

A VILLAGE OF
100 WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE?

Things to celebrate
+ things to improve
SURVEY SAYS...

QUALITY OF LIFE IN
GREATER VICTORIA

VICTORIA'S **VITALSIGNS**[®]

GREATER VICTORIA'S 2016 ANNUAL CHECK-UP

+
PROFILES OF BELONGING
Community snapshots of four population groups

SPECIAL FEATURE:

What does it mean to belong?

Isabel and Eli at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, an organization that has been providing services to Aboriginal people for over 45 years



VICTORIA FOUNDATION

CONNECTING PEOPLE WHO CARE WITH CAUSES THAT MATTER[®]



The Victoria Foundation's Sandra Richardson, Chief Executive Officer and Patrick Kelly, Chair, Board of Directors

ABOUT THE VICTORIA FOUNDATION

Our vision: A vibrant, caring community for all

Established in 1936, the Victoria Foundation is Canada's second oldest community foundation and the sixth largest of nearly 200 nation-wide. We manage charitable gifts from donors whose generosity allows us to create permanent, income-earning funds. The proceeds from these funds are then distributed as grants for charitable or educational purposes. To date, the Victoria Foundation has invested more than \$158 million in people, projects, and non-profit organizations that strengthen communities in BC and throughout Canada.

WHAT IS VITAL SIGNS?

Measuring wellbeing, creating change

Victoria's Vital Signs is an annual community check-up that measures the vitality of our region, identifies concerns, and supports action on issues that are critical to our quality of life. The Victoria Foundation produces the report to connect philanthropy to community needs and opportunities. This is the 11th consecutive year the report has been published. As part of our commitment to continual advancement, we recently sought community feedback to *Vital Signs* that helped us to make improvements this year and beyond.

Special thanks to the Toronto Foundation for developing and sharing the *Vital Signs* concept, and to Community Foundations of Canada for supporting a coordinated national Vital Signs initiative. For more information, visit vitalsignscanada.ca.



◀ Lekwungen
"Place to smoke herring"
by Bradley Dick

Hay'sxw'qa (Thank You)

With an estimated 14,200 people who identify as Aboriginal, Greater Victoria is home to a rich diversity of Indigenous peoples and cultures.

We would like to acknowledge that the Victoria Foundation's office is located on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen people, as represented by the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Our thanks to all of the individuals and organizations that helped to create this report, including the board and staff of the Victoria Foundation for their guidance and continuing support, and to our sponsors and donors whose generosity makes production and promotion of this report possible. We are grateful to all those who provided data and to the many individuals who participated in our survey.

SIGNATURE SPONSOR



KEY ISSUES SPONSORS



TECHNOLOGY SPONSOR

SURVEY SPONSOR

KEYNOTE SPONSOR



OAKCREST PARK ESTATES LTD.

The Victoria Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life in our community today and for generations to come. We inspire giving, care for the assets entrusted to us – and we invest in people, ideas and activities that strengthen our community.

#200 - 703 Broughton Street,
Victoria, BC V8W 1E2
Ph: 250.381.5532 Fax: 250.480.1129
victoriafoundation.ca
Charitable BN 13065 0898 RR0001



THE VITAL SIGNS TEAM

- The Victoria Foundation:
Rob Janus, Project Manager
Jayna Brulotte
Carol Hall
Louise MacDonald
Melanie Porter
Sandra Richardson
Kyle Wells
Grace Wong Sneddon

Page One Publishing Inc.,
Publisher

Photography by Simon DesRochers
(unless otherwise specified)

Balfour Consulting Group,
Research Consultant

NRG Research Group,
Survey Consultant

Times Colonist and
98.5 The Ocean,
Media Partners

Community Foundations
of Canada

International Institute for
Sustainable Development

VITAL SIGNS is designed
and published by



580 Ardersier Road, Victoria
British Columbia, V8Z 1C7
pageonepublishing.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 FEATURE: What Does it Mean to Belong?
Belonging is about feeling like an accepted and contributing part of a community. We look at how strong social relations, a sense of engagement and a desire to contribute define what it means to belong.
By Alex Van Tol

8 METHODOLOGY

9 HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

10 QUALITY OF LIFE IN GREATER VICTORIA

11 A VILLAGE OF 100

VITAL SIGNS KEY ISSUES

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 12 ARTS & CULTURE | 24 HOUSING |
| 14 BELONGING & ENGAGEMENT | 26 LEARNING |
| 16 ECONOMY | 28 SAFETY |
| 18 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY | 30 SPORTS & RECREATION |
| 20 GETTING STARTED | 32 STANDARD OF LIVING |
| 22 HEALTH & WELLNESS | 34 TRANSPORTATION |

36 4 Profiles of Belonging
A look at what belonging means for Greater Victoria’s Indigenous people, newcomers, youth and seniors and how local efforts are working to strengthen belonging for these population groups.
By Alex Van Tol

THIS REPORT ONLY SCRATCHES THE SURFACE

Want to learn more? More information is available, including detailed info on indicators, sources, and survey results at victoriafoundation.ca.



