Root Causes of Crime in Waterloo Region Consultation Report

May 2015

Waterloo Region
Crime Prevention Council
Together for a Safer Community
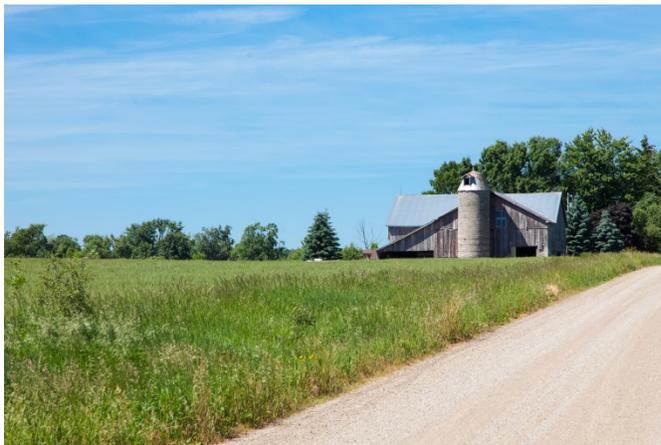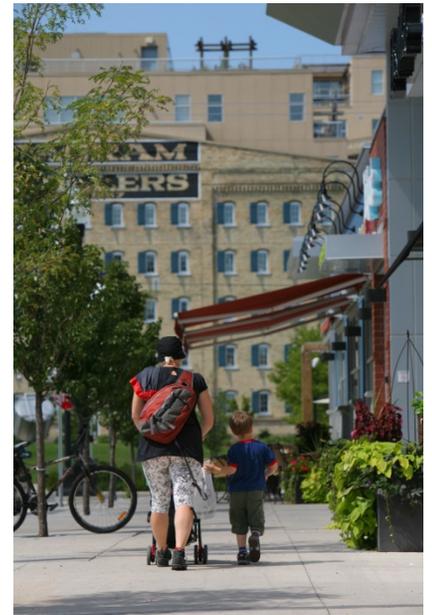
Region of Waterloo

Executive Summary

The results of our community consultation show that people in Waterloo Region generally understand the root causes of crime and victimization. Many root causes and potential solutions were identified by nearly 1,500 participants in telephone and online surveys and community consultations.

"I see poverty, unemployment, lack of access to higher education and marginalization all closely aligned with high risk behavior and victimization."

The root causes most frequently named by participants are summarized below in four broad categories:

- **Economic conditions**:
    - poverty/ inequality
    - unemployment/economy
    - housing

- **Social and community conditions:**
    - family, peer and neighbourhood environments
    - social exclusion
    - lack of opportunities to participate
    - values, attitudes and norms
    - stigma and discrimination

- **Resources and services**:
    - need for educational and training opportunities
    - supports and services for families and individuals
    - criminal justice reforms

- **Individual factors:**
    - problematic substance use
    - mental illness
    - individual characteristics

The multiple and inter-connected nature of the root causes was a common theme.

"Root causes are hard to single out.
The inter-relationship of risk factors needs to be considered…"

The most frequently identified **roots of crime and victimization** were:
- poverty/inequality
- problematic substance use
- unemployment / economy
- mental illness
- neighbourhood environments / disengagement

The most frequently identified **solutions** recommended:
- social services, programs and supports
- education, training
- employment
- improving neighbourhood environments, engagement and participation
- taking a collaborative approach to social problems

Many more people recommended social services and improving economic, social and community conditions in order to address the root causes of crime and victimization than longer jail sentences and increased arrests.

"Ultimately, we need to create communities and neighborhoods where people can afford to live, make a decent, living wage, and have opportunities for social interaction and support when needed."

Background

The Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council employed a variety of methods to answer the question - **Why do people think crime occurs in Waterloo Region?** The answers to this question provided valuable information during the 11-month process of developing the council's strategic plan for 2015 - 2018. Data was gathered through consultations with youth, community and justice system organizations, surveys of individuals by phone and online and facilitated sessions with the Friends of Crime Prevention and with members of the Crime Prevention Council. This document reports the results of this community consultation process.

Consultations/ Community Dialogues

Group consultations conducted with youth as well as staff, boards or clients of 24 agencies that serve populations impacted by the criminal justice system, answered two questions:

1. What do you see as the root causes of crime and victimization in Waterloo Region?

2. What root causes of crime and victimization have an impact on you or your organization's clients?

Online Survey

An online survey distributed to the **Friends of Crime Prevention** and other individuals connected to the Crime Prevention Council received a total of 264 responses. This survey asked three key questions:

1. In your opinion, which root cause(s) of crime should receive the most attention in Waterloo Region?

2. What should be done to address these risks over the next four years?

3. What do you think is working well in Waterloo Region to create a safe and healthy community?

Telephone Survey

Finally, two questions on an omnibus phone survey of Waterloo Region residents received 752 responses:

1. In your opinion, what is the most significant root cause of crime in Waterloo Region?

2. How should this root cause of crime be addressed?

The data from these consultations and surveys revealed a number of themes, outlined on pages 6 and 7. Friends of Crime Prevention received a preliminary analysis of the results

during a Friends meeting in March 2015. At this session attendees used the suggested solutions to the root causes of crime to 'dig deeper' and to prioritize the solutions that will be most effective in addressing the root causes of crime and victimization in Waterloo Region. The workshop resulted in a ranking of the top 70 potential solutions. These rankings helped to identify themes for consideration by the Crime Prevention Council.

