

2020 -2021

# Annual Impact Report



**PATHWAY TO  
POTENTIAL**  
Social Investment Windsor-Essex



# Background

The City of Windsor and County of Essex’s **9-Point Social Investment Plan, Pathway to Potential**, is designed to positively impact the lives of residents by building on existing community capacities and resources to:

**The 9-point Social Investment Plan builds on existing community capacities and resources to:**

**CITY OF WINDSOR**

**COUNTY OF ESSEX INVESTMENT**

**\$2.1M**

**EACH YEAR SINCE 2017**



**1 Promote foundational services or programs that support those who require assistance with basic needs**



**2 Work with lead community organizations on key projects aimed at improving the quality of life for residents**



**3 Champion opportunities toward betterment for residents at senior levels of government**



**4 Enhance or collaborate on equity and social inclusion frameworks to existing municipal programming**



**5 Remove transportation barriers for individuals living on a low-income**



**6 Create inclusive opportunities for children in low-income families through recreation and culture**



**7 Invest in neighbourhoods impacted by poverty and other complex community challenges**



**8 Communicate the strengths and community achievements through strategic promotion**

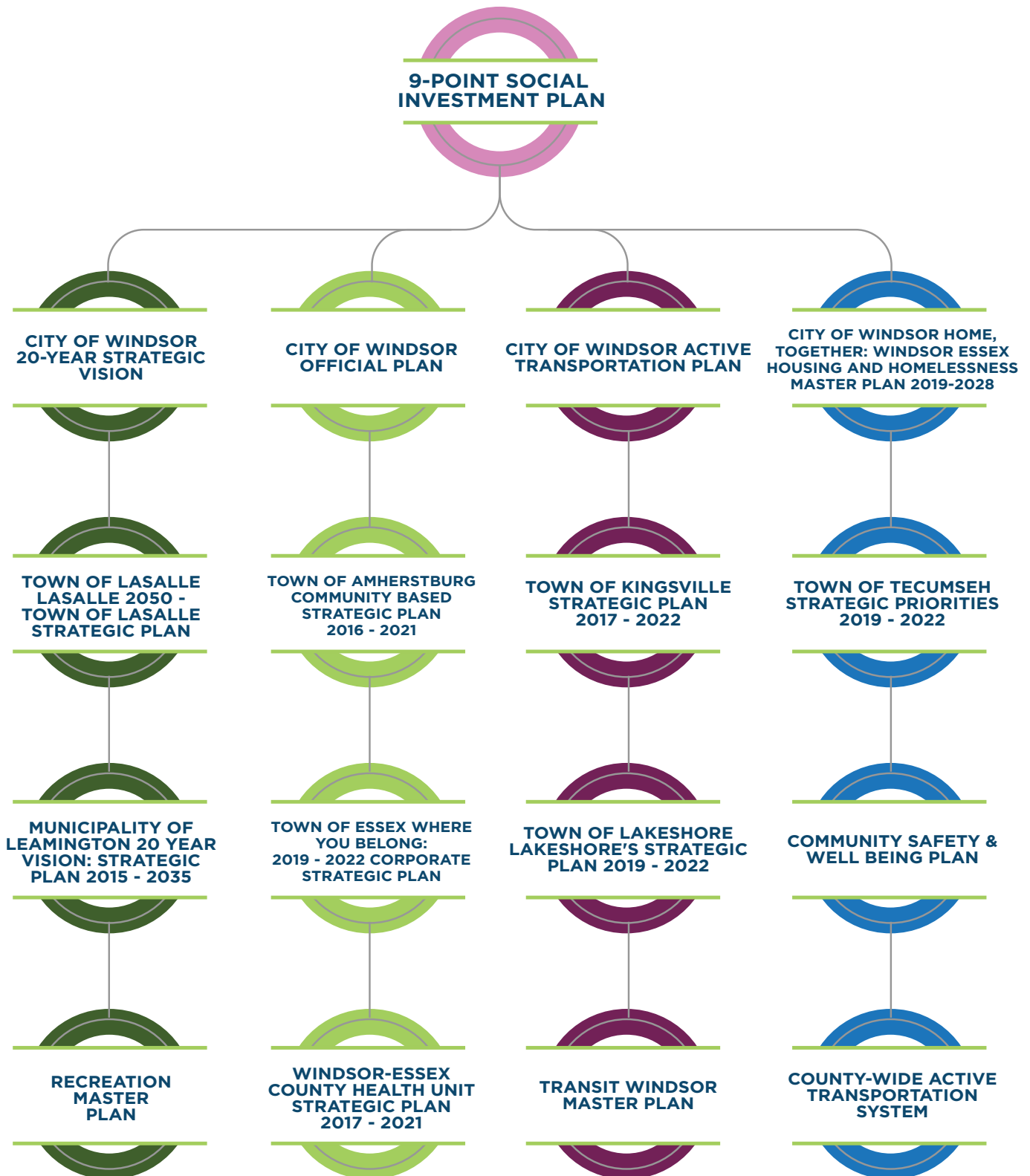


**9 Utilize best practices in data collection, analysis and reporting to enhance social investments**

Through this plan, Pathway to Potential (P2P) provides funding for local programs across Windsor-Essex, including community agencies that **support vulnerable youth and families**; works with municipal departments to **remove accessibility and financial barriers**; and collaborates with community leaders (collaborative leadership) toward a **shared vision of community prosperity**.

# Alignment with Municipal Strategic Plans

P2P makes critical social investments that not only advance the objectives within its 9-Point Social Investment Plan, but also aligns with the objectives of various municipal and regional strategic plans:



# The Impact of COVID-19

In 2020 and 2021, COVID-19 continued to bring unprecedented challenges around the world. In Ontario, the provincial government announced a state of emergency on March 17, 2020. The City of Windsor declared a state of emergency on March 19, 2020 and COVID-19 restrictions were ordered across Windsor-Essex County. Schools remained closed past the week of March Break, employees were faced with large lay-offs, as workplaces and community organizations closed, and many adapted to remote or virtual methods of service. Individuals and families isolated at home as much as possible to limit the spread of COVID-19 throughout the community.