/VicFoundation



/TheVictoriaFoundation



/VicFoundation



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BELONG?

Sharing a smile with an elderly neighbour. Performing a random act of kindness because the man in line at the coffee shop is 50 cents short. Taking the family to community cultural celebrations. High-fiving the kids who showed up to collect garbage from the Gorge. Striking up a conversation with a newcomer to Canada.

Making eye contact. Sharing a meal with new friends. Belonging.

Definitions of belonging vary, but everyone comes back to the same place: it's about feeling like an accepted, contributing part of a well-functioning whole. In this issue of *Victoria's Vital Signs*, the "whole" we are talking about is the community. Strong relationships are a common denominator for belonging, as is a sense of engagement and a desire to contribute to the community in a meaningful way. "To use a sports term," says Steven Baileys,

community development coordinator for the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria, "it's about having skin in the game. You have an investment in the community ... and that contributes to the feeling that you belong."

The 2014 Victoria Capital Region Community Wellbeing Survey shows 3.1% of our city's residents feel a very weak sense of belonging. At the other end of the spectrum, 13.5% feel very strongly that they belong. People aged 65 and older

have the strongest sense of belonging while those under 35 feel they belong the least. About a quarter of respondents feel a moderate sense of belonging, with another 65.9% falling somewhere between moderate and very strong.

When people have the services, supports and conditions in place to enable them to function optimally within their community, belonging can take root and grow. Social connection correlates with better mental and physical health, including lower blood pressure and better immune response, which in turn leads to better employment, stronger interpersonal relationships and longer lifespans.

Communities benefit when people feel they belong. "As people strengthen their connections," says Lori McLeod, executive director of the Greater Victoria Eldercare Foundation, "our whole region benefits.

"When people have a strong sense of



Farmers markets, like Victoria's popular Moss Street Market, are symbols of inclusiveness and community. Above: Victoria resident Eddie Mack of the Yuuhtlulthaht First Nation (Ucluelet)

belonging, they are more proactive, more informed, more self-reliant and better prepared to seek and receive the help they need when they need it."

No matter your age, a strong sense of connection and belonging nourishes both your own spirit and that of your community. When people feel that connection to their community, they are more apt to get involved in actions that further grow that sense. In the 2014 Wellbeing Survey, those who were deeply engaged in civic participation felt a much higher degree of belonging (mean: 5.29 on a 7-point scale) than those who were not engaged (mean: 4.41 on a 7-point scale). Volunteering, taking care of the community, creating gathering places and taking part in the civic process are all ways people can boost their own sense of belonging while adding to the resilience of the community around them.

The 2014 survey shows 40% of Greater Victoria residents belonging to a sport or recreational organization. Another 29% belong to a cultural, educational or hobby organization, like a book club or a theatre group. 23% of people took part in a school group or a neighbourhood/community/civic organization, and another 21% participated in public interest groups such as food security, homelessness and environment-focused groups.

WHERE DOES LOCAL GOVERNMENT FIT IN?

Countless organizations and agencies in the Capital Regional District work to improve community connectedness and foster belonging – and many of these have sprung up to fill the gaps that government either can't or hasn't yet managed to address. Still, much community building falls to local government because of its role in shaping the day-to-day life of residents. In the absence of adequate funding or meaningful conversations with higher levels of government, however, municipalities are limited in how they can enhance belonging.

That doesn't stop Greater Victoria. Innovation and a willingness to listen are signatures of our region's approach. As directed by the Community Charter, one of local governments' purposes is to foster social wellbeing. The City of Victoria's Official Community Plan (OCP) provides direction for the community's development over the next 30 years, and highlights several goals around belonging and social connectedness.

Yes, there is work to be done – but the work is underway. "I think that sense of belonging is being strengthened through the work Greater Victoria is doing through city hall," says Grace Wong Sneddon, adviser to the provost on equity and diversity at the University of Victoria. "For example, the rainbow crosswalks, the focus on homelessness,

“ When people have a strong sense of belonging, they are more proactive, more informed, more self-reliant and better prepared to seek and receive the help they need when they need it.

– Lori McLeod, Greater Victoria Eldercare Foundation



Teen mother Sophie and her infant, Willow, at Artemis Place, an independent alternative school for teenage girls

and some of the initiatives supporting youth." She points to the Victoria Foundation's community granting as a way of providing voice to a lot of marginalized populations that have previously not had a voice.

Wong Sneddon loves seeing festivals and gatherings once again becoming part of the community fabric. "Centennial Square is being used much more actively," she says. "There are more kids and families in the square now than there were a few years ago. What people want is an opportunity to engage and connect."

