

Smart Update (Consent Agenda)

For the Meeting of WRPCPC on September 11, 2020

The Consent Agenda is published on a bi-monthly basis. **Please review this report before meetings.** Any member of Council member has the right to “pull” an item from the Consent Agenda and add it to the regular agenda for discussion, comment, or clarification. Approved consent agendas are published on the Council’s [website](#) along with approved minutes. Consent Agendas are selective, not comprehensive. Whenever possible, Consent Agenda items reflect the key approaches of the Crime Prevention Council.

Expand Reach through Understanding and Engagement:

➤ **New look for the Website!**

- Still more work to be done....[Check it out](#) and let us know what you think?

➤ **Keep Families Safe-Preventing Family Violence in Waterloo Region:**

- Specifically exacerbated by the stress and isolation of Covid-19 - The UN has called it the “shadow pandemic”.
- In May, the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council initiated a coalition of Community Partners now numbering 18.
- With traditional avenues for support cut off by the lockdown, we developed key messages for families, friends, neighbors and the workplace.
- Developed a comprehensive campaign to reach out to people who need help and to people who can help to let them know:
 - services are available and safe,
 - how to identify the signs of family violence in person and on-line,
 - and how to help or to get help.
- Developed, [Website](#), shareable products including an [infographic](#) and [postcard](#) (products are being translated into 10 languages).
- Launched campaign on June 21, 2020 with [5 videos by dads](#) circulated on social media.
- Developed a workplace campaign including [video](#) and [PowerPoint](#) for managers to talk about family violence in the work place and their responsibilities.
- Developed sample social media messages, video scripts and PowerPoint presentation for other partners and community leaders to use.
- Engaged community leaders in creating and circulating videos following a script.
- Working with Interfaith Grand River to engage religious leaders to create videos for different faith groups.

- Advocating with MPPs to include family violence in future pandemic plans. To quote Karen Spencer, "The ICUs are empty but the women's shelters are full."
- With social media and traditional media alone, we have reached more than 700,000 people in Waterloo Region. This is in large part thanks to The Record for covering the issue, our porch chats and reprinting our infographic.
- Our coalition partners, including City of Waterloo, City of Cambridge, City of Kitchener, Township of North Dumfries and Region of Waterloo have also all shared information through their employee portals.
- Community leaders including Mayors Vrbancovic, Foxton, and MPP Fife have also generously recorded brief videos to share the message. MP Louis featured the campaign as part of his Town Hall in June 2020.
- Working with The Coalition of Muslim Women on a project called "Keeping Your Families Safe During Pandemic", this project is inspired by the #Keeping Families Safe campaign. It will provide online training in 6 different topics for 10 women from different backgrounds and languages enabling them to deliver information sessions in their languages to their communities.
- Engaging large employers to ensure they are sharing the online distress signal, know there is help and know how to help. We have created a slide deck, video, infographic and more resources - all easily downloaded from our dedicated website.
- Making local materials available to other communities across Canada.

➤ **2020 Porch Chat Series:**

- Following the Theme of #KeepFamiliesSafe Campaign.
- Provided virtually. Three porch chats facilitated- Four more being planned.
 1. Understanding emotional abuse and precursors to violence in the home
 2. Understanding the Impact of Trauma and Abuse on Children
 3. Resolving Conflict in Families
 4. Becoming An Active Bystander find out more here : <https://bit.ly/PC4-2020>
- Three Porch Chats are being developed in other languages – Turkish, Kurdish and Arabic.

➤ **Missed Opportunities Project - Preventing Family Violence through interactive virtual Theatre:**

- Partners with The Domestic Assault Review Team (DART), MCC and Theatre of the Beat.
- Develop and perform script on Domestic Assault for the purpose of exploring how family, friends, neighbours and the workplace can help.
- In Forum Theatre, the play is performed once; Then the play is performed again and the audience is invited to intervene when they see an opportunity to change the story. [Sample of forum theatre here:](#)
- Will premier in Nov. 2020

- Public Performances. Possible Radio performances. Taped for podcast that can be reused by partners.

