ul>

Neighbourhood Based Crime Prevention

Established in 2006 in Ottawa, Neighbourhood Based Crime Prevention evolved out of a crime analysis led by a municipal crime prevention council in partnership with the police, city departments and a local university that helped identify high-risk neighbourhoods in the area. Based on the analysis, the municipal crime prevention

council engaged multi-sectoral stakeholders in three priority neighbourhoods and provided funding for a staff member at three agencies in the respective neighbourhoods to help address locally identified issues. In each neighbourhood, agency staff brought together a table of residents and community partners to analyze specific issues and priorities in that neighbourhood and develop initiatives to meet the diverse needs of the community and cater to the local demographic. Some stakeholders involved in Neighbourhood Based Crime Prevention include police, resident and business associations, community agencies, education, health, housing and social services.

The municipal crime prevention council provided technical and research support, funding and assisted in outreach to ensure communities access city resources and services. In addition to using local research to determine where supplemental resources would be most effective, an external consultant was hired to assess the overall effectiveness. Results were extremely positive, including reduced levels of crime in the targeted neighbourhoods between 20 and 27 per cent, and improved relationships between citizens, various services and the police.

Neighbourhood Based Crime Prevention primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• crime in the area;</li><li>• feeling unsafe in a neighbourhood; and</li><li>• poor community design.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• access to resources, professional services and social support;</li><li>• positive cohesive communities; and</li><li>• integration of families into the life of the community.</li></ul>

**Strengthening Families for the Future**

Created in 2007, Strengthening Families for the Future is a prevention program for families with children between the ages of seven and 11 who are at risk of substance abuse, depression, violence, delinquency and dropping out of school. In Kenora, it is delivered over nine to 14 consecutive weekly sessions each lasting for approximately three hours. This program involves parents and children coming together to share a meal, followed by a one hour individual session for parents and their children, and a session with the entire family where they practise the skills they learned in their individual sessions. This program is powerful in that it facilitates change within the family by involving the whole family and not just parents or children.

Strengthening Families for the Future is modelled on a successful program developed in 1988 by a professor at the University of Utah. The original program has been evaluated extensively in various countries across the globe. Since being implemented in Ontario, the program has been updated to include information from local treatment

agencies. This adaptation of the program has also undergone extensive evaluation and has been identified as a best practice program by Health Canada. Preliminary results show that Strengthening Families for the Future is a promising intervention for fostering significant improvements in family functioning, parenting and a child’s psychological functioning.

Strengthening Families for the Future primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• behavioural problems;</li><li>• feeling of hopelessness; and</li><li>• families with few resources.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• self-esteem;</li><li>• personal coping strategies; and</li><li>• positive parent-child attachment and interactions.</li></ul>

### Sustainable Responses

While lasting conditions, structures, programs and policies take time to establish, sustainable responses are critical to supporting communities’ ongoing ability to build capacity and respond to harm. Without sustainable, long-term practices in place, crime and victimization will reoccur, and the health and well-being of the community will not be maximized.

The following practices have elements that are important to ensuring sustainability, such as addressing co-occurring challenges at the system level, using volunteers to reduce financial pressures, building local capacity to develop strategies and establishing a train-the-trainer model to help ensure longevity of the practice.

### Aspire

Established in 2010, Aspire seeks to prevent violent youth crime by improving academic achievement and building peer relationships. This program provides children in kindergarten to grade six in under-served neighbourhoods in Mississauga with one-on-one after school tutoring and peer mentoring sessions at no-cost. Students are paired with a peer tutor that is in high school or college/university, meeting once a week after school to work on areas of academic need. In partnership with other community agencies, the municipality and local police service, students are provided with a convenient location for tutoring and attending events.



Aspire is structured around a community operated model, where youth and young adults are encouraged to take ownership of the program. While agency staff provide support in program delivery, volunteers ensure that the program does not solely rely on funding. Volunteers are provided with incentives to participate in the program; for example, they can earn volunteer hours as part of their educational requirements.

Aspire primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low self-esteem;</li> <li>• low academic aspirations; and</li> <li>• negative influences in the youth's life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• optimism and positive expectations for the future;</li> <li>• positive school experiences; and</li> <li>• participation in extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

### Community Crisis Response Program

Since 2008, the Community Crisis Response Program (CCRP) has provided support and resources to Toronto communities impacted by violent and traumatic incidents (e.g., a shooting). This program is activated when a violent incident occurs in a neighbourhood and involves helping communities develop localized strategies, including the development of a coordinated community crisis response protocol. CCRP leads an integrated response by coordinating municipal services, school boards, police, the public, community/faith-based organizations and residents to assist with a neighbourhood's response and recovery. It operates under three key components: crisis intervention, prevention and preparation.