Engagement and connection are even more meaningful within one's close-by community. To this end, Victoria has partnered with the BC Healthy Communities Society (BCHCS) on work supporting

the creation of resilient neighbourhoods. It's all about strengthening the community's ability to adapt to challenges, says Sue McKinnon, program manager of BCHCS — and there's a role for everyone. "Local government's role is long-term planning for strategies around fostering resilience," she says, "including thinking about their role in zoning, land-use planning and bylaws — all those pieces that create the spaces for people to live, work and play."

One respondent to the 2014 survey wrote, "In my fantasy neighbourhood there would be a small common building on an empty lot that served a very intimate area (perhaps 16 square blocks) with car/heavy equipment sharing, an allotment garden, perhaps a free library, a cooking area, a playground... this is the 'It takes a Village' concept." Shaping our region to include "bumping" spaces where people can run into each other, interact and connect — places like atriums, green spaces, parks and plazas — is part of creating that supportive, inclusive place where people feel they belong.



The Songhees Seafood & Steam food truck offers a modern take on traditional Songhees cuisine.

A SENSE OF WELCOME AND INVOLVEMENT

As in any healthy, functioning system, community members have a role, too. "Now we're seeing those pop-up libraries where folks have created a space for connectedness by having people come and pick out or trade books," says McKinnon. "From community gardens to neighbourhood cleanups to closing the street down and having a street fair, there are all kinds of ways people can engage themselves."

Awareness of other people's situations has broadened in recent years in the Capital Region, too. "There is a heightened sense that we are all connected," Baileys says, citing the example of issues around homelessness and tent city. While the encampment generated discussion and polarization on both sides, it provided an opportunity for people to come together and create solutions, both at the government and community levels — and they did. "I wouldn't have seen this five years ago," says Baileys. "People can access information much more quickly now, through the Internet and social media. It invites different stakeholders and community members to weigh in on the dialogue."

““ Belonging starts with the community, and ends with the individual. It also starts with the individual and ends with the community. It's important to take a systems thinking approach and recognize that healthy, resilient communities function as a whole system.

TOWARD ACCEPTANCE AND INCLUSION

About those rainbow crosswalks. "They're a wonderfully visible sign of inclusion," says Robin Stevenson, an award-winning Victoria author whose historic account of the struggle for LGBTQ belonging was published last year in *Pride: Celebrating Diversity & Community*. When Stevenson, a former social worker, attended the lowering of the flag to half-mast in the wake of the Orlando shootings earlier this year, she was moved by the large and diverse crowd — and by the eloquent words of Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps.

"It was a very powerful moment," reflects Stevenson, "one that was very much about belonging and connectedness as our community collectively mourned the loss and resolved to continue loving

each other and fighting for change."

That change has been a long time coming — and while the 2014 survey shows 93.8% of Victorians never feel discriminated against based on their sexual orientation, there is still much road to travel before the LGBTQ population can claim a true sense of belonging. "For LGBTQ people, there is one difference," says Stevenson. "Most of us are not raised in the LGBTQ community; that is, LGBTQ identity is something most of us come to embrace as teens or adults. Many LGBTQ youth are still raised in contexts — schools, families, the media — that are not supportive of their identities and so the role of schools, community organizations and larger institutions in conveying messages of acceptance and inclusion is extremely significant."

Acceptance is a cornerstone of belonging,

For the past two years, one of the CRD's aims has been to include the nine local First Nations at the decision-making table, along with the 13 municipalities.

but it's still lacking in many circles. Although, 90% of the 2014 survey respondents say they never feel uncomfortable or out of place in their neighbourhood due to ethnicity, race, culture or skin colour, there's still 10% who do. Nearly 2.5% of people feel these pressures frequently.

Newcomers and Aboriginal people in particular still suffer significant barriers to acceptance. "In the Capital Region, there needs to be more of a sense of welcoming the

to the Aboriginal perspective. "It's about knowing what happened, and trying to build alliances and move forward and work together."

The Capital Regional District board has directed staff to develop a strategy for how the Capital Region can respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, says Sue Hallatt, manager of the Aboriginal Initiatives division of the CRD.

"That exercise will reveal a bounty of opportunity for local governments to build strong, enduring relationships with their First Nations neighbours."

Hallatt, whose job it is to foster relationships between regional and First Nations governments in the CRD, notes that one of the biggest barriers to inclusion for Aboriginal people is the

fact that they don't feel safe outside the boundaries of their reservation lands. "Municipal leaders are trying to break down that discomfort," says Hallatt, recounting the Oak Bay mayor's recent experience of meeting a Songhees man who admitted to never having been to Oak Bay despite that land having been the historic home of many of his tribe's villages.

For the past two years, one of the CRD's aims has been to include the nine local First Nations at the decision-making

table, along with the 13 municipalities and electoral areas. "It's about understanding each other's interests, getting to the common values, and understanding how we make decisions," says Marianne Alto, chair of the CRD Special Task Force on First Nations Engagement, noting that Victoria's approach is less bureaucratic than typical government frameworks. "We are relationship building," says Alto. "The CRD wants to be whole as a region, and we are looking to the Nations to get direction on that. There has to be a relationship first, before we can begin the work of reconciliation."