COVID-19 and government restrictions impacted vulnerable populations to greater degrees of severity than the general population. Workers in low-wage, precarious and temporary jobs faced a greater likelihood to work interruption and income loss (Messacar et al., 2020). Labour Force Surveys conducted by Statistics Canada in 2020 revealed that employment among low-wage workers fell significantly more compared to all other paid employees. For example, between February and April 2020, employment among employees earning less than \$16.03 per hour fell by 38.1%, compared with a decline of 12.7% for all other paid employees (Statistics Canada, 2020).

The pandemic also impacted the mental and physical health of many Canadians. School closures, increased unemployment, isolation restrictions and concerns over the virus increased or triggered mental health concerns for individuals. Research by Statistics Canada on COVID-19's impact on mental health reported increases in survey respondents identifying fair or poor mental health and decreases in respondents identifying very good or excellent mental health (Statistics Canada, 2020). An April 2020 Windsor-Essex County Healthy Unit survey of Windsor-Essex service providers reported that "feeling isolating and fear of getting ill from the COVID-19 virus were the top two concerns facing clients, identified as a challenge by 87% and 78% of respondents, respectively."



Through critical social investment programming, P2P and its partners continued to support the region's vulnerable populations to address the challenges brought on by the pandemic. Within the Windsor-Essex region, CommUnity Partnership continued to provide service in-person and provided counselling and mental health supports for residents in social housing neighbourhoods. Despite being closed for the majority of 2020 and 2021, recreation service providers offered services through alternative formats including, universal programming and online sessions. Universal programming initiatives included the

Town of Kingsville's Play in the Park and the Town of LaSalle's Park Power Hour. The City of Windsor's Brokerage Program also partnered with 14 local sports and cultural organizations, providing recreation services to 172 local children and youth from low-income families. In 2021, P2P conducted a Virtual Program Survey to assess the experience of Drouillard Place youth during the pandemic, and the impact of remote programming supports provided through the program. Of the survey respondents, youth reported a positive impact on the remote programming provided by Drouillard Place and approximately 97% felt supported by program staff.

**57%** youth survey participants age 15 to 17 reported decreases in their mental health conditions prior to the implementation of physical distancing measures

**(Statistics Canada, 2020, July 23)**

Pathway to Potential also collaborated on City of Windsor and community initiatives. Initiatives included the Isolation Recovery Centre, participation in the High Priority Communities Initiative, Families-to-Families gift card distribution in 2020 where grocery store gift cards were distributed to community agencies such as the Unemployed Help Centre and Drouillard Place and promotion of Connections' Be Back Soon Program for providing unlicensed short-term childcare while parents attended vaccine appointments.

COVID-19 imposed significant challenges to the Windsor-Essex region, particularly for residents living on low-income and in poverty. The provision of social services had proven even more critical in times of complex, global challenges as participation levels within P2P-funded programs experienced significant rises when facilities and operations reopened. The 2020-2021 P2P annual impact report not only reflects on the program's progress towards poverty reduction, it also reflects on the community's strengths in meeting local needs amidst global challenges.

**172** local children and youth from low-income families participated in 14 local sports and cultural organizations funded through the City of Windsor's Brokerage Program.

# P2P in the Windsor-Essex Community

In 2020 and 2021, P2P collaborated with 8 community partners and 8 municipal partners to deliver programs and services that support the 9-Point Social Investment Plan. P2P also distributed funding to local partners and initiatives to support residents during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

**Connections an Early Years Family Centre** offers the Be Back Soon program, which gives eligible parents and caregivers an opportunity to leave their children, 0 to 6 years of age, under unlicensed child care for a short period while attending medical, legal, social service or counselling appointments, job interviews or workshops.

**ACCESS County Community Support Services** Garden-To-You Social Enterprise and Employment program provides paid employment and training opportunities for ODSP and OW recipients, and other individuals on a low-income, to increase their income and to help gain valuable job experience. Community gardens are a vital source of ACCESS' program success. Community gardens are the source from which CSA produce is grown. Community gardens increase access to nutritious food, reduce risk of obesity and obesity-related diseases, improve dietary habits through education, increase physical activity and improve food security. ACCESS collaborates with community partners such as service agencies and schools to establish community gardens.

**Computers for Kids** refurbish computers and laptops received through private, public and corporate donors and distribute the computers to children living in low-income and not-for-profit agencies.

**CommUnity Partnership** (CUP) revitalizes neighbourhoods, builds resilience, and creates a healthy, supportive community. Their programming focuses on the provision of six broad categories: health care/self-care, food security, recreation, community sharing and advocacy. CommUnity Partnership operated at four social housing locations: Reginald, Glengarry, 920 Ouellette Avenue and 255 Riverside Drive.

**Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation** provides a free summer recreation program for children between 4 and 17 years of age in seven local social housing communities. The program provides participants with an opportunity to participate in various positive recreational and social inclusion activities during the summer months.

**Drouillard Place** hosts multiple after school programs in the Ford City and Grandview communities for youth and teens aged 5 - 17, which provide help with homework, digital literacy and access to technology, life and social skills development, nutritious food, leadership and community engagement, recreational activities and more.

**Building Bridges Erie Shores (The Bridge) Leamington Youth Centre** provides services for youth ages 14 to 24 including resources, referrals and partnership support in housing, life coping skills and counseling, as well as a wide range of drop-in activities and special events. The organization also opened the Quiring Family Fresh Start supportive housing facility in January 2020, which focuses on supporting youth for up to a year towards independent housing, family reintegration and permanent housing with supports.

**Transit Windsor** provides a 49% discount toward the purchase of a 30-day bus pass for eligible families living with low income. Providing access to affordable transportation reduces

barriers for low-income households and assists with travel to work, school and/or services across the community.

**Amherstburg Community Services** establishes partnerships with various community organizations to offer children 0 to 17 years living on low income the opportunity to participate in recreational and sports activities offered through the community organizations at 10% of the program cost.

