

# About Hamilton Community Foundation

Hamilton Community Foundation's mission is to strengthen Hamilton's quality of life as an inclusive and sustainable community through philanthropy. We help people make the difference *they* want to make by:

- Working with donors to build funds that meet their philanthropic and financial objectives.
- Granting to the widest possible range of charitable organizations and initiatives.
- Fostering community leadership by bringing people, knowledge and resources together around the community's needs and opportunities.

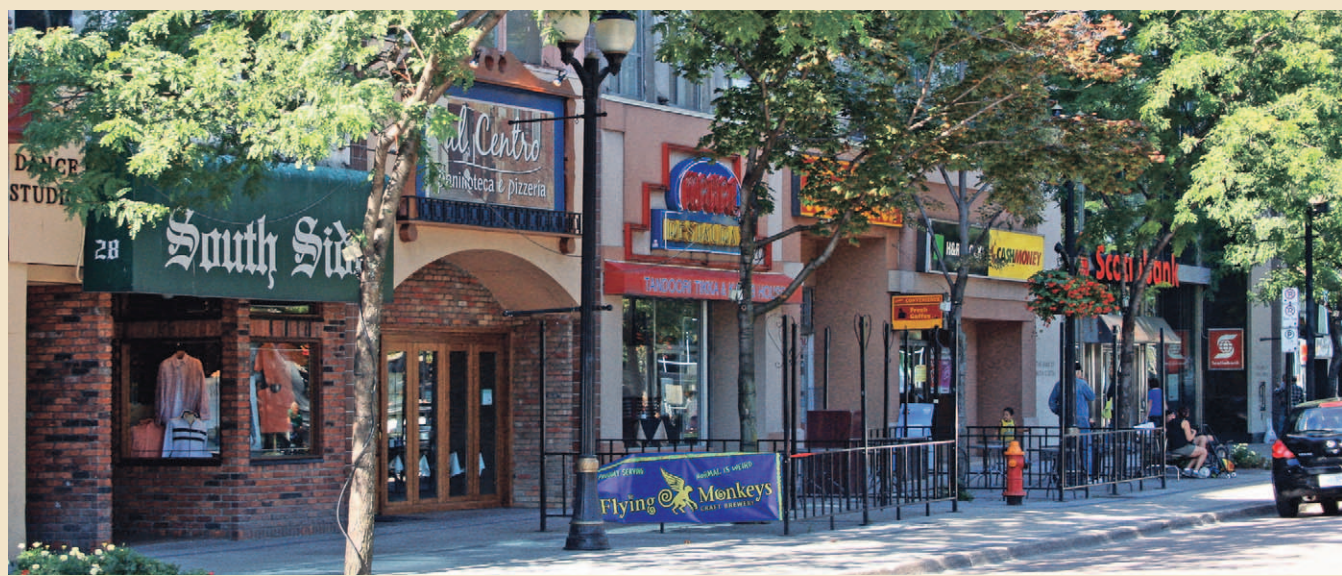
Since it was founded in 1954, Hamilton Community Foundation has made grants to our community totalling more than \$59 million, including approximately \$4.0 million last year.

## Why we're publishing *Hamilton's Vital Signs*

Building and sharing knowledge about our city is at the heart of our mission.

*Hamilton's Vital Signs* is one aspect of informing our own work as a grantmaker and catalyst for community change. It's also knowledge we offer as we work with all Hamiltonians towards a strong and vibrant city. Our goals in providing this data are to:

- Create a portal to a wealth of in-depth research about Hamilton
- Highlight the needs of our community and show evidence of progress
- Provide information for community planning and decision-making
- Spark discussion and offer grist for community conversations
- Inspire action and engage citizens further in civic life



Examples of our own work, in the context of themes highlighted in *Hamilton's Vital Signs*, are:

- **Strengthening challenged neighbourhoods:** HCF has made strengthening low-income neighbourhoods a priority since 2002. Working with residents, we fund local programs ranging from seniors services to homework clubs to nutrition, addressing both the root causes and the symptoms of poverty.
- **Preparing for a changing economy:** We fund stay-in-school initiatives, educational assessments for low-income adults, early childhood education and other programs that help Hamiltonians reach the skill level they need for employment in a knowledge-based economy.
- **Empowering citizens:** *Vital Signs* points to the difference individuals can make in areas like the environment. One example is HCF's small grants to Hamilton's high schools to turn their environmental ideas into action and experience the power of civic engagement.
- **Welcoming newcomers to Hamilton:** *Vital Signs* highlights the under-utilization of newcomers. HCF supports a wide range of programs to help integrate newcomers into their neighbourhoods and broader community, including those in the arts,

environmental, social, employment and economic development opportunities.

- **Poverty reduction:** Recognizing that poverty is the key to many of Hamilton's major challenges, HCF implemented its *Tackling Poverty Together* granting initiative in 2004, and has committed \$8.4 million in funding to this issue. We also continue to provide leadership to the community-wide Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction.