COUNTERACTING SOCIAL ISOLATION

Supportive relationships are a fundamental part of belonging. How can one feel socially connected without them? But that's just the case for many elderly people, as well as some youth and newcomers.

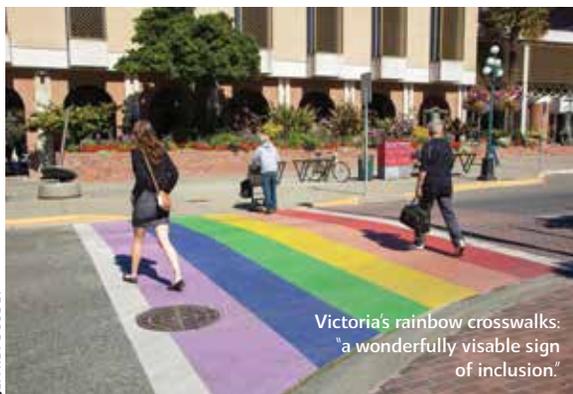
"People who do not feel they belong become disconnected from family, friends and community, which can lead to social isolation," says McLeod. "Providing opportunities for people to become more socially connected and develop a positive sense of belonging leads to stronger, more resilient communities." Building resilience enables more people to live in the community longer, empowering them to age in place. 49% of respondents to the 2014 survey note they provide unpaid help to others in the form of emotional support, babysitting or visiting the elderly, while 44% help other people around their homes, doing chores.

For newcomers, the trouble isn't so much the fading of established connections but the difficulty in establishing new connections in the first place. "In general, Victorians have shown a great amount of support to newcomers," says David Lau, executive director of the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society.

"But the common tripping points have to do with employment – for example, people showing an accent bias when they hire or worrying about a newcomer's credentials."

This hesitance to trust a newcomer's ability and willingness to contribute can make them feel unwelcome, and that their skills are not valued. "When it comes to the most vulnerable newcomers, like temporary foreign workers and undocumented people, a lot can be done to make Victoria a more welcoming city," says Lau. "What would be really great is for all large organizations and funded organizations to do an audit of their intake processes. Is what they're asking for excluding people? Who is it excluding, and why?"

At the end of this issue of *Victoria's Vital Signs* (see page 36), we take a closer look at the issues facing our community as a whole. From Aboriginal peoples and newcomers to seniors and youth, community begins with belonging.



Victoria's rainbow crosswalks: "a wonderfully visible sign of inclusion."

Aboriginal community," says Bruce Parisian, executive director of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre.

"I sit on a number of different committees in the region, and I don't always feel that sense of belonging," he says. "The wider community has to be able to welcome Aboriginal people so that sense of belonging is there for everybody. No matter what colour we are, we're all human beings."

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report offers a way for people to start learning about what happened to Indigenous peoples in Canada, says Parisian, and brings a much-needed voice

METHODOLOGY

CITIZEN OPINION SURVEY

This year, **1,328** citizens added their voices to *Victoria's Vital Signs* by assigning grades, choosing their top three things to improve and adding their comments on three things to celebrate in each of the 12 key issue areas. They were also asked questions about quality of life, happiness and connection to community. And they took the time to provide more than **10,000** comments on the issue areas.

The online survey, conducted by NRG Research Group, is based on a 'self-selected' respondent population. The survey was open to all interested individuals in Greater Victoria, and survey participants volunteered to take part in the survey. Therefore, the results should be considered representative of 'interested Victorians' and may not be representative of the Victoria population overall. Data is accurate + or - 2.8% 19 times out of 20. Most market research involves much smaller samples of around 400 and a margin of error + or - 5% 19 times out of 20. A comparison conducted by another community foundation found that responses from a random sample telephone survey and the online survey revealed no significant differences between the two methodologies.

An invitation to participate in the survey was advertised on a local radio station throughout the survey period, and promoted through many websites, social media channels, online newsletters, libraries, and in local media coverage.

GRADING

Citizen grading of the issue areas is based on a report card scale:

- A** = Excellent, stay the course
- B** = Good, but improvements could be made
- C** = Average performance, suggest additional effort be made to address these issues
- D** = Below average performance, additional work is required
- F** = Failure, immediate action is required

SECONDARY DATA

To complement citizen opinion data, the Victoria Foundation curates secondary data on a range of indicators. Community Foundations of Canada retains the International Institute for Sustainable Development to develop common indicators for the *Vital Signs* communities to choose from, and to obtain data on these indicators from Statistics Canada and other institutional sources. *Vital Signs* communities are encouraged to use both common and unique, locally-relevant indicators. We use citizen responses to our survey to gauge what our community generally thinks are priorities to report on. Local experts from a range of Greater Victoria organizations help us ensure the indicators we select are meaningful. Ultimately, the availability and accessibility of reliable data determines if we can report on a given indicator. Sponsors do not influence the indicator data in any way.