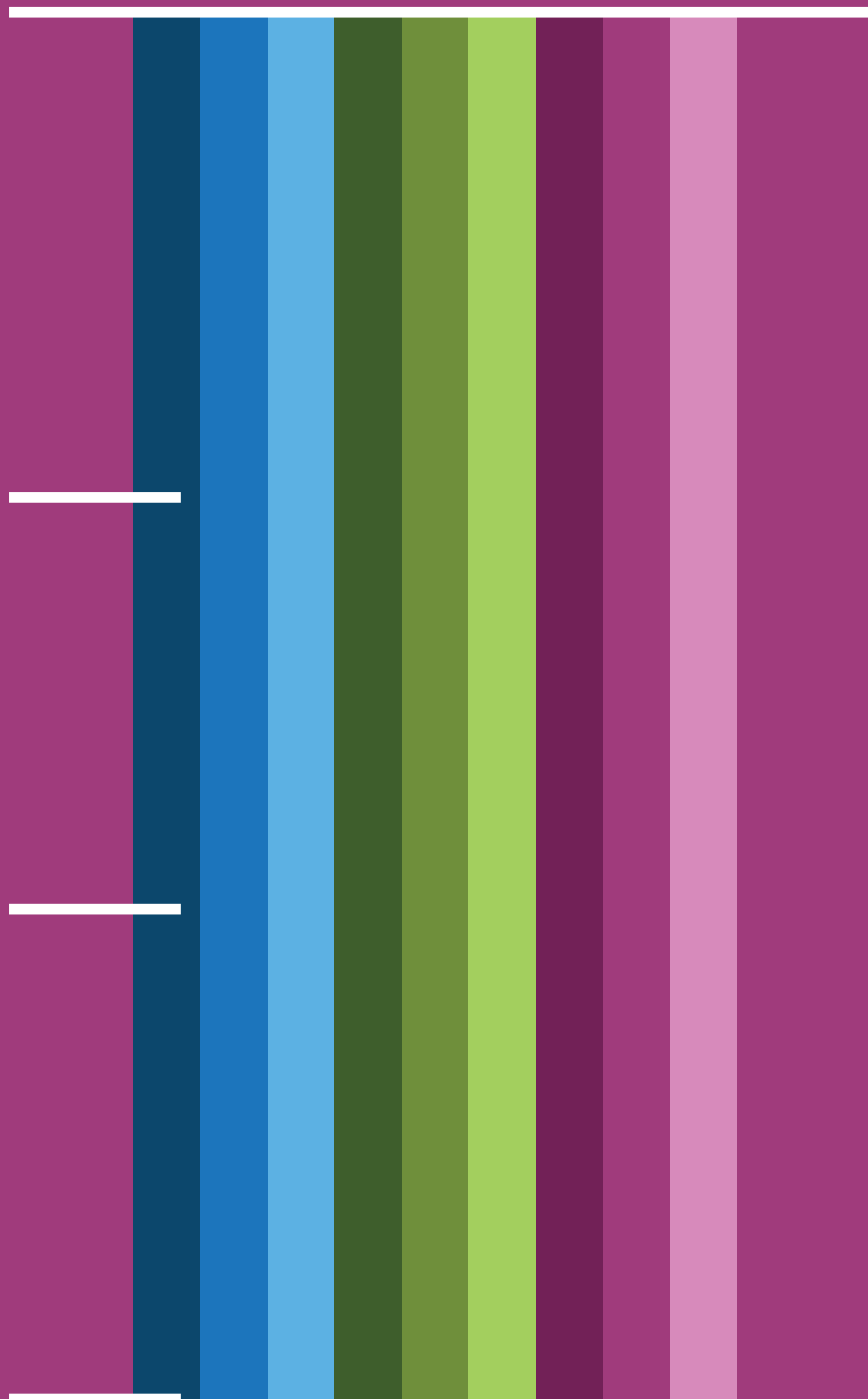
**Municipal Recreation Partners** continue to collaborate with Pathway to Potential to promote social inclusion through recreational, cultural and artistic programs for eligible low-income families in Windsor-Essex County. Programs in the City of Windsor are available at a 90% discount for eligible children 0 - 17 years of age and include internal recreation program, Windsor Aquatics and external brokerage programs. 90% recreation program discounts and external brokerage programs for low-income families are also available across municipalities in Essex County, including Essex, Kingsville, Lakeshore, LaSalle, Leamington and Tecumseh

- a. **P2P Brokerage Program:** Each municipal recreation partner utilizes P2P funding towards brokerage programs. Brokerage programs provide subsidies to external community organizations throughout Windsor-Essex County so that all eligible children and youth have the opportunities to participate and in organized recreational and cultural programming.

# Community + Municipal Partners



# EVALUATING IMPACT







# 1 Promote foundational services or programs that support those who require assistance with basic needs

Between 2016 and 2019, ACCESS staff level was an annual average of 80 employees and ACCESS generated an annual average of \$23,112 in revenues from Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) and Farmers Markets. Throughout 2020, ACCESS operated the program at reduced levels. ACCESS gradually returned to normal operations in 2021 as government eased restrictions.

- \* **In 2020, ACCESS staff level was 22 and ACCESS generated a revenue of \$3,200 in CSAs**
- \* **In 2021, ACCESS staff level was 66 and ACCESS generated a revenue of \$43,000 in CSAs and Farmers Markets**

The Bridge resource centre was closed for the majority of 2020. Pathway to Potential provided funding for The Bridge to provide mental health sessions as well as education and training programs. The Youth Independence Program provides participants with life skills training, employment supports and individualized goal planning.

- \* **100 unique youth accessed the centre**
- \* **59 mental health sessions held**
- \* **28 participants enrolled in education and training programs including the Youth Independence Program and Head Space Family App Program**
- \* **Acquired new technology and increased digital access for youth**





## 2 Work with lead community organizations on key projects aimed at improving the quality of life for residents

RentSmart Ontario is a housing stability model offering education, life skills and support to tenants, landlords and community organizations with one goal, successful tenancies. In 2020 and 2021, Pathway to Potential and Housing Services worked together to continue to support RentSmart educators in Windsor-Essex County.