Attentive Public and General Public

The phone survey tapped into the opinion of the general public while the community dialogues and online survey accessed the opinions of the attentive public. Phone surveys of the general public provide top of mind opinions. The **general public** typically does not follow issues of the justice system or the social service sector very closely so recent news can influence their thinking. The **attentive public**, in contrast, pays closer attention to issues related to crime and the social service sector. They are well informed and can place recent news into a broader context.

A further distinction exists between the community dialogues and the online survey. Within the community dialogues the percentages in the tables (see page 8) represent the percentage of groups that mentioned each root cause of crime and victimization, whereas the percentages in the online (and phone) survey are the percentage of respondents. The community dialogues also asked open ended questions whereas the online (and phone) survey sought one response (though many respondents still provided multiple answers).

Both attempts at garnering the opinions of the attentive public - the online survey and community dialogues - also faced a selection bias. In the case of the community dialogues, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council staff selected the groups to consult and this may have impacted the results. For example, most of the youth groups consulted (high school/ university) did not mention poverty. Selecting fewer youth groups would have made this theme more prevalent. In the online survey people self-selected into the survey. This may have also biased the results, though the specifics of how are impossible to ascertain.

Despite these limitations the use of three different approaches to gathering data provides a degree of confidence in the overall findings. The overlap between the opinions of the general public and the attentive public validates this belief. It is encouraging to see that both groups generally understood the root causes of crime and how to address them.

The data from the phone survey, online survey and community dialogues were categorized into a number of themes. The following table provides a **brief description** of each theme as a root cause and as a solution. The section titled Detailed Description of Root Cause and Solution Themes describes in greater detail the range of responses in each theme (see page 14).

Brief Description of Root Cause and Solution Themes

Theme	Short Description of Root Cause and Solution
Poverty/ Inequality	Primarily described by respondents as "poverty" or "income inequality" and a lack of sufficient income from employment or social assistance to meet basic needs. Solutions include social services, better wages from employment, and higher rates of income supports.
Substance Use Issues	Substance Use Issues were frequently referred to as "drugs" or "addictions". Solutions primarily focused on addiction programs / services and education about substances.
Unemployment / Economy	Primarily refers to "unemployment" and the "lack of jobs". Solutions recommend more and better jobs, job creation and strengthening the economy.
Youth	Indicates the number of respondents specifically mentioning youth or children in their answers to causes or solutions, across all themes.
Norms-Attitudes-Values	A number of values and attitudes were described such as lack of respect, or social responsibility as well as cultural norms regarding gender roles that lead to violence. Solutions focused on developing positive norms, attitudes and values through the home, school, community or awareness raising.
Family Environments	Respondents identified a variety of family conditions, including poor parenting skills and family violence. Solutions aimed at strengthening family capacities through resources and supports.
Neighbourhood Environments/ Engagement	Respondents identified social exclusion, disengagement or lack of pro-social opportunities and connections, particularly for youth. Solutions focused on increased participation in affordable recreational and community activities, often within neighbourhoods.
Education/ Training	Respondents identified lack of education as a root cause. Solutions recommend the need for more education and training opportunities, educational (awareness-raising) efforts were also identified as solutions to a range of causes with schools as a popular site for a variety of interventions.
Individual Characteristics	Describes individual characteristics / dispositions that do not fit in other categories such as "sin," "impulsivity," and "personal choice."

Theme	Short Description of Root Cause and Solution
Mental Health Issues	Mental health issues were most frequently named along with a range of other issues such as trauma and stigma. Solutions include increased mental health services and supports, and the need for mental health literacy among service providers and the public.
Tough on Crime	Respondents described a lenient or insufficient justice system response as the cause (lack of police presence, lenient sentences). Solutions recommended more enforcement and tougher penalties for crimes.
Housing	A lack of affordable housing, subsidized housing and homelessness. Solutions include the availability of more affordable housing options and supports for people experiencing homelessness.
Social Services	Respondents indicate a lack of social services Solutions include more social services and specific suggestions for child care, addiction treatment, mental health supports.
Justice System Reforms	Respondents identified aspects of the criminal justice system needing reforms such as the lack of rehabilitation for offenders. Recommended solutions include more emphasis on crime prevention and enhanced capacity to respond to mental health issues.
Peer Influences	Describes negative peer influences, lack of positive role models and relationship skills. Solutions recommend participation in pro-social activities and relationships.
Lenient Social Systems	Lenient social systems were identified as the cause. Solutions such as more discipline in schools and drug testing of social assistance recipients were suggested.
Stigma/ Discrimination	Stigma and discrimination experienced by multiple populations, take forms such as racism, hate crimes, sexism and homophobia. Recommended solutions focused on education, awareness and advocacy.
Collaborative/ Systemic Solutions	Encompasses systemic and collaborative solutions such as public awareness campaigns and increased agency collaboration.
Other Answer	Responses that were infrequently mentioned or not a cause or solution.
Do Not Know/ No Answer	This is the combined percentage of respondents who said they don't know or did not provide a response.

