

## Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy Briefing Note March 2009

### **Background:**

*Hamilton is a compassionate and resilient community; we are also a community that prides itself on working together to find collaborative solutions to complex problems like poverty.*

### **The current economic downturn presents challenges:**

- U.S Steel Canada (formerly Stelco) will be idling operations for the foreseeable future – putting more than 2,000 workers directly out of work and possibly leading to tens of millions of dollars in lost economic activity monthly to the area.
- Hamilton is facing a significant increase in the unemployment rate. Individuals applying for Employment Insurance benefits rose by 42% in December, 2008 over December, 2007.
- The City is also facing a large increase in Ontario Works caseloads (with 1,000 new families being added in just the last two months).
- Even before the current economic crisis hit, Hamilton was challenged by one of the highest poverty rates in the province with 89,000 individuals living below the low-income cutoff – including 34% of children growing up in poverty within the boundaries of the ‘old City of Hamilton’.

### **The case for immediate investments and long term change:**

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction commends the Province of Ontario on its leadership in developing the Ontario Poverty Strategy to address the unacceptable levels of poverty in the province. The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction is ready to work with the Government of Ontario on strategic investments in poverty reduction efforts which we believe will make a significant and immediate impact on low-income children, their families and communities. These include, investing in early learning, education, after school programs, neighborhood development, affordable housing and recognition of the City of Hamilton’s unique burden in balancing downloaded social service costs.

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction urges that a focus also remain on the systemic changes that will lead to long-term poverty reduction efforts through enhanced community partnerships with government, increased flexibility in funding and program delivery, and action-oriented solutions that have already demonstrated extraordinary results. The time for consultation is over, we are ready for action.

## **Social stimulus investments:**

Over the last year, partners with the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction have been extremely successful in leveraging resources within and from outside the community to make an impact around poverty reduction initiatives and enhance the lives of children and their families.

Hamilton is ready with a strategic plan in place through our 'framework for change' and Starting Point Strategies that are building successful collaborative initiatives. These have included specific Investments in Children, Youth and their Families

### **Quality Early Learning and Parenting:**

- Continued support and increased investment in the provincial Best Start Initiative and the Ontario Early Years Centre
- Commitment to implement the recommendations outlined in the three expert panel reports commissioned under the Best Start initiative
- Commitment to work with Best Start Networks and CMSMs/DSSABs to understand and plan for the transition to full-day early learning for four and five year olds (which will have a huge impact on the current child care system)
- Expand and enhance the integration of programs directed at children and families in the early years with a particular focus on low-income and marginalized families; including increased investment in child care subsidies to assist CMSMs/DSSABs. Research proves that an investment in the 0 to 6 age range makes a significant impact on the child and their family.

### **Skills through Education, Activity and Recreation**

- Increased access recreational activities by children in the middle years through before and after school programs; support for sports, recreation and the arts; and support to schools to increase their availability to the community.

### **Targeted Skills Development:**

- Support for targeted training and mentoring programs for at-risk youth to increase their opportunities and attachment to the workforce. At risk youth traditionally fall between the margins in being able to access appropriate employment training programs. A unique pilot project is being undertaken in Hamilton through the Skills Development Flagship and community partners which provides at-risk youth with employment supports, mentoring and social supports to ensure employment success.

### **Employment:**

- Continued support for new immigrants to obtain appropriate credentialing and access to employment opportunities which will increase the earning capacity of these families. In Hamilton, 50 % of new immigrants fall below the poverty line. Many of these individuals have skills and capacities which would strengthen the Ontario economy but are not able to access employment because of credential and Canadian experience barriers.
- Continued investment in a jobs and economic development strategy for Hamilton through the Jobs Prosperity Collaborative

### **Asset Building and Wealth Creation:**

- Investment in increasing the affordable housing stock in communities and supporting low-income families to maintain their current housing status. In many low income neighbourhoods, families often move several times during the course of a year leading to

increased costs to the family, disruption to the school system and disorientation within neighbourhoods. Supporting families to build assets including home ownership can have a significant impact on the stability of a family.

These critical points of investment are built on foundational community supports that require investment and policy direction by all levels of government, particularly the Provincial Government. Without these foundational supports, children are unable to move through the five critical points of investment. The foundational community supports require both investment by the Provincial Government and the development of policies to support their sustainability.