- \* **Partnered with Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor, Canadian Mental Health Association - Windsor-Essex County Branch, ACCESS Community Support Services and The Bridge to deliver RentSmart courses**
- \* **13 RentSmart courses were delivered to 114 Windsor-Essex residents**
- \* **Female newcomer and youth (42%) made up the majority of participants**

Women: Newcomer & Youth	48	42%
Newcomer Women	37	32%
Youth	14	12%
Francophone	15	13%
	114	100%

In 2021, Connections Early Years Family Centre's Be Back Soon program extended no-cost unlicensed short-term childcare to qualifying parents in high priority neighbourhoods with young children while they attended vaccine appointments. The program's intention was to remove barriers for families that have no one to watch their children while getting their vaccinations.

- \* **15 families accessed the program and 17 children were cared for while parents/caregivers attended their vaccination appointments.**
- \* **Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) held three mobile vaccination clinics at Early Years Centre between October and December 2021. Registered Early Childhood Educators from the Be Back Soon Program provided childcare while parents and caregivers received their vaccination. 8 children were cared for through the program.**

### DID YOU KNOW?

The High Priority Communities Initiative is a collaborative effort with community partners and led by the Canadian Mental Health Association - Windsor Essex County Branch. The high priority communities included areas in Windsor-Essex with higher rates of COVID-19 and lower rates of vaccination compared to the region: West Windsor, Downtown, East Windsor, Leamington and Kingsville. Targeted supports have included pop-up vaccination clinics in these communities, free transportation to vaccination clinics, and the Be Back Soon childcare program.



### 3 Champion opportunities toward betterment for residents at senior levels of government

## DID YOU KNOW?

In 2021, Statistics Canada began to develop an interactive tool to better understand the indirect impacts of COVID-19 on children and youth (Lifting the Burden on Kids, Statistics Canada, 2021).

- \* Participation in the National Conversation of Place-Based Poverty Reduction with Employment and Social Development Canada; Lifting the Burden of Kids
- \* Participation in the End of Poverty Communities Reducing Poverty National Gathering
- \* Participation in the Poverty and Homelessness Roundtable at the Canadian Urban Institute Conference
- \* Participation in the Vibrant Communities End of Poverty Conference
- \* Participation in Tamarack Communities of Practice with Municipal Practitioners

**P2P**  
**Participates**





# 4 Enhance or collaborate on equity and social inclusion frameworks to existing municipal programming

Through their efforts, Computers for Kids promotes a socially equitable and environmentally sustainable strategy for older computers and laptops. Computers are refurbished and distributed to children and students living on low-income or identify as needing the hardware. By donating computers to the program, e-waste is diverted from the landfill. Increased access to computers enables recipients an equal opportunity to learn in-demand computer skills and to succeed in school

**\* 2,382 computers were distributed to children, students and social service agencies**

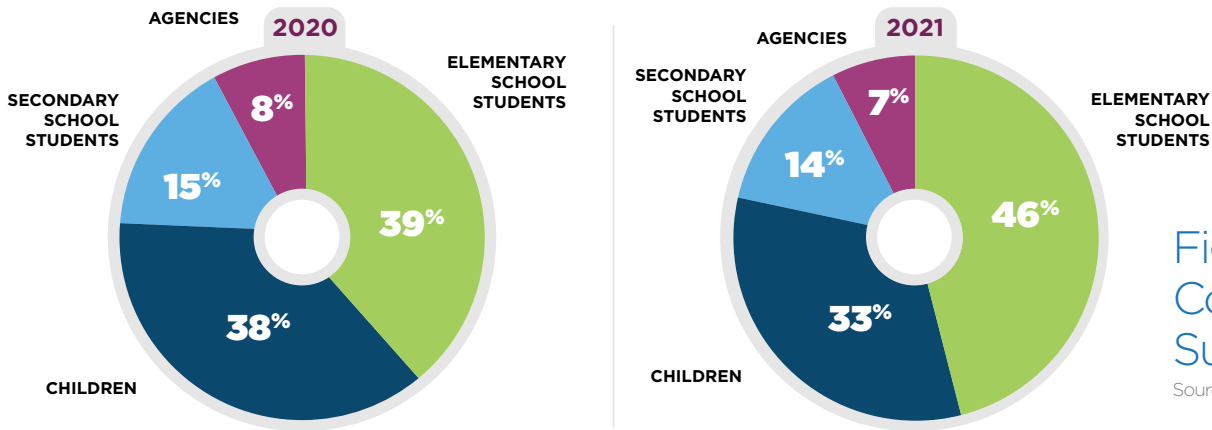


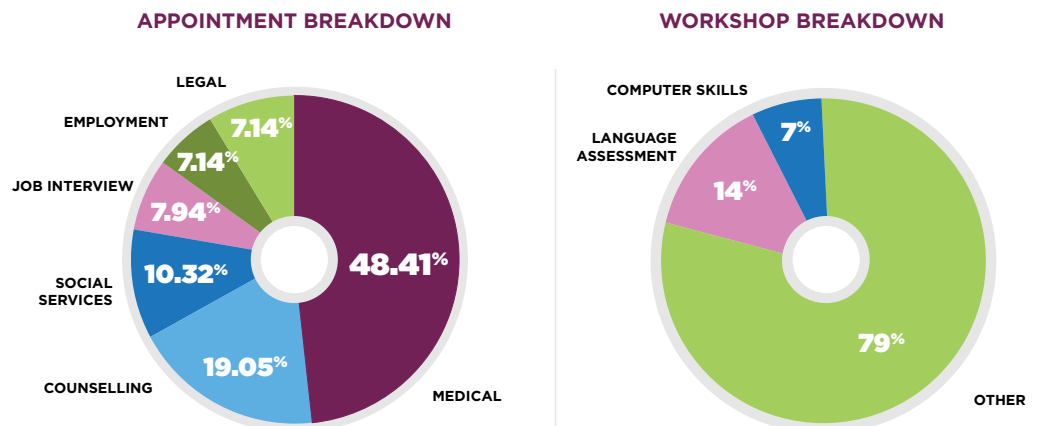
Figure 1  
Computers Supplied  
Source: CAW Local 200

Connections' Be Back Soon program experienced a significant rise in use of child care between 2020 and 2021 as government restrictions were lifted.

