

Youth in Niagara

HOW ARE WE DOING



?



This is what we know...

While 80-85% of new jobs require education beyond high school:

- Student drop-out rate has **increased from 22 to 32%** (former Minister of Education, Gerard Kennedy)
- Losing **10,000 15 year olds per year**
- **80% of people in jail have not achieved high school**

This is what we know...

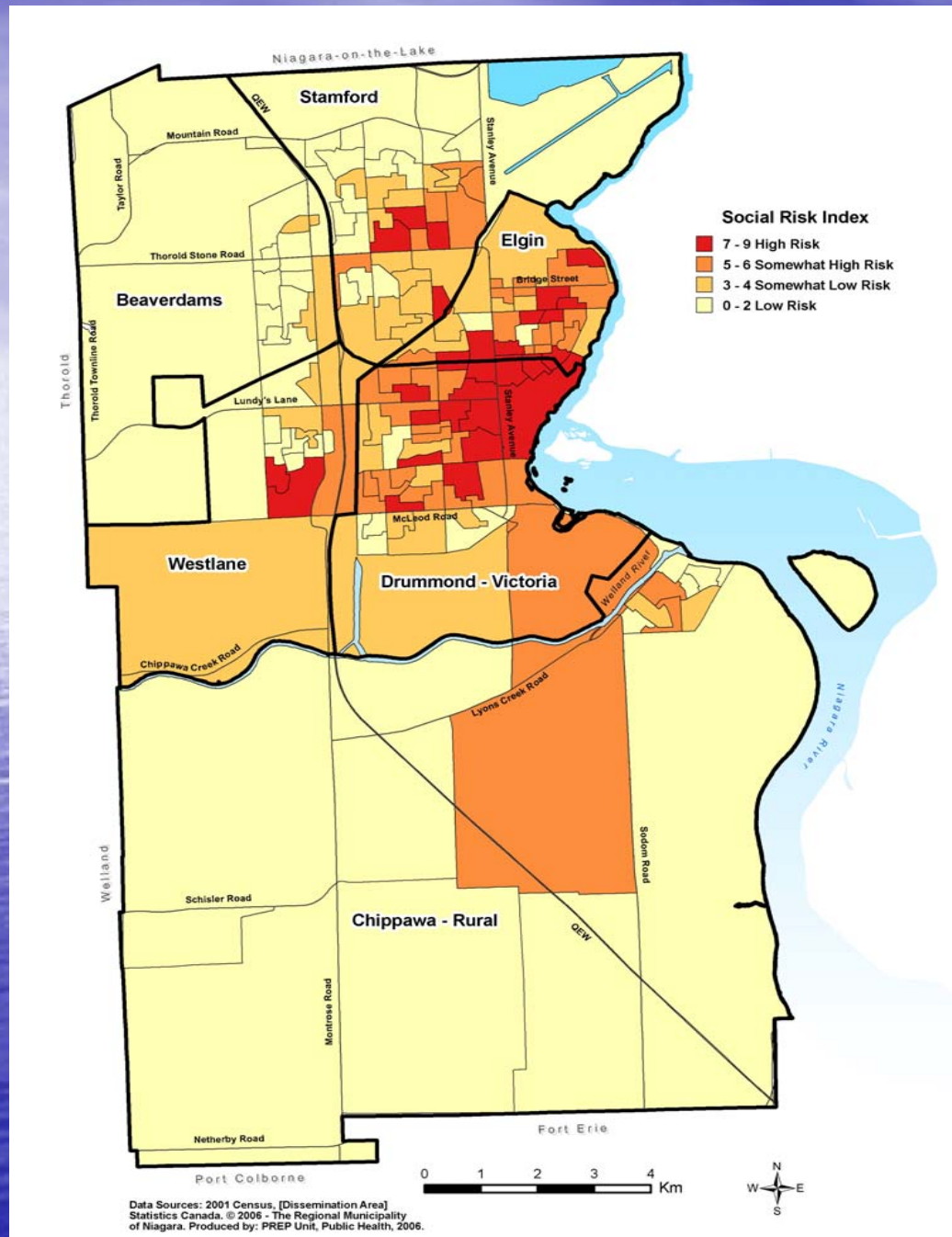
Community factors impact learning and development over the long-term. From UEY Niagara Falls 2003 results:

- Approx. **25.7%** of children in N.F. were living in **low income families headed by a single parent**
- **Elgin** neighbourhood had the **most vulnerable** children (downtown area)
- **Drummond/Victoria** area had the **second most vulnerable** children
- Additional UEY research (2005, 2006) yielding further insights...