CCRP seeks to improve the safety and well-being of neighbourhoods by increasing the local capacity to develop collaborative strategies to intervene, prevent and prepare for violent and traumatic incidents. It connects community stakeholders in order to address locally identified safety challenges by enhancing local service delivery and leveraging inter-sectoral linkages. The success of CCRP has resulted in it being embedded into the core business of the municipality in which it originated.

CCRP primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• violent victimization;</li> <li>• feeling unsafe in a neighbourhood; and</li> <li>• low level of perceived police/justice system legitimacy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personal coping strategies;</li> <li>• positive cohesive communities; and</li> <li>• high awareness of detriments of well-being.</li> </ul>

## The Fourth R

The Fourth R is an optional interactive classroom curriculum that aims to promote healthy relationships, reduce youth relationship violence and decrease substance misuse in Ottawa. It was developed and evaluated by an addictions and mental health centre in partnership with a local school board. The Fourth R focuses on relationship goals and challenges that influence youth decision-making through a gendered approach by emphasizing gender-specific patterns and aligning them with activities. It is integrated into existing grade seven, eight and nine health and physical education curricula and is administered in co-ed or sex-segregated classrooms. In addition, there are Aboriginal and alternative education versions of The Fourth R that align with cross-curricular expectations. Each of these programs seek to involve community members in delivering positive messages to youth about healthy relationships. Teachers and parents are engaged using strategies that assist in building bridges between community agencies and schools to increase access to resources and services for youth.

Using a longer-term approach of working with youth, The Fourth R consists of 21 sessions delivered over the course of a school year. Teachers are trained to deliver the program and are provided with curriculum materials. After they are trained, they do not need to be re-trained, but are provided with program updates as they are made available. In addition, “Master Trainers” are also trained within each school board in the community to ensure that they have the capacity to offer the training themselves. The Fourth R addresses co-occurring challenges by teaching lessons and using activities that teach youth negotiation, delay and refusal skills, help youth define and rehearse responsibilities associated with healthy relationships, and allow the use of role-playing to increase interpersonal problem-solving skills.

The Fourth R primarily targets the following risk factors and enhances the subsequent protective factors:

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• peer pressure;</li><li>• negative influences in the youth’s life; and</li><li>• family violence.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• personal coping strategies;</li><li>• pro-social behaviours; and</li><li>• sense of responsibility.</li></ul>

## Conclusion

Whether it is demonstrating strong community leadership, meaningful partnerships or comfort with sharing knowledge and information, using research and evaluation, or being innovative to achieve sustainable solutions that are responsive to the diversity of the community, it is evident that Ontario communities are implementing social development approaches to achieve greater community safety and well-being.

## Section 5 - Ontario's Way Forward

Overall, the most significant learning from the community engagement sessions is the strong recognition across the province of the need to change the way we look at service delivery in all sectors moving forward in order for Ontarians to get the services they need, when they need them. Relying solely on reactionary and incident driven responses to community safety and well-being is inefficient, ineffective and unsustainable. It is encouraging that communities continue to move towards innovative, collaborative and risk-driven approaches to prevent crime and victimization and increase safety and well-being in a more effective and efficient way.

In response to this learning, the third and final booklet in the Ministry's provincial approach will take the shape of a framework for community safety and well-being planning. This framework will set the stage for service delivery and the development of local community safety and well-being plans that encourage meaningful multi-sectoral partnerships to respond to crime and complex social issues on a sustainable basis. The framework will also respond to the common challenges and build on the principles and local strengths of community safety and well-being practices identified in this booklet. It will continue to inspire communities to refocus their efforts to work towards meaningful collaboration, an environment that promotes information and data sharing, and holistic performance measurement that is outcomes-based. In addition to the framework, the Ministry will provide guidance to assist communities in developing and evaluating local community safety and well-being plans that leverage existing community strengths and resources to respond to local circumstances, needs and priorities.

Thank you for your commitment to community safety and well-being. As community safety and well-being is ever evolving, the Ministry would like to continue to hear about novel practices being developed or implemented in local communities. The Ministry also welcomes your thoughts, comments and input on this booklet. Please send your novel practices and comments to [SafetyPlanning@Ontario.ca](mailto:SafetyPlanning@Ontario.ca).

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