**\* 796 parents accessed free, unlicensed short-term childcare**

## Figure 2 Purposes for Accessing Childcare

Source: Connections An Early Years Family Centre





# 5 Remove transportation barriers for individuals living on a low-income

Transit Windsor services were briefly stopped in 2020 and when resumed, buses required social distancing practices and masking while operating on reduced schedule.

- \* **10,211 households participated in Transit Windsor’s Affordable Pass Program (APP) (household participation indicated eligible members within the household being approved to participate in APP for a given period)**
- \* **Of the respondents who participated in a 2020 survey, school (31%) was the greatest reason for travel with medical (23%) being the second greatest reason**

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
 Transit Windsor now allows children 12 and under ride free with a paying rider.  
**AND**  
 Transit Windsor has added 15,000 service hours to the system, including adding a new route, 518X.

Figure 3  
 Affordable Pass Program Participation

Source: Transit Windsor

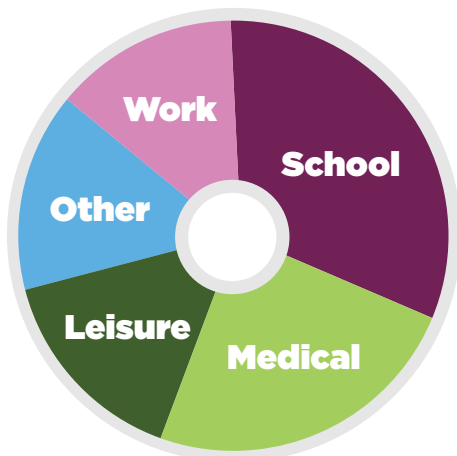
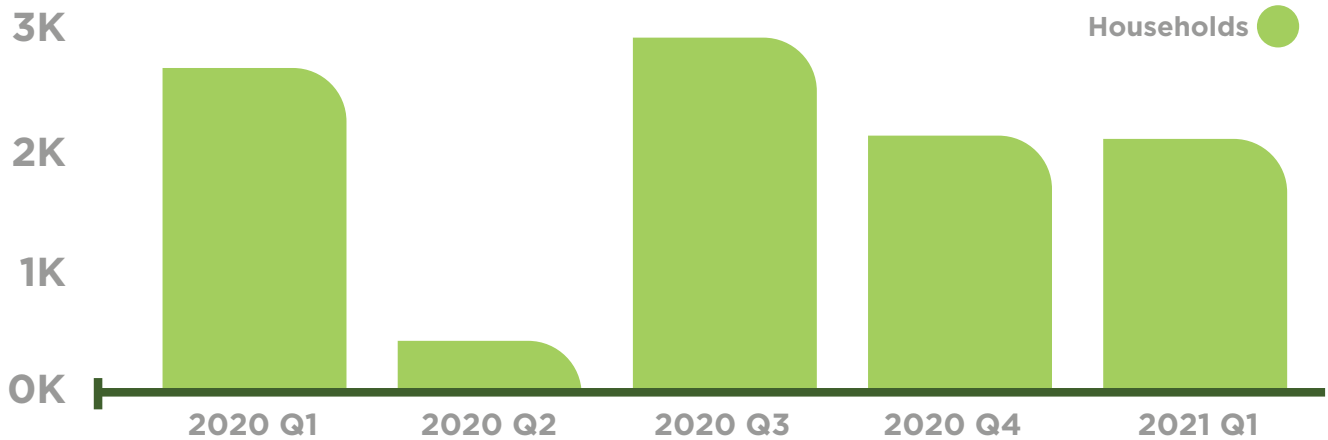


Figure 4 - Reasons for Travel

Source: Transit Windsor





## 6 Create inclusive opportunities for children in low-income families through recreation and culture

Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation’s Recreation Program ran between July and August 2020 at seven of its locations. Recreation program activities include games, food and field trips. 432 children attended the program with the age majority being between 6 and 12 years old (74%).

Discounted recreation programming promotes social inclusion through recreational, cultural and artistic programs for eligible low-income families in Windsor-Essex County. The pandemic limited the programs available due to closures of recreational facilities. Recreation service providers altered the provision of their programs including offering recreational programs virtually and offering drop-in activities at local parks for members in the community to participate.

- \* **Town of Kingsville offered Play in the Park**
- \* **Town of LaSalle offered Parks Power Hour**
- \* **The City of Windsor expanded their summer camp eligibility to cover up to all nine weeks of summer camp versus their regular two-week P2P coverage**
- \* **City recreation program participation totaled 2,136 and County recreation program participation totaled 5,848**
- \* **The City of Windsor’s Brokerage Program funded 14 local organizations, who provided recreational and cultural programming to 172 children and youth from low-income families**
- \* **The City of Windsor’s Aquatic and Adventure Bay programs did not run for the majority of 2020 and 2021. In early 2020, 422 passes were sold to residents.**

Figure 5 - City of Windsor and Essex County Recreation Program Participation, 2020 and 2021