➤ **Chelsea's Story Professional Theatre Tour 2020:**

- The Chelsea's Story Working Group consist of MT Space, SASC and a Grade 7-8 teacher and is lead by WRPCPC staff.
- Met with the Catholic School Board to bring into schools in Feb 19th, 2020. Scheduled a reading and dialogue with key members of the Board to bring in this material into their schools– cancelled due to lockdown.
- Received funding from the KWCF - \$22,000 towards this project. Must be used by July 2021. Will wait until schools settle to determine how to proceed with this project.
- On line child exploitation has significantly increased since Covid-19 – Children are required to spend more time on-line and it is difficult for families to adequately supervise. In addition, Children and teens are feeling lonely due to social isolation and are easy targets for those accessing them through social media apps and gaming platforms. The Sexual Assault Support Centre reports that since COVID-19, calls with concerns and referrals of online sexual exploitation have increased. The primary method we are hearing about is DISCORD, an app meant for video games, followed by Instagram and TikTok.
- In response to a recent request from the Catholic School Board, WRPCPC Staff are helping connect them with suitable online resources for both teachers and students due to the increased vulnerability of their students. There are several new resources that have recently become available.

➤ **Human Sex Trafficking Awareness Events cancelled due to Covid-19:**

1. Honey Bee Film and Panel Cambridge in July 2020
 2. Chelsea's Story Script Reading 5 events
 3. The YUVA Arts Project – public event
- Due to increased vulnerabilities of children and youth during Covid this work is imperative and will continue.

➤ **Every Voice Matter Mural:**

- Touring the Region of Waterloo- Tour halted due to COVID-19. Displayed currently at the Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation Office

Base Change in Good Evidence and Innovation:

➤ **Surveys Developed During Redeployment:**

- WRPCPC staff developed two surveys during redeployment. The first survey was of a diverse group of staff deployed to the YMCA Overflow shelter. Respondents indicate overwhelming support for a low barrier shelter option(s) in Waterloo region that allows for drug consumption on site, provision of safe

supply as an alternative to the toxic unregulated market and increases in supportive housing options. The second survey is near completion and asks people dependent on substances from the unregulated market a variety of questions related to housing-shelter preferences, substance use, crime and victimization. Early results indicate people existing in a near-constant state of being unsafe.

➤ **Pulse Check on Collaboration and the Workings behind the Pandemic:**

- (Draft) report of the preliminary findings is complete
- Further/deeper analysis of the findings to include qualitative results, comparisons between groups, as well as overall findings from communities across Canada
- Consideration needs to be given to how the report will be mobilized (e.g. who needs to hear the results)

➤ **Research Action Team on Violence and Victimization in the Home during/after the Pandemic:**

- Team includes representatives from the Council (Richard and Kelly), Family and Children's Services, Lutherwood, Women's Crisis Services and Police/Wellbeing Waterloo Region of Waterloo
- The group has identified a number of sources that look at the relationship between the pandemic and the experience of violence and victimization in the home; this includes recommendations for measures that help to reduce and/or prevent violence and victimization
- The group has also been working on gathering and reviewing data from local agencies to get a sense of what the local experience has been over the last few months; so far, data from FACS and WCSWR have been reviewed (police data will be available soon)
- The plan is to take all of the findings and turn them into a knowledge brief to help inform ongoing/future pandemic planning; this work is linked to the Keep Families Safe campaign

Lead Side by Side - Leverage Dynamic Partnerships:

➤ **Support and Advice on Prevention Initiatives:**

- WRPCPC staff continue to support and advise on prevention initiatives locally via KW4Health and the Inner City Health Alliance, among others. For decades, prevention has been recognized as a key if underfunded priority in a variety of health domains (e.g. Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, 1986). The WRPCPC is currently advising with area health entities on an opportunity from Health Canada aimed at supporting low-no income persons using unregulated substances. WRPCPC staff continue to support the Waterloo Region Integrated Drugs Strategy (developed by WRPCPC and a 26-member Task Force) at the Steering Committee. Two other drug-related municipal committees in the region have paused activities due to COVID-19.

- **The Canadian Municipal Network on Crime Prevention (CMNCP):**
 - CMNCP met in September. Members acknowledged the key contributions of Christiane Sadeler. The bulk of the meeting focussed on community engagement related to Indigenous communities and opportunities via the United Nations for selected municipalities to highlight innovative crime prevention initiatives. The CMNCP has requested WRCPC assistance with the review of template for municipal overdose prevention plans.
- **The Community Safety and Well-being Plan (CSWBP)**
 - The Core Writing Group met twice over the summer. Immigration Partnership and the Children and Youth Planning Table have been added to the writing group along with Richard Eibach of WRCPC. The Region previously added the Pandemic Control Group into the CSWBP process. The Province has waived the January 1, 2021 deadline. The Province has not set a new deadline for Ontario municipalities to complete a Plan and the group has not determined a new completion date.