A note about geography: Greater Victoria is an umbrella term that applies to different geographical areas, depending on the indicator. It can refer to the Capital Region, Victoria Census Metropolitan Area or South Vancouver Island Health Service Delivery Area. For a full list of indicators, data sources and geographies used in this report, visit victoriafoundation.ca.

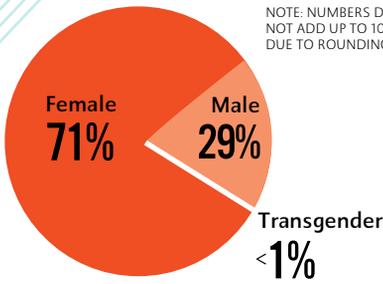
2016

HOW DID WE DO?

Here's how local citizens graded the 12 key issues this year:

2015	2016	Change
ARTS & CULTURE		
B+	B+	—
BELONGING & ENGAGEMENT		
B	B-	↓
ECONOMY		
C+	C+	—
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY		
B	B-	↓
GETTING STARTED		
B-	B-	—
HEALTH & WELLNESS		
B	B-	↓
HOUSING		
C	C-	↓
LEARNING		
B	B	—
SAFETY		
B	B	—
SPORTS & RECREATION		
B+	B+	—
STANDARD OF LIVING		
B-	B-	—
TRANSPORTATION		
C+	C+	—
OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE		
B+	B+	—

GRADER PROFILE



AGE

Under 24	> 4%
24-34	> 15%
35-44	> 16%
45-54	> 20%
55-64	> 25%
65-74	> 17%
Over 75	> 3%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Under \$20,000	> 8%
\$20,000-49,999	> 25%
\$50,000-79,999	> 23%
\$80,000-109,999	> 20%
\$110,000 >	> 23%

NOTE: NUMBERS DO NOT ADD UP TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING.

EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

Retired	24%
Non-Profit/Charity	23%
Business	20%
Government	19%
Private Institution	7%
Student	3%
Unemployed	3%

WHERE THEY LIVE Victoria > 44% Saanich > 23% Oak Bay > 7% Esquimalt > 6% Central Saanich > 3% Langford > 3% Colwood > 2% Sooke > 2% View Royal > 2% North Saanich > 2% Other > 6%

HAVE LIVED IN GREATER VICTORIA More than 10 years > 72% 6 to 10 years > 13% 1 to 5 years > 13% Less than 1 year > 2%

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

GRADE

Each person completing *Victoria's Vital Signs* survey was asked to assign a grade to each key issue area. These grades were then averaged to provide an overall grade for each issue.



SECONDARY DATA

Selected for reliability and relevance, among other factors, indicator data were collected from a number of national, provincial and local sources such as Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the Capital Regional District.

THE ISSUE AND THE RESPONSE

The Victoria Foundation takes an active role in addressing issues of concern in our community. Often, these issues come to light as the result of research findings profiled in *Victoria's Vital Signs*.

PUBLIC OPINION FINDINGS

An online survey was taken by 1,328 people. Citizens were asked to grade each issue area. They were also asked to provide their top three priorities for improving the grade, and to tell us what they perceived to be working well when it came to each area. This section provides the average grade as well as the most commonly noted priorities and statements about what is working well.

QUALITY OF LIFE IN GREATER VICTORIA

This year's survey participants were once again generally very positive about their quality of life and feelings of connectedness to their community.

66%

ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR WORK AND HOME/LIFE BALANCE



86%

WOULD DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS HAPPY



87%

FEEL SUPPORTED BY LOVING FAMILY, COMPANIONS AND/OR FRIENDS

74%

ARE HAPPY IN THEIR JOB AND SATISFIED WITH THEIR WORK

70%

rarely or very rarely felt **lonely** over the past week. Eight percent have felt lonely often or very often.

20%

feel uncomfortable at least sometimes as a result of **discrimination**.

26%

feel high or **overwhelming stress** associated with personal finances.

48%

volunteered their time with an organization at least once a month.

69%

rate their general sense of **physical wellbeing** as high.

75%

rate their general sense of **mental wellbeing** as high.

60% FEEL GREATER VICTORIA IS WELCOMING TO NEW CANADIANS



FEEL IT IS LIKELY OR VERY LIKELY THEY WILL BE LIVING AND WORKING IN GREATER VICTORIA 10 YEARS FROM NOW

84%

feel somewhat or very **connected** to their community.

64%

actively participate in their community of interest.



68%

feel they have the opportunity to **make a difference** in their community or city.

66%

feel they **know their neighbours** well enough to ask for assistance.

93%

agree or strongly agree that it is every citizen's duty to **vote**.