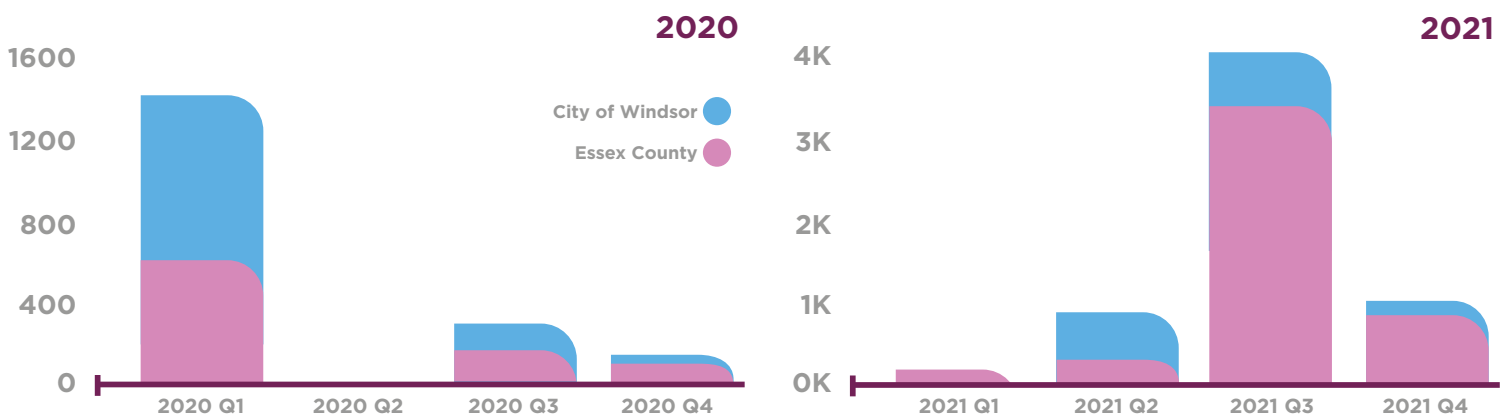




Figure 7 – City of Windsor Recreation Brokerage Partners

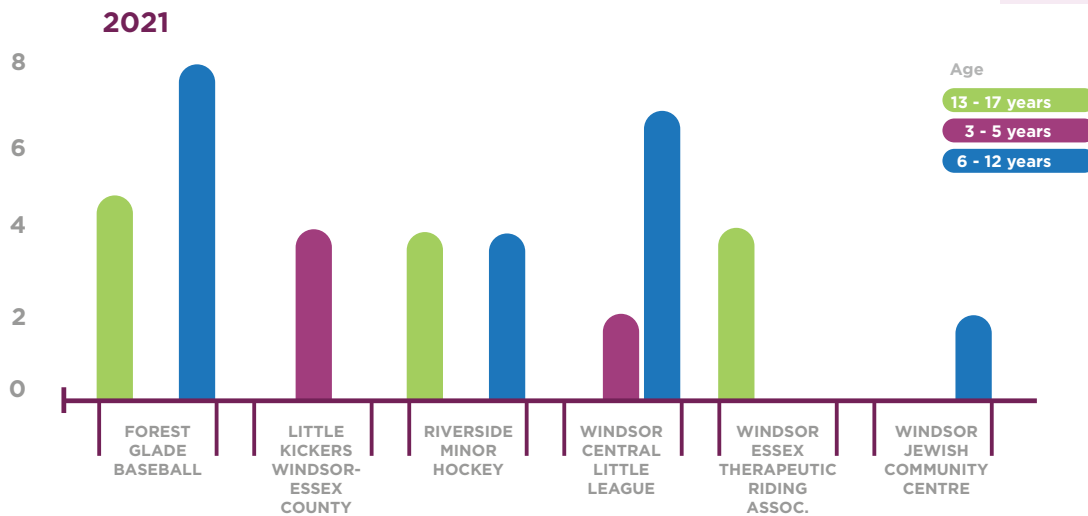
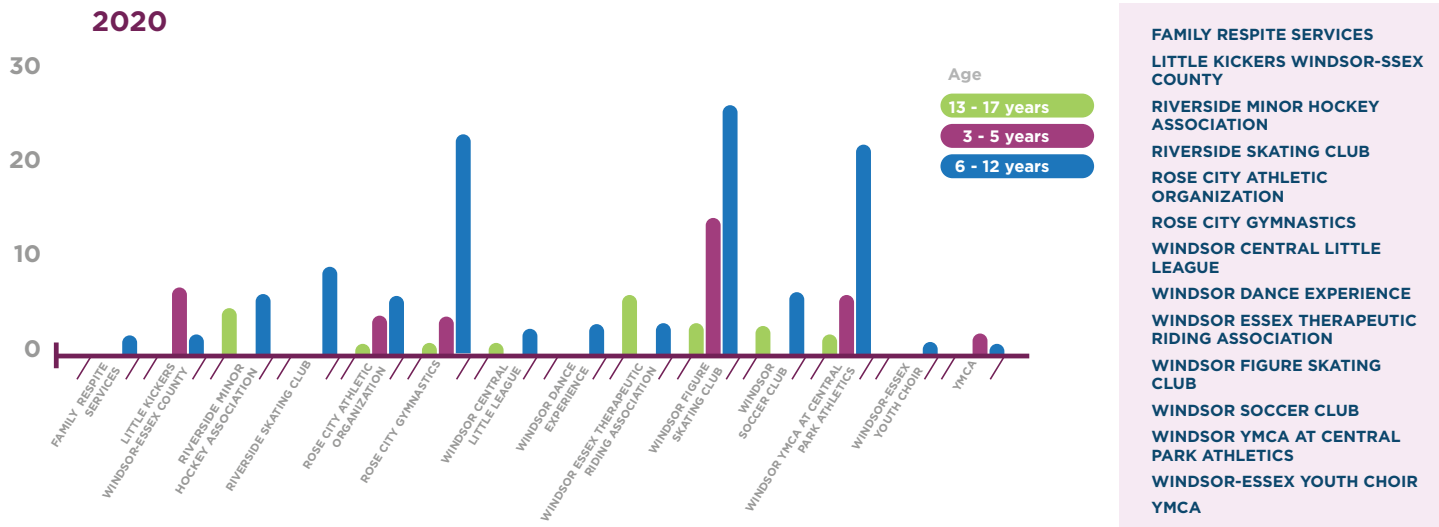
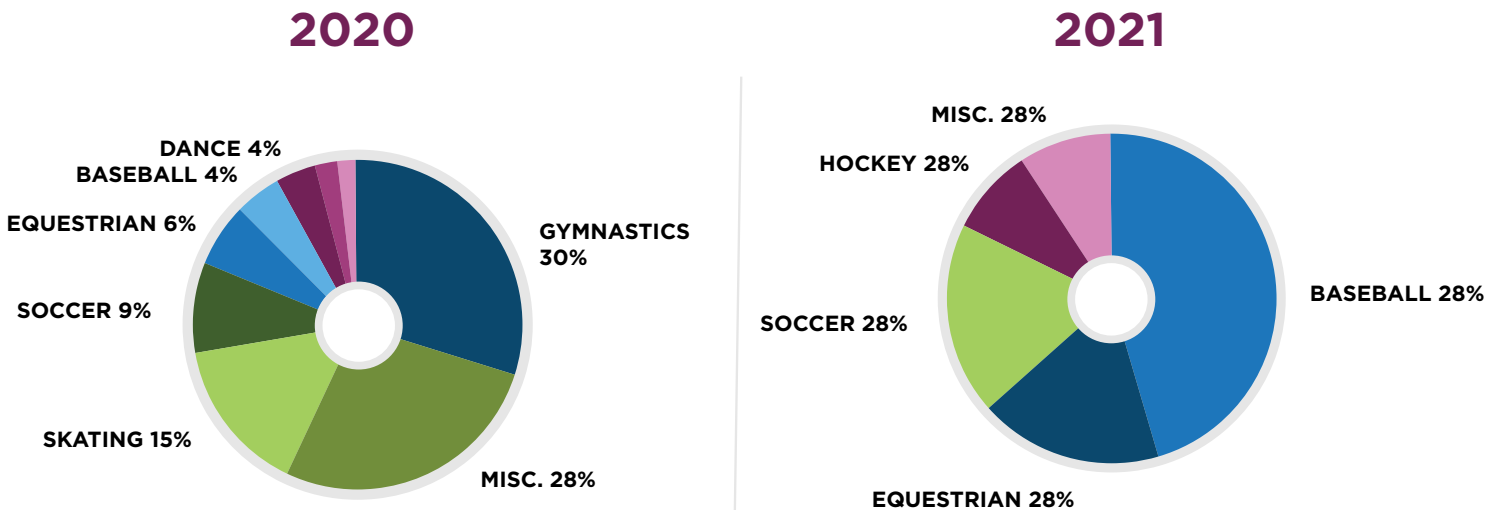


