

# Community Update

From the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction



April 23, 2007

## Report to the Community Event a Success

The community-wide vision to make Hamilton the best place to raise a child was brought to life at the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's (HRPR) Report to the Community event on March 7 at the Sheraton Hamilton Hotel. The event showcased community progress underway and unveiled the Starting Point Strategies report – a community plan aimed at preventing and reducing poverty in Hamilton.

The Roundtable is partnering with Hamilton's Best Start Network, School Age Solutions Network, Skills Development Flagship, Hamilton Immigrant Workforce Integration Network and the Affordable Housing Flagship to develop community resources and supports throughout children's lives. These five networks represent over 200 businesses, organizations and government departments collaborating with a focus on poverty reduction.

Some 350 people were in attendance including all three levels of government, two school boards, social service agencies, local businesses and voluntary organizations.

This issue of Community Update shares the community impact and evaluation comments received from participants at the event.

## What Participants Said

Approximately 63 evaluation forms were completed by session participants. Participants commented on what they liked about the event, what was missed in the Starting Point Strategies report, and on what the community and individuals can do to make Hamilton the best place to raise a child.

Event highlights:

- Kids against Poverty presentation
- The live panel discussion featuring early results
- Seeing participants who are willing to collaborate for success
- The opportunity to network
- The Poverty Rap Song written by Justin Cho, a local student

What was potentially missed in the Starting Point Strategies report:

- Enhanced racial analysis and social inclusion of minorities
- Specific strategies to address the root causes of poverty
- Literacy (as it impacts poverty)
- Street-involved and homeless youth issues

What the community can do:

- Create a community where a living wage can support a family
- Engage diverse communities and aboriginal people in a meaningful way
- Invest in recreational programming for children and youth
- Strengthen families
- Tackle the root causes of poverty
- Educate the community about poverty

What individuals can do:

- Continue to volunteer and make connections through the work place and voluntary organizations
- Build partnerships across the community with a focus of Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child

### **Community Impact**

- Close to 700 community contacts were made to coordinate the event
- \$520 was raised at the event for the “City Kidz by Kids against Poverty” initiative
- 350 copies of the Starting Point Strategies report were distributed to community members
- Media coverage was received from print, television and radio outlets
- Since the session, affiliation with the Roundtable has been sought by 32 new community members (including the Junior League of Hamilton-Burlington, Horizon Utilities, Sheraton Hamilton Hotel, Community Child Abuse Council, Adult Basic Education and the Hamilton Literacy Council)

### **About Community Solutions Underway**

In addition to the five starting point strategies, there are dozens of other community solutions underway in Hamilton right now. Community solutions are projects and initiatives that have been implemented across the city by various community partners who are each working to decrease Hamilton’s unacceptable poverty rate of 20 per cent.

Community posters have been created to illustrate the early successes of each community solution, the poverty reduction strategy that’s in place and the community partners involved.

To view the complete list of community solutions and posters, visit the Hamilton poverty web site at [www.hamiltonpoverty.ca](http://www.hamiltonpoverty.ca).

### **News and Resources**

Looking for more information about the *Tackling Poverty in Hamilton* initiative? Check out our web site: [www.hamiltonpoverty.ca](http://www.hamiltonpoverty.ca). You’ll find current news as well as background information and resources.

*We welcome your questions and comments. Please contact Liz Weaver, Director, at 905-523-5600, or [lizweaver@hcf.on.ca](mailto:lizweaver@hcf.on.ca).*