## **Your investment in Hamilton leverage change:**

Hamilton has been extremely effective in responding to community needs through flexible program delivery. The Roundtable encourages a flexible, community-led roll out of the OPRS which allows municipalities and community organizations to effectively meet local needs and priorities.

In child care, as one example, it will be as important to have investments that can be used towards subsidies for child care fees as it will be to have capital dollars to build new spaces. If spaces are available, but subsidies are not, families will still not be able to access the care. Likewise in housing, new construction may not always be the best choice. Flexibility to renovate or improve existing stock can increase access to affordable housing without necessarily engaging in new construction. Best practices show that the more flexibility that comes with investments the stronger the resulting outcome. The “project based” approach to social investment is not working. Investments must be sustained in meaningful ways (akin to other health and social transfers).

## **Moving to Action:**

Over 900 Hamilton businesses, organizations, government departments, and educational/research institutions are linked resulting in new health services in low income neighbourhoods, bus routes and an affordable transit pass program for low-income workers, new early years programs, school based and after school programs, employment and mentoring supports for at risk youth, home ownership and affordable housing programs.

The Roundtable committee structure is a valuable asset to manage local investments. The HRPR Government Engagement Working Group, a collaborative of senior staff from all three levels of government, can be a vehicle to flow and manage funding and the Hamilton Neighbourhood Transformation Committee is a key link to neighbourhood investment and development.

The Roundtable's collaborative model of engaging cross-sectoral partners is a leading edge approach for complex issues. The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has successfully worked across silos to bring some real results for children, youth and their families living in poverty in Hamilton.

We have worked collaboratively and achieved real results. Hamilton is well placed to respond as a pilot site for poverty-related initiatives. We can help the government achieve results and impacts immediately.

## Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction A Strategic Poverty Focus: Community Results – 2008

### Strategic Poverty Focus: Influencing and Changing Policies

- Identification of policy issues or policy opportunities such as elections – source: Policy Working Group, Government Engagement Working Group, Hamilton Best Start Network, School Boards, School Aged Solutions, Skills Development Flagship, Jobs Prosperity Coalition and Affordable Housing Flagship
- Development and presentation of 7 policy briefs – Policy Working Group
- Consultations and convening of community partners around policy issues
- Consultations and/or meetings with elected officials and senior civil servants where appropriate– Municipal, provincial and federal
- Convening of policy specific working groups – Affordable Transit Pilot Project, Colour of Poverty, Neighbourhood Transformation, Social Inclusion
- Development of overarching Policy Matrix and White Paper
- Leadership involvement at the local, provincial and national levels through the National Council of Welfare, Caledon Institute of Social Policy, Ontario Poverty Strategy Results Team, Fairness for Hamilton Committee

### Issues Focus: The Municipal Poverty Agenda:

- National Child Benefit Claw back Return
- Affordable Transit Pass Pilot Project
- Child Care wait list strategy
- Investment in early learning and parenting programs
- Investment in recreation infrastructure and access to recreation
- Living wage procurement policy for the City of Hamilton
- Local immigration partnership planning
- Affordable housing investments
- Support for rental subsidies and hostel to homes project
- Community Action Plan on Homelessness
- Social inclusion focus for the 2014 Pan Am Games Bid

### Issues Focus: The Provincial Poverty Agenda:

- Ontario Poverty Strategy
- Access to Recreation for Low Income Families
- Ontario child benefit timelines
- Continued support and increased investments in early years
- Increased supports for low income neighbourhoods
- Increased and targeted skills training supports for at-risk youth
- Accreditation for newcomers and decreasing of employment barriers
- Investment in affordable housing stock and repairs
- Assistance to low income families to maintain current housing status
- Support for legislation for independent Social Assistance Rates Board

### Issues Focus: The Federal Poverty Agenda:

- National Poverty Strategy
- Investments in early learning and child care
- Investments in recreation and community infrastructure

- Increased youth employment supports
- Access and reform of Employment Insurance Fund
- Development of a National Housing Strategy
- Homelessness Partnership Initiative Funding