Figure 8 - Breakdown of Brokerage Program



Source: City of Windsor



## 7 Invest in neighbourhoods impacted by poverty and other complex community challenges

CommUnity Partnerships provided programming and services, which support residents within social housing locations within Windsor-Essex County. CommUnity Partnerships were present in 255 Riverside, Glengarry, Ouellette Manor and Reginald. CommUnity Partnerships ended its programming in Leamington and Drouillard Terrace in Spring 2020. Within the locations that CommUnity Partnerships was present, the programming and activities they delivered include afterschool programming, assertive outreach, counselling, mental and physical health, outreach events and vegetable distribution.

- \* **Between 2020 and 2021, CUP delivered 1,137 advocacy and mental-health events, 984 interventions and 984 hours of after-school programming**
- \* **6,548 –Number of times CUP’s services and programs were accessed across all locations**
- \* **Reginald’s STARS and READY after-school programs were the highest accessed services between both 2020 and 2021; a total of 546 STARS participants and 300 READY participants**
- \* **At 255 Riverside, counselling services were the most accessed service with a total of 164 between 2020 and 2021**
- \* **In 2020, CUP space and resources was provided at Ouellette Manor for community partners to deliver 11 unique Hub programs, which was attended by 2,912 participants**
- \* **In 2020, CUP space and resources were provided at Ouellette Manor and Glengarry for community partners to deliver Hub programs. At Ouellette Manor, 11 unique programs were attended by 2,912 participants. At Glengarry, 2 unique programs were attended by 259 participants.**

### DID YOU KNOW?

CUP staff continued to meet with clients in person with appropriate safety protocols throughout the pandemic.





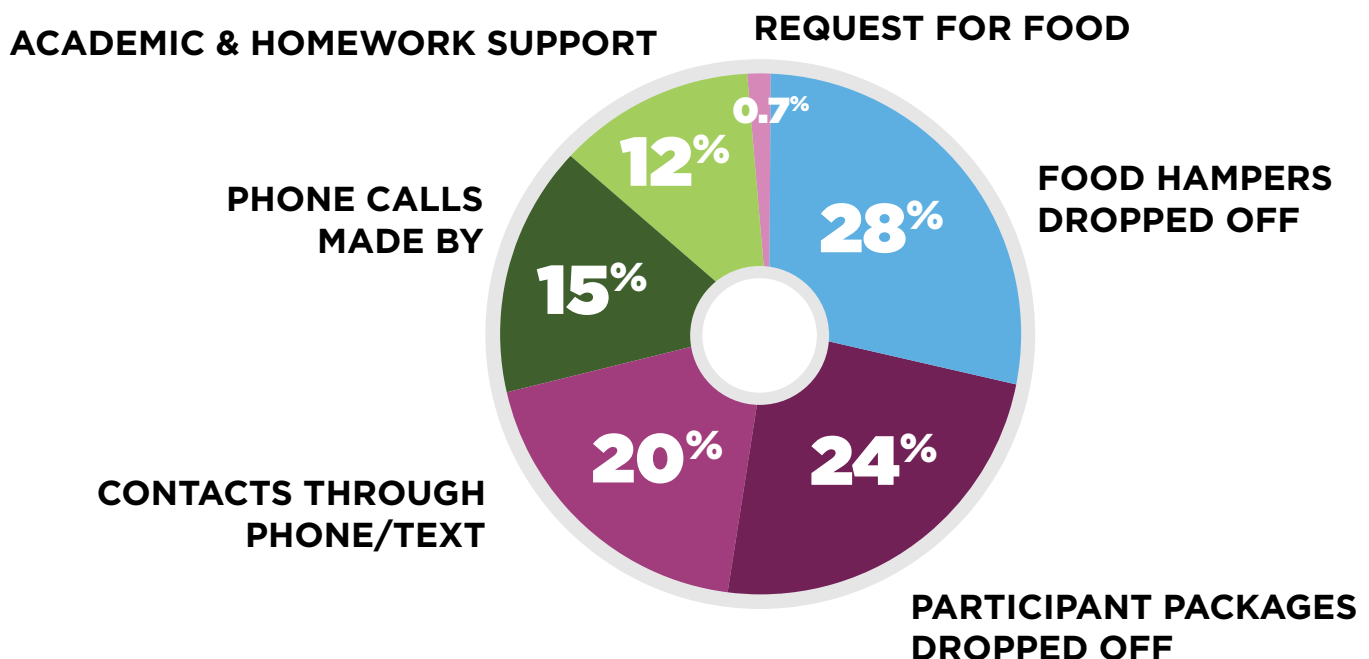


Drouillard Place's two locations, Grandview and Teen Centre, operated at reduced levels due to the pandemic and government restrictions. Both locations continued to offer some of their services and also introduced new services. The provision of alternative services reflects the program's responsiveness to meeting the needs of low-income residents, particularly during a time of crisis. 2021 signified a gradual return to pre-pandemic levels as government restrictions lifted.