Root Cause Themes

This section compares responses to the question regarding the root causes of crime in Waterloo Region.

The community dialogues answered two related questions about root causes of crime:
- What do you see as the root causes of crime and victimization in Waterloo Region?

- What root causes of crime and victimization have an impact on you or impact your organization's clients?

The online survey answered a similar question:
- In your opinion, which root cause(s) of crime should receive the most attention in Waterloo Region?

Finally the phone survey respondents answered:
- In your opinion, what is the most significant root cause of crime in Waterloo Region?

The following table ranks themes by their number of mentions in the phone survey.

Root Cause Themes	Phone (n = 747)	Consultations (24 groups)	Online (n = 264)
Poverty/Inequality	28.6%	66.7%	42.8%
Substance Use Issues	22.1%	95.8%	27.7%
Unemployment \ Economy	13.0%	58.3%	14.4%
Youth Mentions	10.2%	N/A	29.5%
Norms-Attitudes-Values	7.9%	75.0%	4.9%
Family Environments	7.5%	79.1%	14.0%
Neighbourhood Environments/Engagement	6.8%	87.5%	24.6%
Education/Training	4.8%	62.5%	11.0%
Individual Characteristics	3.7%	Not Coded	3.4%
Mental Health Issues	3.2%	87.5%	20.5%
Tough on Crime	2.3%	8.3%	2.7%
Housing	2.7%	58.3%	12.9%
Social Services Mentions	2.3%	N/A	16.3%
Peer Influences	2.1%	Not Coded	6.8%
Justice System Reforms	0.8%	66.7%	2.7%
Lenient Social Systems	0.4%	Not Coded	Not Coded
Stigma/Discrimination	0.3%	70.8%	5.7%
Individual Characteristics & Peer Influences	Not Coded	66.7%	Not Coded
Other Answer	13.5%	Not Coded	14.0%
Do not Know / No Answer	7.6% (n = 57)	N/A	3.1% (n = 8)

Poverty/inequality was the most frequent root cause named by respondents in both the phone (28.6%) and online surveys (42.8%). When considering this theme, it is important to remember that poverty/inequality was broadly defined with responses that identify poverty as the lack of adequate income from either employment or social assistance and responses describing the structural aspect of social/income inequality.

Substance use issues were the number one response in the community dialogues (95.8%). This was the second most frequently identified root cause by respondents in the phone survey (22.1%) and online survey (27.7%).

Solution Themes

This section compares the solutions that survey respondents provided to the cause of crime they identified in their previous question.

Online survey respondents answered the following question about solutions to crime:
- What should be done to address these risks over the next four years?

Phone survey respondents answered a similar question:
- How should this root cause of crime be addressed?

Please note these themes may not all sound like solutions as they are categories summarizing the solutions people suggested.

The following table ranks themes by their number of mentions in the phone survey.

Solution Themes	Phone (n = 747)	Online (n = 264)
Social Services Mentions	22.8%	46.6%
Education/Training	15.3%	17.8%
Unemployment \ Economy	11.8%	12.5%
Poverty/Inequality	10.4%	14.8%
Youth Mentions	10.4%	32.2%
Tough on Crime	10.3%	6.8%
Neighbourhood Environments/Engagement	8.2%	26.1%
Substance Use Issues	7.9%	13.3%
Family Environments	6.7%	11.0%
Justice System Reforms	6.2%	11.4%
Housing	5.1%	20.5%
Collaboration	4.4%	26.9%
Norms-Attitudes-Values	4.4%	2.7%
Lenient Social Systems	3.5%	Not Coded
Mental Health Issues	3.3%	13.6%
Peer Influences	Not Coded	6.8%
Stigma/Discrimination	Not Coded	5.7%
Other Answer	7.1%	8.3%
Do not Know/No Answer	21.3% (n = 159)	8.7% (n = 23)

This table of results illustrates the percentage of survey respondents recommending each category of solution. It is interesting to note the substantial change in rankings for both phone and online survey responses for many of the solutions themes in comparison to

the root causes themes and the differences between the two groups. The number one answer in the online survey (46.6%) and phone survey is Social Services Mentions, a theme that captures a wide range of services and programs.