#### **Changes in Collaborative processes:**

- **Ontario 2007 Election** – (October 2007) development of position paper calling for Ontario Poverty Strategy, local candidates briefing sessions around poverty, briefing of provincial leadership, participation in poverty rally , support for poverty advocacy organization hosting of candidates debate
- **Caledon – Community-Government Policy Collaborative** - (on-going) HRPR selected as Vibrant Community representative on national policy collaborative initiative
- **City of Hamilton** – (on-going) adoption of ‘making Hamilton the best place to raise a child’ as part of city’s strategic vision statement, identifies impact of poverty on children and youth through Public Health reports and reports on the increasing costs of a nutritious food basket, impact of increased transit fares on low income population, child care fee waitlist with priority focusing on low income families, downtown safety and security report, living wage policy for the city, transportation (Metrolinx), reinstatement of back to school and winter clothing allowances for low income families, development of an environmental roundtable modeled on the HRPR approach, identifying a funding approach for grandparents raising their grand children
- **Parks and Recreation Ontario – Access to recreation for low income families** – policy consultation conference (October 2007), development of policy framework and action plan
- **Government of Ontario – Roots of Youth Violence** consultation (December 2007) hosted in Hamilton with community organizations
- **Provincial policy networks** – (April 2008 – ongoing) HRPR participating in a number of provincial policy networks focused on the Ontario Poverty Strategy
- **Municipal policy networks** (April 2008 – on-going) HRPR members present to municipal policy networks including Urban Commissioners, Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Ontario Municipal Social Services Association
- **Chamber of Commerce – Hamilton Economic Summit** (May 2008) – 150 business, government and community leaders discuss the challenges to prosperity facing Hamilton and poverty is identified as a significant issue
- **Government of Ontario** – Ministry of Health Promotion (June 2008) – informing social inclusion process for the Pan Am Games and afterschool program processes
- **Progressive Workplaces** – (July 2008) in partnership with Hamilton Training Advisory Board and the Jobs Prosperity Collaborative – initiating progressive workplaces handbook which identifies policy changes and work place supports for low income wage earners
- **McMaster University** – (September 2007 and on-going) supporting the development of a strategic poverty framework for McMaster including supporting applications for SSHRC funding around quality of life indicators for neighbourhoods and precarious employment research
- **Government of Canada** – (September – October 2008) – 2008 federal election and development of policy brief calling for National Poverty Reduction Strategy and briefing meetings with federal candidates locally
- **Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities** - (September 2008) meeting regarding investments in employment and skills training for at-risk youth

### **Influencing Inclusive Decision Making Processes:**

- **Local Immigration Partnership Council** – (on-going) HRPR involvement in consultation process, LIP development mirrors HRPR collaborative structure, HRPR members engaged in development
- **The Hamilton Spectator – Hamilton Next** (October 2007 –publication focusing on prosperity for Hamilton) includes local HRPR leaders and identifies poverty and prosperity as linked issues
- **Youth Engagement and Action in Hamilton/HRPR** – (October 2007) publish youth engagement 101 tool designed to increase youth engagement and involvement in decision making and host series of community meetings about the tool
- **Government of Ontario – 2008 Pre-budget consultations** – (January 2008) policy brief and presentation by HRPR
- **Government of Canada – 2008 pre-budget consultations** – (January 2008) development and submission of policy brief
- **Colour of Poverty** – (March 2007) – HRPR and Hamilton's Centre for Civic Inclusion host a colour of poverty workshop identifying that poverty impacts diverse and racialized community members more significantly – leads to cooperative working relationship between two organizations around these issues
- **Census Canada – 2006 Low Income Statistics Release** – (May 2008) development of joint statement in community about LICO numbers and impact on individuals in Hamilton
- **Hamilton Health Providers against Poverty** – (September 2008) developing linkages for coordinated policy approaches regarding the health impacts of poverty on low income individuals and their families