Niagara Falls Social Risk Index 2005 (UEY)

Social Risk Variables

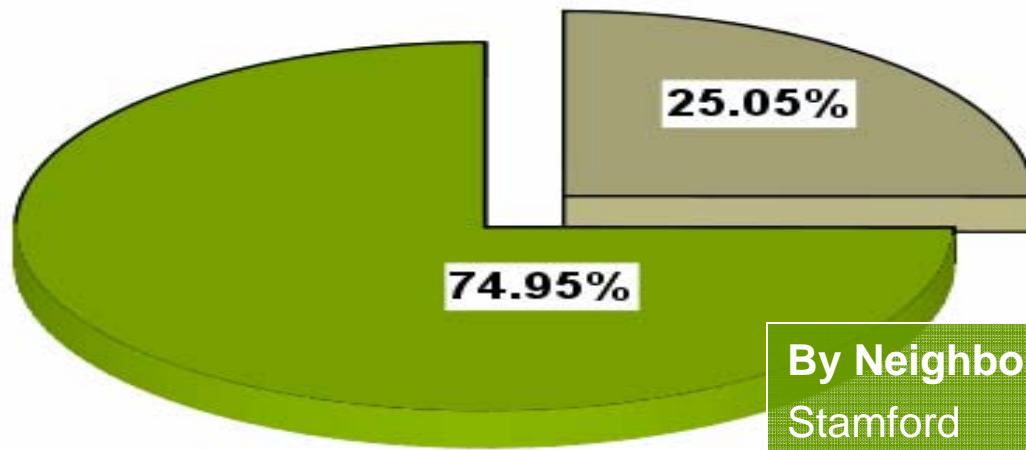
1. Employment Rate
2. Average Income
3. Education Level
4. Family Status
5. Mobility
6. Language
7. Home Ownership
8. Immigrant Status
9. Government Assistance



N.F. Children Who are Ready to Learn (UEY 2005)

By Neighbourhood of the 25.05% Not Ready

Elgin	24.06 %
Stamford	24.06 %
Drummond–Victoria	18.05 %
Westlane	18.05 %
Chippawa – Rural	6.02 %
Beaverdams	9.76%



By Neighbourhood of the 74.95 % Ready

Stamford	21.86 %
Beaverdams	23.12 %
Drummond–Victoria	18.84 %
Westlane	16.58 %
Chippawa – Rural	10.80 %
Elgin	8.80 %

The potential impact in N.F. ...

With an ongoing need for responsible, educated and employed citizenry:

- Drop-out rates may contribute to ongoing low employment, community violence and incarceration rates
- Increased immigration may result in cultural differences and language barriers
- Vulnerability and social risk may lead to cascading social and educational (learning) difficulties among youth
- Lack of community resources and recreational opportunities may contribute to poorer outcomes for overall community

This is what's being done...

- **City of N.F. Recreation Committee funding opportunities**
- **City of N.F. Arts & Culture Committee has Young Family Endowment Fund**
- **City of N.F. Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee (MYAC) providing opportunities for youth involvement; contributing to NF strategic plan, community events and improvement efforts and the development of youth leadership**
- **Ministry of Ed. providing opportunities for youth through student success, literacy, apprenticeship and 'stay in school' programs**

This is what's being done...

- **Niagara Children's Charter**, clearly outlining rights of youth 0-18, endorsed by all municipalities and a wide range of community organizations
- **N.F. Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs)** provide programs for children 0-6 and their parents/caregivers at multiple locations and through mobile services
- **UEY research data** being used to plan for training, programs and services and to **strategically allocate resources** (DSBN, NCDSB, OEYCs, NF Public Library, Boys & Girls Club, Region and Municipalities)

This is what is recommended...

- Build on existing, effective initiatives
- Work together to give children and youth the best possible start in life
- Provide resources for a healthy community
- Support programs and services that contribute to healthy families
- Consider long-term impact of early learning and development and youth engagement
- Use UEY N.F. research data in planning and resource allocation decision-making
(additional 2005 and 2006 results soon to be released)

How can you help, specifically?

- Allocate funding for development of improved recreational spaces
- Support creation of Parks & Trails and Recreational facilities
- Provide funding for Libraries & Literacy
- Partner with school boards, etc.
- Promote Niagara Children's Charter
- Provide funding for non-profit groups directly related to children

The future of Niagara Falls rests in young hands...

Perhaps it takes an AWARE and RESOURCED village to raise a child...

Thank You for your time, attention and leadership!

~ Lori Albanese