It is important to note that solutions were coded independently of root causes. For example, a respondent who named poverty as a root cause might name affordable housing as a solution. This solution was categorized as a housing solution rather than a poverty solution. Thus, solutions represent how often a particular solution theme was recommended, regardless of the root cause(s) named by respondents.

Combined Root Cause and Solution Themes

Combining the results of the root cause and solution questions, into Aggregated Themes, is useful for examining the strength of the themes across the two questions and for exploring the connections between the themes. This is justified since the second question referred back to the first, explicitly asking respondents how to address the root cause(s) of crime they identified. While many respondents provided multiple causes and multiple solutions, they likely had a rationale for their responses linking the two questions taken together. This section of the report delves deeper into the phone survey responses and examines the respondent's entire answer and finds connections.

The following table ranks themes by their number of mentions in the phone survey.

Theme (Aggregate Results)	Phone (n = 747)	Consultations (24 groups)	Online (n = 264)
Poverty/Inequality	30.1%	66.7%	43.9%
Social Services Mentions	23.6%	N/A	53.4%
Substance Use Issues	22.9%	95.8%	28.4%
Youth Mentions	18.5%	N/A	40.9%
Education/Training	17.9%	62.5%	23.9%
Unemployment/Economy	17.7%	58.3%	18.6%
Neighbourhood Environments/Engagement	11.2%	87.5%	36.0%
Tough on Crime	11.0%	8.3%	8.3%
Family Environments	10.7%	79.1%	19.7%
Norms-Attitudes-Values	9.5%	75.0%	7.6%
Justice System Reforms	6.7%	66.7%	13.6%
Housing	6.4%	58.3%	24.6%
Mental Health Issues	5.0%	87.5%	22.7%
Individual Characteristics	4.6%	Not Coded	3.8%
Lenient Social Systems	3.6%	Not Coded	Not Coded
Collaborative/Systemic Solutions	(included in other)	Not Coded	26.9%
Peer Influences	(included in other)	Not Coded	6.8%
Stigma/Discrimination	(included in other)	70.8%	5.7%
Individual Characteristics & Peer Influences	Not Coded	66.7%	Not Coded
Other Answer	19.8%	Not Coded	17.6%
Do not Know/No Answer	11.6% (n = 87)	N/A	1.9% (n = 5)

Statistical techniques demonstrated the connections between the Aggregated Themes[1]. Four groupings of the themes emerged. These groupings provide four high level categories describing what the general public believes would address the root causes of crime.

The first grouping included the themes:
- Education/Training
- Family Environments
- Neighbourhood Environments/Engagement
- Youth Mentions

Individuals were likely to connect these four themes in their answers. This is a logical grouping as clear connections exist between youth, neighbourhoods, families and education.

The second grouping included the themes:
- Social Services Mentions
- Mental Health Issues
- Housing

Again, this is a logical connection as mental health issues, housing and social services are all interconnected.

The third grouping included two themes:
- Tough on Crime
- Lenient Social Systems

This grouping indicates that individuals who called for Tough on Crime solutions often also mentioned concerns about Lenient Social Systems.

The final grouping included two positively related themes:
- Substance Use Issues
- Justice System Reforms

This indicates that individuals who discussed Substance Use Issues were likely to mention Justice System Reforms in their answer.

Additional Survey Question – What is Working Well?

Participants in the online survey were asked one additional question - **what do you think is working well in Waterloo Region to create a safe and healthy community?** Respondents provided numerous examples of positive actions in Waterloo Region, highlighting the good work of the police and community organizations, the strong spirit of collaboration and successes in creating an engaged, inclusive, caring community.

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[1] The specific statistical technique used is a Factor Analysis. The steps involved were as follows: The number of factors to extract was determined using a Parallel Analysis Simulation. A Principle Components Analysis identified the specific factors. Generation of the final solution relied upon a Direct Oblimin Rotation. For those concerned, please note a Varimax Rotation yielded similar results.

One quarter (24.2%) of respondents made positive comments about the quality and approach of policing in Waterloo Region and the collaborative relationship between the public and the police. One quarter (25.0%) of respondents said that agencies and community organizations in Waterloo Region provide high quality services and programs for residents and provided many examples of exemplary programs and organizations. Almost one in five (17.4%) of respondents indicated that partnerships and collaborations are important and are strengths of this Region with the work of the Crime Prevention Council and other collaborative initiatives cited as positive examples.

One in five (20.5%) respondents made positive comments about the high level of community and neighbourhood engagement in Waterloo Region and the efforts of residents, neighbourhood associations/community centres, organizations and governments, to build an inclusive community where people experience a sense of belonging. A number of respondents believed that Waterloo Region is innovative, does a good job in educating the public and in addressing housing issues, has a strong economic foundation and enjoys good governance and political leadership. Overall, these responses clearly reflect a strong belief that many things are working well, and that many are working well together in Waterloo Region to create a safe and healthy community.