### **Influencing Systems Design and Operation:**

- **Government of Canada** – (September 2007) HRPR part of panel presentation hosted by Vibrant Communities with members of the Federal Family
- **Government Engagement Working Group** – (November 2007) HRPR establishes a working group composed of senior government staff from all three levels of government to identify policy trends, impacts for Hamilton and to begin a coordinated approach for Hamilton
- **Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction – Government of Ontario** – (November 2007) – announcement of CCPR lead by Minister Deb Matthews, Minister of Children and Youth Services with a focus to develop a poverty reductions strategy for Ontario – HRPR hosts meeting with Minister Matthews (Nov 2007), Hamilton consultation (May 2008), Hamilton Community Conversation on Poverty Reduction (July 2008) and submission of report to Cabinet Committee (July 2008)
- **Ontario Social Assistance Rates Board – Economic Working Group** – (January 2008) HRPR convenes a working group to study the economic impacts of increasing social assistance rates in Ontario
- **National Council of Welfare** – February 2008 – HRPR chair is appointed as Ontario member for the NCW
- **City of Hamilton/ Ministry of Community and Social Services** – (June 2008) series of community town halls on the Ontario Child Benefit and impacts on low income families
- **Linkages with other Municipalities** – (ongoing) HRPR has met with or provided resources to colleague municipalities including York, Durham, Brantford, Halton, Peterborough, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, with a focus on developing poverty collaboratives

### **Influencing Funding Processes:**

- City of Hamilton - Affordable Transit Pass Pilot Project: \$500,000 committed by the City of Hamilton for ½ price bus passes for low income wage earners (Nov 2007) – Target approximately 1,100 eligible employees
- City of Hamilton - \$1.5 million for economic development strategy focusing on enhanced employment opportunities
- HRSDC – Homelessness Partnership Initiative – (February 2008) – funding announcement \$9 million for Hamilton
- Government of Ontario (March 2008) announces increased investment in poverty reduction priorities including enhanced dental care (\$135 million over 3 years), increased funding for student nutrition programs (\$32 million over 3 years) and increased funding for affordable housing \$100 million to 47 municipalities
- City of Hamilton (March 2008) - \$1 million for rent subsidies for low income tenants, \$3 million to supplement projects within the Homelessness Partnership Initiative
- Ministry of Education (March 2008) - \$765,000 to Hamilton school boards to coordinate summer camp programs in low income neighbourhood schools in Hamilton
- City of Hamilton – (June 2008) \$2 million for new community centre in Beasley Neighbourhood, \$ 1 million to clean up contamination in neighbouring park, \$1 millions to create subsidized housing in the city core
- Government of Ontario – (June 2008) investing in Hamilton economy - \$386,000 to boost local efforts from the Communities in Transition Fund
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services (July 2008) - \$900,000 in additional funding for low income families accessing child care in Hamilton
- Government of Ontario – Employment Innovations fund (September 2008) - \$192,487 to City of Hamilton to provide employment supports to hire OW/ODSP recipients within the city hiring process

### **HRPR focus on Broad Community Engagement**

- 448 individuals and partner organizations engaged with Roundtable, working groups, collaborative and issues focused tables
- Outreach to 15,056 individuals in 2008 through presentations, workshops, and meetings
- HRPR Report to Community distributed to 150,000 households in Hamilton, 7 policy briefs, 53 community solution posters, 4 Hamilton stories developed by the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 150 CDs of HRPR resources distributed to community partners
- HRPR hosted 15 Community Learning events with 3,140 participants in 2008-09
- 178 Media articles, blogs, television and radio interviews about poverty and poverty reduction

## Leveraging Change to Increase the Assets of Low Income Children and their Families

Physical Assets		
Emergency Supports		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horizon Utilities provided more than \$640,000 in financial assistance to over <b>2500 households</b> to help pay energy bills</li> <li>Mission Services served 140,000 meals, provided 19,598 nights of shelter, and provided 9,428 hours of counseling, and had 439 people in Addictions Treatment</li> </ul>
Food		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children have access to breakfast programs in 50% of Equal Opportunities schools, and a Nutrition program is established in all Equal Opportunities schools in the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board</li> <li>Living Rock <b>served 2606 families</b> in Youth-Focused foodbank and served 7902 youth at breakfast</li> <li>Mission Services provided emergency food to <b>7880 households</b> (10867 children, 10990 adults)</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>691 tenant households</b> receive \$100 / month housing allowance from provinces ROOF program (Asset Building/Wealth Creation)</li> <li><b>200 housing allowances</b> (\$200 / month) for next 5 years – City of Hamilton (Asset Building/Wealth Creation)</li> <li>City of Hamilton commits \$1 million to create subsidized housing in the core with <b>551 units</b> to be built (Asset Building/Wealth Creation)</li> <li><b>9 families</b> moved from rental to home ownership (Asset Building/Wealth Creation)</li> <li>Down payment assistance for <b>245 families</b> – joint project Province/Hamilton and 30 have received funding (Asset Building and Wealth Creation)</li> <li><b>80 individuals</b> moved from emergency shelter to rental housing (Asset Building/Wealth Creation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living Rock found <b>101 youth</b> housing</li> </ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Transit Pass Pilot Project – <b>1200 low income wage earners</b> (Employment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environment Hamilton – Family Bus Pass program – ‘Passport to Hamilton’ targeted at low-income families</li> <li>Low Income residents in the Keith Neighbourhood have access to a new bus route through the neighbourhood – 6,000 residents</li> </ul>
Child and Dependent Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government of Ontario - \$691,125 support to <b>850 children</b> accessing quality child care in Hamilton (Early Learning and Parenting)</li> <li><b>12 mentors</b> identified to work with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Supplies – <b>2,253 back packs</b> filled with school supplies and distributed through school boards to local children (value \$225,000) (September 2008)</li> <li>National Child Benefit Clawback – return</li> </ul>