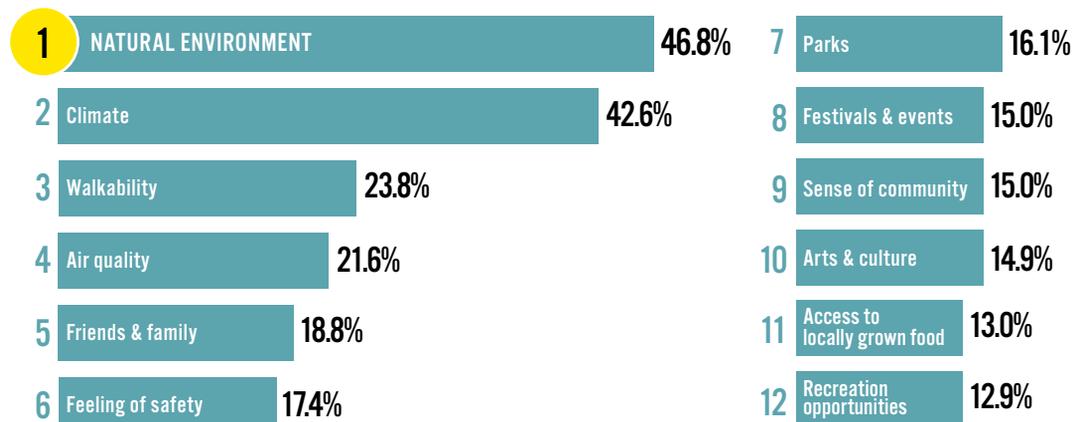


71%

agree or strongly agree that it is every **citizen's duty** to engage in activities that strengthen democracy.

WHAT ARE THE BEST THINGS ABOUT GREATER VICTORIA?

According to this year's survey, these attributes, ranked by the percentage of survey respondents who selected them, are the top 12 best things about the region.



A VILLAGE OF 100

IF GREATER VICTORIA WERE MADE UP OF 100 PEOPLE, THERE WOULD BE...

AGE BREAKDOWN

- 0-14 > 13
- 15-24 > 12
- 25-64 > 56
- 65-74 > 9
- 75-84 > 6
- 85+ > 4

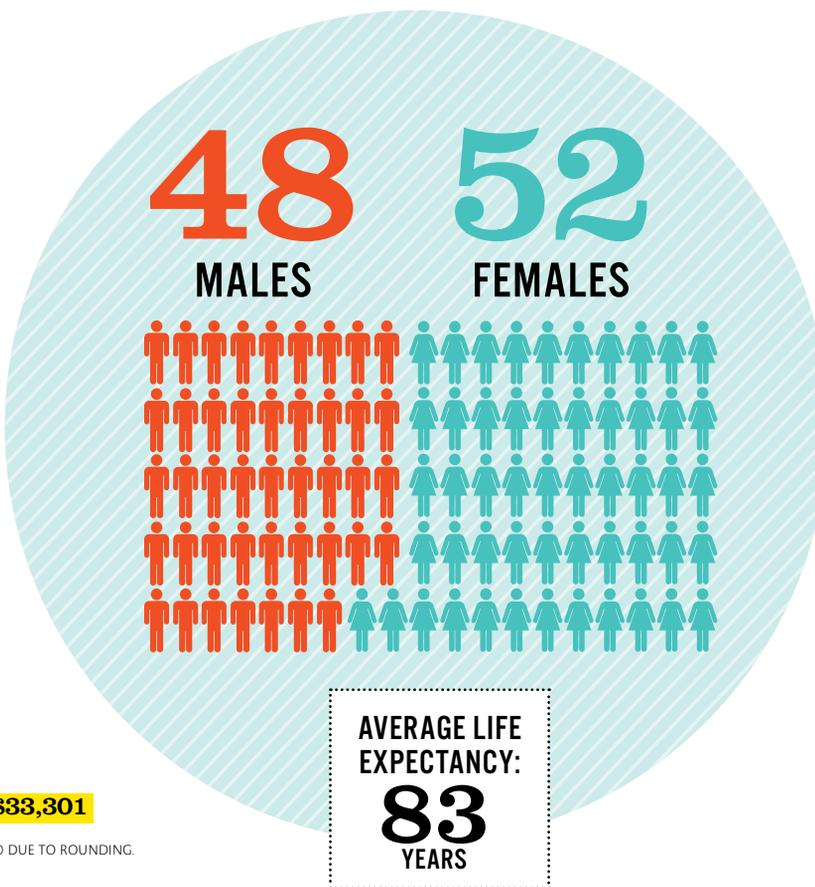
Median age > **44.2**

INDIVIDUAL INCOME

- Under \$10,000 > 15
- \$10,000-\$29,999 > 31
- \$30,000-\$59,999 > 33
- \$60,000-\$99,999 > 17
- \$100,000 and over > 5

Median total income > **\$33,301**

NOTE: NUMBERS DO NOT ADD UP TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING.