Friends Meeting Results

At the Friends of Crime Prevention meeting on March 13, 2015, groups of people were given a list of solutions to a root cause of crime. They were then asked to divide the solutions into the following categories: being addressed well in Waterloo Region; will not help to solve the root causes of crime; and needs more attention. Then from the list of solutions needing more attention each group was asked to identify which solutions they saw as the most important.

Seventy solutions were identified (see the section titled Friends of Crime Prevention Meeting 70 Specific Solutions, page 19-22) and prioritized using an exercise involving the entire group of participants. Prioritization was based upon which solutions will be most effective at reducing crime in Waterloo Region. The priorities do not necessarily indicate which solutions are most appropriate for the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council to address. From the prioritized list of solutions Crime Prevention Council, staff identified ten themes:

- Reducing the Impact and Amount of Poverty
- Supporting Youth
- Addressing Housing Issues
- Early Identification & Interventions
- Addressing Lack of Employment Options
- Creating Belonging for Everyone
- Awareness & Education
- Working in Neighbourhoods
- Supporting those with Mental Health Issues
- Supporting those with Substance Use Issues

In addition to these ten specific themes, two overall observations about the Friends meeting warrant mention. First, the 'more programming' and 'more funding' answer was common in the phone survey but was not prevalent amongst the final 70 solutions identified. Second, amongst these 70 solutions, broad, structural and comprehensive responses received higher ratings.

Conclusion

A brief summary of research findings inevitably oversimplifies the complexity and depth of responses. This review is no exception, however this oversimplification is particularly disappointing as the depth of responses from respondents was particularly impressive. Those that answered the phone survey, the online survey, participated in the consultations and attended the Friends of Crime Prevention meeting provided thoughtful responses and feedback which has helped to generate a broad understanding of what people in Waterloo Region think causes crime and how to address it.

On a final note, this deeper understanding of the perceptions of root causes and solutions would not have been possible without the contributions of individuals and agencies throughout Waterloo Region. We would like to conclude by expressing our gratitude to everyone who contributed to this research process.

Detailed Description of Root Cause and Solution Themes

Poverty / Inequality

As a root cause it is most often described simply as "poverty" and less frequently, "income inequality" or "social inequality" / "lack of opportunity." Where respondents provided more information, poverty was most often described as a lack of sufficient wages from employment or a lack of adequate income from social assistance. Low income was associated with a struggle in meeting basic needs and a lack of resources and opportunities.

The most common solution was increasing income through "a living wage," "better wages" from employment or increased social assistance rates. Also suggested were additional social services and supports. Some suggested more income or social equality through a more equitable distribution of resources or opportunities. There are a number of frequently suggested solutions to poverty that are included (coded) in other themes, particularly, more affordable housing, more jobs and more education.

Substance Use Issues

As a root cause it is most often referred to in the surveys simply as "drugs" or "addictions." Some people said that people may "steal to support their habits" or may commit crimes while under the influence. Some respondents mentioned the prominence of alcohol and partying among students. Some consultation groups and survey respondents indicated that trauma is a root of substance misuse and substances are used as coping mechanisms. A consultation group noted that '80% of crimes in the court system are drug related. Very few people become criminal in their 20's and beyond unless it is addictions.'

The most frequent solutions related to programs and services (rehab, withdrawal, counseling, harm reduction), and access to and availability of these services, as well as education about substances, often within the school system. A few suggestions related to legal reforms (decriminalization / legalization), the implementation of the Waterloo Region Integrated Drugs Strategy and incorporating addiction supports within other systems. A frequent solution that was coded in criminal justice reforms or tough on crime - was to stop or arrest the drug dealers.

Unemployment / Economy

The lack of employment and lack of jobs were most frequently mentioned as a root cause. Some indicated the "economy" and economic challenges as the root cause. Consultation groups and some survey respondents noted the increase in part-time jobs and jobs paying less than a living wage and that youth, people with disabilities, newcomers, immigrants, minority groups, people with a criminal record and others, experience more barriers to employment.

The most frequently mentioned solutions were "more jobs" and "better jobs." Some suggested more job search assistance while others suggested we need more focus on job creation and stimulating the economy. (Note: The frequent suggestions of better wages were categorized as "poverty" and education and training suggestions in "education / training.")

Norms-Attitudes-Values
This theme includes a range of cultural norms, attitudes and values that people associated with the root cause of crime. Phone survey respondents named values and attitudes such as the lack of personal responsibility, respect or compassion; a sense of entitlement and greed. Also noted were the influences of the media and entertainment world (violent movies and video games) and lack of religious beliefs. The online survey and consultation participants were more likely to describe a lack of social responsibility or empathy, lack of cultural sensitivity or the normalization of criminality.