	<p>emerging After School Programs (Skills through Education, Activity and Recreation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIAF Funding \$53,000 to identify low cost and free recreational activities in the community and partner with school boards – 36 priority schools identified , 9500 children with at least one care giver = <b>14,200 total participants</b> (Skills through Education, Activity and Recreation)</li> <li>• United Way invests \$1.5 million in 27 programs benefiting children, youth and families and \$1.3 million in 33 programs to strengthen neighbourhoods (Quality early learning and parenting/Skills through Education, Activity and Recreation)</li> <li>• Hamilton Best Start Network and partners open an Ontario Early Years Centre in Limeridge Mall (Quality Early Learning and Parenting)</li> <li>• City of Hamilton approved new investments \$1 million to build a new community centre in the Beasley Neighbourhood (Skills through Education, Activity and Recreation)</li> <li>• 7 Early Years hubs developed in Hamilton – 2 hubs are community based, 4 are school based and one is an Aboriginal hub (Early Learning and Parenting)</li> <li>• Wesley Urban Ministries and partners open three Early Years sites with programs geared to young parents up to 24 years of age (Early Learning and Parenting)</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$ 2 million to 6500 low income families</b> in 2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YMCA – access to recreation grant from Ministry of Health Promotion to assist <b>762 low income kids</b> access recreation</li> <li>• Summer Camp program in priority schools – <b>67 youth hired, 20 camps offered, 6,000 children</b> participating (HWDSB/HWCDSB)</li> <li>• Ontario Child Benefits working group established by the Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits – 75 low income citizens</li> <li>• 429 Pajamas raised and donated to local shelters and \$500 in donations raised</li> <li>• Best Start Network provides <b>1100 new childcare spaces</b></li> <li>• Today's Family Early Learning &amp; Childcare centres had 550 children aged 6-12 attend</li> <li>• Through donations of \$757,691 from 1,379 donors, <b>4,797 children</b> received financial assistance through the YMCA</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Assets</b></p>		
<p>Civic Participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Series of community workshops held on the “Framework for Understanding Poverty” focused on education and students living in poverty – more than <b>1200 participants</b> in attendance (Skills through Education, Activity and Recreation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four Caledon Institute Community Snapshots profiling community solution partners in Hamilton (September 2008)</li> <li>• 200 Citizens participate in Community Conversation on Poverty Reduction including approximately half low income leaders</li> <li>• Student Research – Mapping Poverty Connections in Hamilton</li> <li>• Media Summer Camp – 25 community participants resulting in 5 stories being published in Hamilton Spectator</li> <li>• Hamilton Community Foundation – \$1.1 million investment in neighbourhoods and neighbourhood hubs through 14 grants addressing six low income neighbourhoods – McQuesten, Jamesville, Keith, South Sherman, Riverdale and Weaver community</li> <li>• Youth Engagement and Action in</li> </ul>