Advocate for Equity and Belonging. Reduce Marginalization and Discrimination:

- **Breaking the Silence:**
 - BTS group submitted an application in May 2020 to the Status of Women in partnership with Stride of Community Justice Initiatives to enhance work with the LGTBQ2+ community inside of Grand Valley Institution for women. Other work of BTS has been delayed due to Covid 19 and staff redeployment.
- **Speak Up Event:**
 - **Racism Is a System Not an Event.** Date: March 26, 2020: The committee is made of reps from ACCKWA, African Community Wellness, the equity office of WRDSB, Laura Mae Lindo's office, Sara Shafiq of the Coalition of Muslim women, Immigration Partnership, KPL and WRCPC staff. Postponed due to Covid-19.
- **WRCPC's ad hoc Racial Justice Communications Committee**
 - The Committee met on August 21, 2020. Several conversations and inquiries to our BIPOC neighbours have occurred since the committee last met. The Committee suspended agenda items related to outreach, WRCPC retreat planning etc. during staffing transition until the impact to community relationship could be assessed. The Committee noted that advocating for systemic change makes individuals and organizations vulnerable to structural violence. The Committee unanimously decided to remain committed to the

work of establishing dialogue between WRCPC and local organizations and individuals who are challenging systemic racism and structural violence.

➤ **Youth Engagement Strategy:**

- In July 2019, WRCPC discussed supporting the Youth Engagement Strategy and advancing the hybridized Icelandic approach by utilizing approximately \$1,494,000 in provincial funds provided to the Region and area municipalities through the Cannabis Legalization Implementation Fund. The WRCPC had recently completed two reports – original research with youth currently using substances and a prevention-orientated policy document - linking the YES and variations on the Icelandic model to issues of cannabis use amongst area youth. A proposal for \$240,000 was subsequently submitted for consideration to the Region.

➤ **Other Collaborative Efforts:**

- The work of WRCPC was interrupted earlier this year by redeployment to an ad hoc low barrier shelter-drug consumption facility in Kitchener as part of the local COVID-19 response. Previous to being re-deployed by Community Services Department, some WRCPC staff were working to ensure a robust COVID-19 response for our neighbours lacking in opportunities – people without or relying on shelters, people using substances for example. Upon redeployment and beyond the ‘normal’ activities at the shelter, WRCPC staff organized a barbeque and entertainment for residents, staff and volunteers. Staff went above and beyond to provide care to residents in the shelter in very difficult circumstances.

In the Media:

Media about the Keep Families Safe Campaign:

Child protective agency urges ‘Please pay attention’ after sudden deaths of two children
https://www.therecord.com/news/waterloo-region/2020/08/10/child-protective-agency-urges-please-pay-attention-after-sudden-deaths-of-two-children.html?li_source

Intervention vital to change trajectory for abused children
<https://www.therecord.com/news/waterloo-region/2020/08/12/intervention-vital-to-change-trajectory-for-abused-children.html>

Emotional abuse typically builds, warns women’s crisis services
<https://www.therecord.com/news/waterloo-region/2020/07/27/emotional-abuse-typically-builds-warns-womens-crisis-services.html>

Agencies helping women, children at risk of violence seeing return to more normal levels
<https://www.therecord.com/news/waterloo-region/2020/07/13/agencies-helping-women-children-at-risk-of-violence-seeing-return-to-more-normal-levels.html>

Pandemic creates urgent need to flatten the violence curve

<https://www.therecord.com/opinion/columnists/2020/05/05/pandemic-creates-urgent-need-to-flatten-the-violence-curve.html>

Karen Spencer talks about child abuse during the Pandemic as part of the #KeepFamiliesSafe Campaign <https://www.570news.com/audio/the-mike-farwell-show/> at 1hour 9 min. mark.

CTV covered July 19th's Porch Chat on Understanding Family Conflict: <https://kitchener.ctvnews.ca/mobile/video?clipId=2018330>

In other News:

An [evaluation of the Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act](#) has been undertaken and has been subsequently published in the International Journal of Drug Policy.

[Overdose Awareness Day is a time for healing](#). By Fitsum Areguy, The Record, August 31, 2020

WRPC on the Mike Farwell Show ([Audio](#)). September 5, 2020.

[Petition asking government to fund alternative drug options](#). By Aastha Shetty, Kitchener Today, September 5, 2020

Community Corner:

Nothing to report.

News from the office:

- We wish David Siladi well as he and his partner have recently welcomed their baby into their family. He will be off on parental leave until 2021.
- Mary Anna Allen, Michael Parkinson and Julie Thompson were redeployed to the AR Kaufman Emergence Overflow Shelter for Men.
- Deb Bergey, Interim Executive Director, joined the team in August and has been meeting with staff, the Facilitating Committee and other key stakeholders to begin her orientation to the work of the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Bergey, Interim Executive Director
September 11, 2020