A few survey respondents and several consultation groups, particularly the youth groups, discussed violence against women, indicating that patriarchal structures and cultural norms regarding gender roles form the roots of gendered violence. A few survey respondents suggested that interpersonal violence against men needed more attention.

Solutions described the need to acquire positive values, attitudes and to shift cultural norms, most often through the home or school, as well as through community programs and involvement, mentoring, advocacy and awareness - raising activities.

Family Environments
Respondents in the online survey most frequently mentioned poor parenting skills, and the lack of discipline, supervision and moral education of children. Another theme raised by consultation groups and survey respondents related to the multiple stresses families may face such as poverty, long working hours, lack of supports and the impacts of addictions, mental health issues and other challenges. Family violence was identified by a number of respondents particularly in the online survey as a root cause. Solutions focused primarily on providing more supports and resources to strengthen family capacities such as educational and parenting supports. Frequently mentioned solutions that were categorized in other themes included child care, and recreational activities for youth.

Neighbourhood Environments / Engagement
This describes several related themes of neighbourhood environments, participation in social activities and sense of inclusion and belonging that are frequently mentioned together. Many respondents identified boredom, disengagement, marginalization, and the lack of participation in recreational activities and community life as a root cause. While youth were mentioned most frequently, families and people experiencing marginalization and risks were also mentioned along with barriers to participation such as affordability and accessibility. A few respondents indicated the structural aspects of neighbourhood design and infrastructure as the cause such as the lack of community centres or the concentration of social housing.

Many solutions focused on increasing engagement, inclusion, sense of belonging and community connections, often through participation in recreational and social activities and volunteering, especially within neighbourhoods. It was noted that some groups are excluded or lack access to social opportunities and connections because of their age or disability, where they live, their income or their cultural, ethnic, sexual or gender identity and that these barriers should be addressed.

Education / Training
This theme encompasses several distinctive aspects. As a root cause, a lack of education was most frequently noted. A minor theme was the lack of training and apprenticeship opportunities. Several consultation groups described a need for increased cultural competence and supports for aboriginal and newcomer youth in schools. Solutions indicated the need for more education, more supports and strategies to help youth succeed in school, more affordable post-secondary education, and greater availability of training and apprenticeship opportunities.

A second aspect of this theme relates to the identification of schools as a place to implement a host of solutions such as teaching moral values, working with families on early interventions and preventive education about substance misuse. Thirdly, many respondents named education as a solution in the sense of raising awareness and understanding particularly about substance misuse.

Individual Characteristics
The theme describes individual characteristics and dispositions that are distinct from values and attitudes that individuals may hold and included responses such as "sin," "unhappiness," "personal choice," "impulsivity," "lack of coping skills." Suggestions to address these causes included improving problem-solving or coping skills, "grow-up classes," and making better choices.

Mental Health Issues
As a root cause, survey respondents most frequently said "mental health" and sometimes unaddressed or untreated mental health issues. Consultation groups and survey respondents also raised the impacts of trauma, the increased vulnerability to victimization, the problem of stigmatization and lack of public awareness, the presence of mental health concerns in pre-sentence reports and the criminalization of mental illness. All groups indicated a need for more access to a range of services and supports.

The most frequent solutions were to provide more mental health supports and services. A number of additional recommendations included trauma informed services, more psychiatrists, and more accessible, affordable and timely services. A few respondents suggested more mental health training and awareness for the public, service providers and police and educational efforts to reduce stigma.

Tough on Crime
In this theme respondents indicated causes and solutions consistent with a "tough on crime" orientation. As a cause, respondents typically identified lenient sentences or a lack of police presence. As a solution, respondents frequently recommended more police and policing, more arrests and enforcement of laws, and tougher sentences for offenders.

Housing
Most frequently mentioned as a root cause was the lack of affordable housing, lack of subsidized housing and homelessness. Solutions prioritized the need for more affordable housing in the Region. Increasing subsidized housing, and programs and supports for those experiencing homelessness were also themes. A few recommended additional housing supports such as supportive housing for a variety of populations.

Justice System Reforms
A number of consultation groups and some survey respondents discussed ways in which mental health issues, addictions or social disadvantage brought people into contact with the justice system due to the visibility of behaviours, lack of support services or the need for more conflict resolution approaches to be utilized by police. A lack of trust or fear of police was seen by some as contributing to a lack of reporting of victimization for some groups such as newcomers and LGBTQ. Also noted were the lack of rehabilitation and reintegration supports and services for offenders to prevent re-offending.

Several themes emerged in the solutions. Some recommended shifts in the focus of the criminal justice system such as more program referrals, restorative justice and crime prevention approaches, more focus on serious rather than minor crimes or changes in laws such as the decriminalization / legalization of marijuana. Some respondents suggested more rehabilitation and reintegration programs for offenders. A range of recommendations were made for increasing the collaboration of police with the public and with community agencies. This included building relationships with youth in schools and increased training and strategies for police in dealing with mental health issues.