		<p>Hamilton/HRPR – Youth Engagement 101 tool kit and meeting with 45 front line youth resource workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colour of Poverty workshop held with 75 community members in attendance</li> <li>• 22 members of Crown Point Neighbourhood formed a committee to address issues in their community</li> <li>• Today's Family Early Learning &amp; Child Care centres had 40 youth volunteers</li> <li>• 572 children participated in YMCA Outreach Programs</li> </ul>
Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed linkages with Jobs Prosperity Collaborative – 60 business and community leaders focused on developing a jobs strategy for Hamilton (employment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant's Rights Town Hall – 70 community participants (September 2008)</li> <li>• The Hamilton Spectator – No Excuse Poverty Blog – 17 community members as bloggers (September 2008)</li> </ul>
<b>Human Assets</b>		
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projected – 450 low income mothers and 450 children – family support, employment training and life skills - Nurse Family Partnership (launched June 2008-2 year project)</li> </ul>
Life Skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big Brothers/Big Sisters have 1094 children in their program, with 964 active volunteers, and launched new program "Go Girls: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds" to address self-esteem and health issues</li> <li>• 6000 new moms received a "Read to Your Baby" care package from the Hamilton Public Library</li> <li>• Junior League of Hamilton/Burlington had 1000 children attend their programs</li> <li>• St. Joseph's Immigrant Women's Centre did 1039 home visits to families with small children; had 43 children at their homework club, and had 13 girls at their Girls Power Zone Club</li> </ul>
Financial Literacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 income tax clinics for low income residents held across Hamilton (November 2008)</li> <li>• Community Economic Development forum – 150 community participants</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Way, From Here to the Bay invests \$198,000 in first year in programs targeting early learning and parenting and students (Early Learning and Parenting, Skills through Education Activity and Recreation)</li> <li>• Kiwanis Club of Hamilton invests \$60,000 in funding to student success programs at Sanford Avenue and Hess Street Schools (Skills through Education, Activity and Recreation)</li> <li>• \$1,607,412 in United Way funding supports 27 community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 new corporate/community school partnerships developed</li> <li>• Increased community partnerships support Benetto School – 227 students</li> <li>• 100 low income residents participate in Hamilton Public Libariry family literacy nights</li> <li>• The Student Success – Tackling Poverty project secured employment for 40 low income students in 25 firms and more than \$85,000 in student wages</li> <li>• 400 students received Math &amp; Reading tutoring, kindergarten literacy scores are up, and all grade 3 students have access to the Swim to Survive program in the</li> </ul>

	<p>organizations and collaboratives to deliver programs focused on low income children and youth including counseling, child and youth character development, summer camps, community hubs, afterschool programs, physical activity programs and community centre based program with a focus on strengthening neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 library branches offer free after school homework help</li> <li>• Hamilton Wentworth District School Board's Turning Point Programs helped 106 students to graduate.</li> <li>• Family Literacy and Parenting Centres opened in 4 schools</li> <li>• RBC Foundation donated \$40,000 to Wesley Urban Ministries After School Program</li> </ul>
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hamilton Hires Project – targeting OW/ODSP recipients for employment with the City of Hamilton (new program) – (Employment)</li> <li>• Progressive Employer Handbook – Target 6,000 small to medium sized employers in Hamilton (Employment)</li> <li>• Government of Ontario - \$386,000 to boost <b>economic development planning</b> in Hamilton (employment)</li> <li>• <b>32 local employers</b> commit to hiring new immigrants (employment)</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 160 employers actively fulfilled staffing needs through SISO specialized recruitment and placement for newcomers</li> <li>• Workforce development toolkit launched to encourage employers to diversity their workforces</li> <li>• <b>700 people accessed employment</b> services at St. Joseph's Immigrant Women's Centre; 200 people completed computer training; 200+ English students daily.</li> <li>• Today's Family Early Learning &amp; Childcare centres created 20 summer jobs and had 30 co-op students</li> <li>• <b>22,000 people</b> accessed the YMCA Employment programs</li> <li>• 200 youth participated in the YMCA Jobs for Youth Summer program</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Assets</b>		
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>190 youth</b> employed in Hamilton neighbourhoods through the Youth Opportunities Project – Ministry of Children and Youth Services/YMCA – (Employment)</li> </ul>	
Assets		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal LePage partners with Hamilton Community Foundation to raise awareness about poverty and raise funds to help reduce and prevent poverty in Hamilton (September 2008)</li> </ul>
Financial Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Poverty rate for Hamilton declines from 20% to 18.1% resulting in 6,000 fewer individuals living below the low income cut-off</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Actual # of Individuals or Households Benefiting</b>	<p><b>Added This Period:</b></p> <p><b>46,749 participants this period</b></p> <p><i>* Source: Vibrant Communities – Trail builder Report (2008)</i></p>	