MARITAL STATUS

- Single (never married) > 27
- Common-law > 10
- Married > 45
- Divorced > 8
- Widowed > 6

(Does not add up to 100 due to rounding and exclusion of 'separated')

MISCELLANEOUS

- Employed > 61
- Aboriginal > 4
- Visible minority > 11
- Immigrant > 18
- Religious affiliation > 49
- Post-secondary credential > 60

93

SPEAK ENGLISH MOST OFTEN AT HOME

5

SPEAK LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH AND FRENCH MOST OFTEN AT HOME

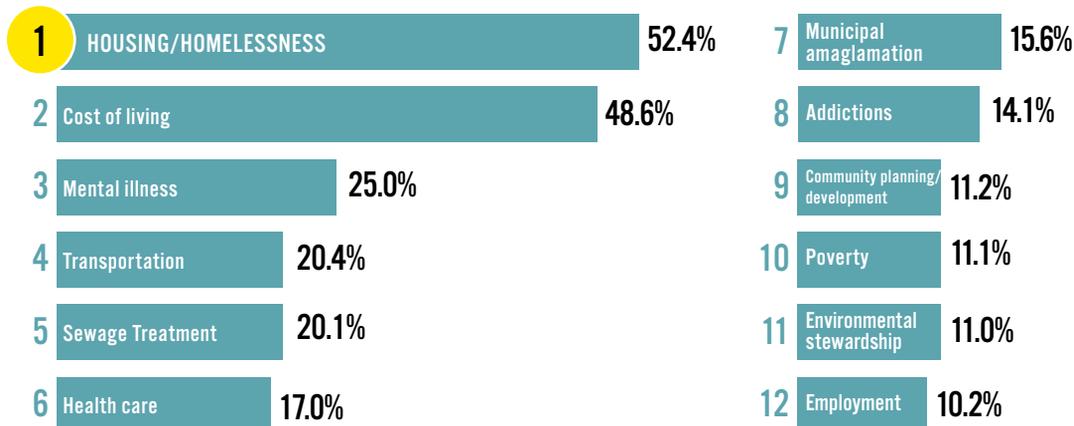
10

HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING GREATER VICTORIA TODAY?

According to this year's survey participants, these are our region's top 12 issues, ranked by the percentage of survey respondents who selected them.



ARTS & CULTURE

VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B+

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Vibrant arts and culture community with diverse offerings
- > Strong festival scene
- > Variety of quality organizations and venues fostering the arts

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Offering more affordable arts and cultural activities
- > Increasing funding to support arts and culture
- > Creating more festivals and community celebrations

Left: Phyllis Arron and Sandra Glass of the Victoria International Jewish Film Festival

Below: This year's poster for the Victoria International Jewish Film Festival



THE ISSUE

A lack of arts and cultural opportunities that reflect diverse populations.

THE RESPONSE

The Victoria International Jewish Film Festival, supported by a Victoria Foundation grant, will present independent films not readily available at local cinemas. It seeks to bring disparate groups together to learn about and reflect on fundamental and universal themes as expressed in Jewish-themed films. The films will not be religious in nature but will offer secular cultural experiences to both the Jewish and the wider communities of the region, broadening awareness and providing an opportunity for community engagement.



REGIONAL DATA

2015 EMPLOYMENT IN INFORMATION AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES:

4.8%

of the Greater Victoria labour force

COMPARED TO:

4.9%

of the BC
labour force

4.2%

of Canada's total
labour force

Information and cultural industries include publishing, motion picture and sound recording, broadcasting, internet publishing and broadcasting, telecommunications, data processing and web search portals.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

THE ARTS GET A BOOST

\$2.2M

 TO 122 ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

The amount the Capital Regional District Arts Development Service distributed in 2015 through three funding programs.

SOURCE: CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

DID YOU KNOW?

WSÁNEĆ Leadership Secondary in Brentwood Bay is using a new app in the classroom that allows Indigenous language speakers to text, type and tweet in SENĆOŦEN. The FirstVoices app gives users access to over **100** Indigenous languages from Canada, the U.S., Australia and New Zealand, with the aim of reinvigorating endangered languages for the mobile age. In the 31 First Nations communities in BC, representing 61 dialects, only **four per cent** of speakers are fluent in their mother tongue. The majority of those are over age 65. SENĆOŦEN is the traditional language of the WSÁNEĆ people of the Saanich peninsula, but there are only **seven** fluent speakers of this language alive today.

SOURCE: CBC NEWS AND FIRST PEOPLES' CULTURAL COUNCIL

ARTS DONORS & VOLUNTEERS



IN 2013, BC'S ARTS AND CULTURE **DONORS** ACCOUNTED FOR 6% OF THE PROVINCE'S 3.1 MILLION DONORS.

SOURCE: HILL STRATEGIES RESEARCH



IN 2013, BC'S ARTS AND CULTURE **VOLUNTEERS** ACCOUNTED FOR 10% OF THE PROVINCE'S 1.9 MILLION VOLUNTEERS.