Peer influences
This theme describes the negative influence of peers on criminal involvement through a lack of supervision, and delinquent peer associations or gangs. It also captures other relational factors including the lack of positive role models and lack of conflict resolution skills. Solutions included mentoring, role models and learning about healthy relationships. Solutions to peer influences were predominately related to participation in pro-social activities which were categorized in neighbourhood environments / engagement.

Lenient Social Systems
This theme captures responses indicating that the cause of crime is that systems are too lenient and families and schools do not discipline sufficiently. Solutions included curfews for teenagers, mandatory rehab for people with addictions picked up by the police and drug testing of welfare recipients.

Stigma and Discrimination
Stigma and discrimination were discussed by the majority of consultation groups, some participants in the online survey and a few in the phone survey. It occurs on an individual level and a systemic level such as within workplaces, services and institutions. For example, a consultation group noted that sometimes older adults who are a visible minority or LGBTQ, are fearful of discrimination in accessing some services.

Stigma and discrimination were described as a root cause of victimization. Consultation groups and online survey participants noted that stigma and discrimination are experienced by many populations including women, LGBTQ, aboriginal, newcomer, immigrant and visible minorities, people with disabilities, and people experiencing mental health challenges, addictions, homelessness or having low incomes. Recommended solutions focused on education, awareness and advocacy on these issues.

"Other" Category
This category captures a range of causes and solutions that were either unclear, not a cause or solution (such as naming crimes like break and enter or saying they did not see

much crime without further elaboration), or too infrequently mentioned to warrant a separate code.

Do Not Know/ No Answer
This is the combined percentage of respondents who said they don't know or did not provide a response.

Collaborative / Systemic Solutions
This theme describes solutions that were more systemic, transformative, or collaborative in nature. Suggestions included public awareness campaigns, advocacy, community dialogues and consultations, partnerships and collaboration across agencies and systems, plans and strategies, addressing root causes and prevention approaches to address a range of root causes. Solutions of this nature were most prevalent in the online survey and thus appear as a separate code only for that survey.

Social Services
This theme captures responses indicating a lack of social services as a cause and the suggestion for more social services as a solution. General responses regarding "social services" and a broad range of specific suggestions (such as child care, addiction treatment, mental health supports) are captured in this theme.

Youth
This theme indicates the number of respondents specifically mentioning youth or children in their answers to causes or solutions, across all themes. The prevalence of this theme indicates that youth are important to many people's understandings of root causes and solutions.

Friends of Crime Prevention Meeting 70 Specific Solutions

Rank	Solution	Score
1	Bring 'The Roots of Youth Violence' off the shelf and implement it!	4.9
2	More supportive housing with case management built in [Combined with Card] group home style housing with supports for education, employment {Combined with Card] Accessible housing options (barrier free & supports) [Combined with Card] More supportive housing options for victims of domestic violence	4.8
3	Supportive housing for people being released from incarceration	4.8
3	More mentoring & positive youth models for youth	4.8
5	More opportunities and supports for at risk youth in recreation, education, employment and volunteering	4.8
6	Need more affordable housing available [Combined with Card] need more subsidized housing	4.8
7	Reduce income inequality (examples: tie minimum wage raises to inflation, higher corporate taxes)[by lobbying for a working plan from all levels of government to reduce poverty]	4.7
8	Reduce the impacts of poverty on everyone, particularly [e.g] on early childhood development through daycare, literacy, parenting groups, etc. [more opportunities for less advantaged young people to network, be creative, start businesses; and provide more resources and support to parents and increase awareness of services and restore inREACH!]	4.7
9	Establish more programs that work on family intervention and conflict resolution within the home.	4.6
10	Need education in schools around conflict resolution, parenting skills, and coping skills	4.5
11	Breaking the cycles of poverty, violence and trauma – seek to learn from people with low incomes about what would support their well-being and sense of belonging	4.5
12	Improve early identification and early intervention for children and families who are struggling	4.5
13	Our two regional schoolboards provide additional mental health resources to address at risk youth. At risk youth our often identified, however, resources may not be available to provide early and consistent treatment options	4.4
14	Address the changes in the nature of employment (more precarious, low wage, part-time, contract etc.)	4.3
15	Public education and awareness, especially for students, about substance misuse	4.3
16	Increase awareness of mental health programs and resources available	4.3
17	More programs, services and funding for mental health	4.3
18	More programs for young people providing education and employment supports [for example more focus on skilled trades and other secure opportunities]	4.3
19	A bigger focus on belonging. It's not only about creating programs and services since people may not get involved in anything if they don't believe they belong	4.3
20	Create gathering places and positive welcoming environments for youth to increase their social connections & opportunities	4.2