All the evidence shows that these strategies are effective, but as *Vital Signs* confirms, the challenges are complex. Each of us has a critical role, but on its own, is not enough. The broad engagement and collaboration of our whole community is needed to move our city forward.

That's the action we hope *Vital Signs* will inspire.

We encourage you to visit [www.hamiltonvitalsigns.ca](http://www.hamiltonvitalsigns.ca) for more about HCF's investment in these areas, and to visit [www.hcf.on.ca](http://www.hcf.on.ca) to learn how we can help you make the difference you want to make.



**HAMILTON  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**

For Hamilton, For Ever

## How You Can Use Vital Signs

**Go deeper** into the research and the impact of the results at [hamiltonvitalsigns.ca](http://hamiltonvitalsigns.ca). There's more information including links to the source data and the organizations involved. You can find out more about what this information means for Hamilton.

**Pass it on.** Share the report and the [hamiltonvitalsigns.ca](http://hamiltonvitalsigns.ca) link with your family, friends, colleagues, your faith organization, school council, neighbourhood association and service club, as well as with electoral candidates and officials.

**Start conversations.** If you, or your organization, are moved or motivated by what you read, use *Hamilton's Vital Signs* as a starting point for individual and collective action.

**Request a speaker.** We'd love to talk to your organization about *Vital Signs* or to connect you with speakers on the topics profiled.

**Visit [hcf.on.ca](http://hcf.on.ca).** Find out more about the good work already going on by local charities in partnership with businesses, government and everyday citizens and read about the differences donors are making through Hamilton Community Foundation.

**Let us know how you're using it! Send a note to [vitalsigns@hcf.on.ca](mailto:vitalsigns@hcf.on.ca)**

*Vital Signs* is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life. *Vital Signs* is co-ordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

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## Hamilton's Vital Signs Methodology

### Indicator Selection

This research was overseen by the Vital Signs Advisory Committee. This group includes members of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's Evaluation and Learning Working Group, which has spent several years researching and developing a set of indicators to measure Hamilton's progress on a wide range of socio-economic issues, the core of which are covered in this report. To cover all the Vital Signs issue areas and provide a broader quality of life picture, the Evaluation and Learning Committee was supplemented with additional experts from the environment, economy, and arts and culture sectors to form the Vital Signs Advisory Committee.

As part of a national initiative, all Canadian community foundations who are publishing Vital Signs reports agree to report on five common topics (e.g. "environment"), and one common indicator within each. These common indicators, as well as the indicators previously developed by the Evaluation and Learning Committee, were prioritized for this report by the Vital Signs Advisory Committee at a consultation session in June 2010.

## Thank You to Our Partners

Hamilton Community Foundation would like to thank the many organizations and individuals who provided expertise, guidance and resources to this report. In particular we wish to acknowledge the extraordinary work of the Evaluation and Learning Working Group of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction over the last several years identifying key local indicators.

### Vital Signs Advisory Committee

Dr. Leila Ryan, *Chair*

Jeff Wingard, *Project Manager*

### City of Hamilton

Chris Borst, *Community Services*

Riley Crotta, *Public Health Services*

Heather Donison, *Planning & Economic Development*

Dr. Colin McMullan, *Community Services*

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Patti Tombs, *Community Services*

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### Environment Hamilton

Brenda Johnson

### Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council

Tim Rees

### Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

Tom Cooper

### Hamilton Training Advisory Board

Judy Travis

### McMaster University

Dr. James R. Dunn, *Department of Health, Aging and Society*

Dr. Peter Kitchen, *School of Geography & Earth Sciences*  
Dyanne Semogas, *School of Nursing*

Progress was examined in three ways:

- 1) the indicator's change over time
- 2) its comparison to provincial and national averages
- 3) the disparity present within the indicator – e.g. between different neighbourhoods or between different groups of Hamiltonians.

### References

Information in this report was gathered in co-operation with research experts from a variety of local and national organizations. Links to data sources, contributors, definitions, additional information about the indicators and a full list of references are available at [hamiltonvitalsigns.ca](http://hamiltonvitalsigns.ca).

### Statistical Notes

Every effort was made to use information pertaining to the city of Hamilton where possible. In the case of some Statistics Canada information, data was available only for the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) which includes Burlington and Grimsby. This is indicated in the report where applicable.

**Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton**  
Sara Mayo

**Tamarack – An Institute for Community Engagement**  
Liz Weaver

### Local Contributors of Information

City of Hamilton, *Public Health Services; Community Services; Planning and Economic Development*  
Clean Air Hamilton  
Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council  
Hamilton Police Service  
Hamilton Public Library  
Hamilton Training Advisory Board  
McMaster University  
Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton

### Hamilton Community Foundation

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