- \* **Between 2020 and 2021, total program participation at both locations equalled 448.**
- \* **Academic and Homework Support (42%) remained a highly utilized service.**
- \* **Deliveries of food and supplies were the most utilized service by residents and made up approximately 62% of total services accessed**

**The majority requests for academic support were in the areas of math (50%) and sciences (29%)**

Figure 12 - 2021 Program Breakdown



Source: Drouillard Place



## 8 Communicate the strengths and community achievements through strategic promotion

In 2020, P2P with the City of Windsor released a promotional video through YouTube with the Executive Director of Drouillard Place, the video highlighted how Pathway to Potential, through its 9-Point Social Investment Plan, continued to serve its participants through programs like those offered at Drouillard Place amidst COVID-19 restrictions.

- \* **Viewed 105 times and received 4 likes**
- \* **Received 28 reactions, 14 comments and 5 shares through the City of Windsor's Facebook**
- \* **The video was shared on the City of Windsor's Facebook page and received 28 reactions.**

P2P was asked to present about poverty and social investment efforts to students at the University of Windsor in the Leadership Experience for Academic Direction (LEAD) program.

- \* **More than 60 people attended the virtual presentation in 2020**

P2P and local partners promoted the Families-to-Families gift card initiative through a media event in July 2020 at Drouillard Place. The event was attended by Mayor Drew Dilkens.

- \* **Received 67 views on YouTube, as well as 106 reactions.**

**The Solcz Family Foundation, the Windsor Spitfires "Family", City of Windsor, Pathway to Potential and the WindsorEssex Community Foundation established the Families to Families initiative to ensure 3,500 families with children received a \$100 grocery store gift card with children receiving Ontario Works.**

**Source - City of Windsor**

P2P held a virtual lunch and learn webinar in 2020 to mark the **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**. The presentation included information on Canada's new poverty line, low-income statistics in Windsor Essex, a segment on children and youth in low-income families, and a discussion on the impacts of COVID-19 on the local population. P2P partners Drouillard Place and CommUnity Partners shared information about the adaptations of their youth programming during COVID-19.

170 participants attended **6 virtual lunch and learns** presented to the community in 2021: Property Tax Relief (January), Income Tax Services (February), Presentation to NCCE Inc. (June), Impact of COVID-19 on Marginalized Populations (August), Affordable Pass Program (September), and National Housing Day (November).

In 2020, P2P disseminated **12 monthly newsletters to over 430 subscribers** with information on services available during COVID-19, information about community partners in Windsor-Essex and information relevant to social investment. Newsletters generated an average of 133 opens and 23 clicks per send.

To promote their program for unlicensed short-term childcare while parents attended vaccine appointments, Connections Early Years Family Centre and P2P designed a poster that was translated into four languages: French, Arabic, Spanish and Simplified Chinese. Information was distributed to several settlement sector agencies and residents. Targeted mailers featuring a guide to Getting Your COVID Vaccine and Be Back Soon promotional flyers were mailed out to approximately 70,000 residents in high priority postal codes. Connections also produced a video featuring a client's experience with using the Be Back Soon program to attend her vaccine appointment. Barb, Brown, the Executive Director of Connections, promoted the program on AM 800s The Shift.



**70,000**

**targeted mailers featuring a guide to Getting Your COVID Vaccine and Be Back Soon promotional flyers were mailed out to residents in high priority postal codes.**

## 9 Utilize best practices in data collection, analysis and reporting to enhance social investments

P2P conducted a Virtual Program Survey in 2021 to assess the experience of Drouillard Place youth during the pandemic and the impact of the remote programming supports provided through the program. 68 youth participated in the survey. The remote programming had a positive impact during the pandemic

- \* **Youth noted that they look forward to the door drop packages (98.5%) and are keeping in touch with program staff at least once a week (95.5%)**
- \* **Many youth received tutoring support with online school (82.3%) and a majority found it helpful (84.7%)**
- \* **Youth have been feeling sad and lonely/isolated during the pandemic. They also reported a lack of social interactions with friends, and program staff, and lack of group activities have been the most challenging. Almost all of the youth surveyed stated virtual programs helped them feel supported during the pandemic (95.6%), and almost all felt they could reach out to program staff (98.5%)**

P2P distributed a feedback poll to registrants from the 2020 Lunch & Learn on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

- \* **At least 13 people responded to one of the poll questions. 78% said they were interested in attending another webinar**
- \* **All respondents said the information presented was helpful**
- \* **31% were interested to hear more about poverty in Windsor-Essex/Canada and 8% wanted to hear more from community organizations.**

### DID YOU KNOW?

Pathway to Potential has worked on a comprehensive literature review to explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on marginalized populations and the tools to respond to these impacts in the Windsor-Essex region. The exploration includes research on several impacts of COVID-19, including financial security, food security, the physical and mental health of several vulnerable groups, and other issues, such as challenges accessing technology and lack of access to information.

*The literature review and related appendices are available for download at [pathwaytopotential.ca](https://pathwaytopotential.ca)*

**Impact of COVID-19 on Marginalized Populations - Literature Review**  
**Impact of COVID-19 - Appendix A - Summary Table**  
**Impact of COVID-19 - Appendix B - References**



For more information,  
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