Rank	Solution	Score
21	More outreach to disengaged students to finish school and with young adults to connect to training opportunities	4.1
22	Address the systemic barriers to employment experienced by youth, immigrants, those with criminal records and others	4.1
23	Better collaboration and integration across services and systems working with this population	4.1
24	Provide broad supports through schools; (School Resource Officers, early identification, programs during and after school)	4.1
25	Police community partnerships that include collaborative planning	4.0
25	Educational/Awareness Campaigns, healthy relationships, power dynamics, why patriarchy is bad for men too, acknowledge and bringing attention to all interpersonal violence (children, men, women, trans)	4.0
25	Get feedback from youth on what they believe would work the best to increase their sense of community belonging	4.0
25	Community engagement and development of community leadership in neighbourhoods to build assets & partnerships in order to create local opportunities and find solutions [plus introducing mentoring programs in at-risk neighbourhoods]	4.0
25	Early identification and intervention with struggling children and families identified through the school	4.0
25	Find ways to develop empathy & walk in another's reality →schools, workplaces, government (if we were all blind…) Important to have experiential learning to experience others' reality, personal accountability	4.0
31	Provide more recreation, art, music and skill building programs for young people that are affordable, accessible or free (in and out of school)[need to consider needs of 'at risk' youth/youth experiencing challenges]	3.9
32	Reduce the criminalization of mental health and more referral to programs	3.9
33	Work on developing healthy interactive affordable neighbourhoods – that facilitates walking, supports transit, has opportunities for social interaction and support [& resources]	3.9
34	Continued work in low-income [especially newcomers] neighbourhoods to assist families to build capacity and to provide enriched experiences for children and youth.	3.9
35	More employment initiatives for all youth & for at risk youth (job creation, training, apprenticeships, paid internships) [those new to Canada, those with limited experience/education, or those with a criminal background]	3.8
36	Work on creating connection and belonging for all vulnerable populations	3.8
37	Provide better supports to children of different cultural backgrounds	3.8
38	Increase public awareness and involvement in preventing and reporting crime (eg. crime stoppers)	3.8
39	Provide more jobs	3.7
40	Changes to criteria for program admission for (lower threshold access) treatment programs, withdrawal management, community based treatment, detox, creative approaches,	3.6

Rank	Solution	Score
41	Prevention of substance misuse through neighbourhood initiatives and involvement in community activities and programs	3.6
42	Integrated Drug Strategy [Combined with Card] more coordinated services, strategies and partnerships to reduce substance misuse (eg schools and police)	3.6
43	More community awareness to debunk myths and remove stigma of homelessness [Combined with Card] Education of public on importance (cost benefit) of housing	3.5
43	More affordable and more subsidized housing options available	3.5
43	In-reach to engage marginalized people (youth, mental health, aboriginal, LGBTQ, immigrants)	3.5
43	Better funding, access and awareness of services for substance misuse	3.5
47	Need public awareness campaigns to address stigma and discrimination faced by groups in the community i.e. LGBTQ populations, homeless individuals and those facing mental health issues [& disabilities]	3.4
47	More spaces in the community where people facing stigmatization or who are excluded can go and be accepted and welcomed	3.4
47	Provide more support for aboriginal, newcomer/immigrant, LGBTQ populations	3.4
50	More community services, support and access to education for new Canadians	3.3
51	Make landlords follow the rules better [Combined with Card] ensure that existing housing meets acceptable standards	3.3
52	More inclusive, respectful, trauma-specific supports and services	3.2
53	(more integration) Less concentration of certain population groups (seniors/students)	3.2
54	Educate the business world of the community value of hiring those who have been incarcerated	3.1
54	More job training opportunities; more apprenticeships and more awareness of these	3.1
56	Multi-year senior level funding for services to prevent, reduce, eliminate problematic substance use	3.0
56	More affordable post-secondary education (lower fees, more financial support)	3.0
56	Awareness and education needed within culturally diverse communities to promote acceptance of LGBTQ identities	3.0
59	Planning policies [by-laws] that provide for diversity of [business activity &] housing types, and increase pedestrian movements and interaction of neighbours	2.9
59	Engage community residents & recognize their strengths and resources	2.9
61	Address racism & discrimination within the work force	2.8
62	Community discussion./decision on social & criminal justice definition (safety & well being for all)	2.8
63	Gathering spaces for residents to come together to socialize and for recreation	2.7
64	literacy programs like Strong Start in all schools, and all places that serve at risk youth	2.7
65	More [caring families providing) supportive housing for youth	2.6
66	Ask people what they want (person directed services)	2.6

Rank	Solution	Score
67	More educational efforts emphasizing Canada's historical and ongoing colonial practices toward Indigenous Peoples	2.6
67	Make social inclusion and a diverse community fabric a priority	2.6
69	Specific populations not coming forward on sexual & interpersonal violence, more research on why not, need to know barriers in order to find solutions focus on: gender, cultural issues	2.5
70	Assessment or evaluation of practices of workplaces re inclusivity, including police and agencies	2.2