SOURCE: HILL STRATEGIES RESEARCH INC.

GREATER VICTORIA LOVES ITS PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 2014, the Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL) had the highest circulation per capita in Canada at **19.45**, considerably above the national average (**11.03**), and the second highest visits per capita in the country at **7.88**, well above the national average (**6.06**) across all monitored libraries in Canada. SOURCE: CANADIAN URBAN LIBRARIES COUNCIL

DOOR COUNT
2,512,237

VIRTUAL VISITS
3,812,327

TOTALS FOR GVPL'S **10** BRANCHES IN 2014

ADULT ATTENDANCE
14,128

TEEN ATTENDANCE
4,490

KIDS ATTENDANCE
54,594

OVERALL CIRCULATION
6,201,939

eMATERIALS CIRCULATION
632,693

SOURCE: GREATER VICTORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY

BELONGING & ENGAGEMENT

VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B-

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Strong sense of community and volunteerism
- > City administration efforts to engage citizens
- > Plenty of opportunities to get involved

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Increasing opportunities to get involved in community and neighbourhood activities
- > Increasing involvement of marginalized groups
- > Increasing awareness of community engagement and public consultation opportunities

Left: Project leader, Alison Baxendale (in hat), of the Community Palette Project on 5th Street, one of the projects funded by Neighbourhood Small Grants

Below: The completed mandala



THE ISSUE

Citizens taking the *Vital Signs* survey asked for more opportunities to get involved in community and neighbourhood activities.

THE RESPONSE

Last September, the Victoria Foundation introduced a pilot program for Neighbourhood Small Grants for the Hillside-Quadra area. Sixteen grants up to \$500 each were successfully funded for a total of \$7,082. There was a wide variety of projects, including community clean-up days, free painting and meditation classes, community gardens, block parties, and intercultural celebrations. The pilot was such a success that it was offered again for 2016.



REGIONAL DATA

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

According to the 2014 Victoria Capital Region Community Wellbeing Survey, **70%** of residents reported that they were **somewhat or highly involved in civic activities** in the previous year, including attending community meetings or charitable events and giving feedback on issues through letters or online.

SOURCE: CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING AND UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

LIVING ALONE



PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WHO LIVE ALONE, INCLUDING "EMPTY NESTERS" WHOSE CHILDREN WERE NO LONGER AT HOME, ACCORDING TO THE 2014 VICTORIA CAPITAL REGION COMMUNITY WELLBEING SURVEY.

SOURCE: CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING AND UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

MEDIAN CHARITABLE DONATION **\$410**

24% of all tax filers in Greater Victoria made charitable donations in 2014. The median donation in Greater Victoria was considerably higher than the national median donation of **\$280**.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

DID YOU KNOW?

Over the past six years, Bottle Depot customers have raised over **\$180,000** for charity. Since 2010, the Bottle Depot has had donation kiosks at each of its three locations in Victoria. Customers have the option of donating refundable containers through these bins, with all proceeds distributed to charity. All refundable containers collected by the company are diverted from the landfill. Last year alone, the amount diverted totalled more than **425,000 cubic feet** of material.

SOURCE: THE BOTTLE DEPOT

COMMUNITY BELONGING

70% OF PEOPLE, AGED 12 YEARS AND OLDER ON SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND, REPORTED A STRONG OR SOMEWHAT STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY BELONGING IN 2014.

COMPARED TO **66%** NATIONALLY AND **69%** IN BC

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

VOTER TURNOUT

Voter turnout in Greater Victoria for the 2015 federal election was the highest it has been for the past five federal elections – higher than either BC or Canada's turnout.

GREATER VICTORIA VOTER TURNOUT FOR THE 2015 FEDERAL ELECTION: **77%**

68% VOTER TURNOUT IN CANADA
▶ Highest in 22 years

70% VOTER TURNOUT IN BC

SOURCE: ELECTIONS CANADA / NOTE: VOTER TURNOUT IS THE PERCENTAGE OF REGISTERED VOTERS WHO VOTE

CLOSE FRIENDS & NEIGHBOURS



CLOSE FRIENDS

According to the 2014 Victoria Capital Region Community Wellbeing Survey, residents reported that they had an average of **six close friends** and knew an average of **four neighbours** well enough to ask for a favour.

SOURCE: CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING AND UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO



NEIGHBOURS

ECONOMY

SPONSORED BY TRENHOLME & COMPANY



VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

C+

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Efforts to diversify economy and high technology sector growth
- > Availability of jobs/unemployment
- > Economic stability of strong government and post-secondary sectors

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Diversifying the economy
- > Increasing job opportunities for new graduates
- > Improving supports for entrepreneurs and small business

Left: Volunteer board member Patricia Reichert of the Farm Centre For Food Security

Below: An artist's rendering of the proposed Salt Spring Island Farm Centre for Food Security

THE ISSUE

Improving support for the local farm economy.

THE RESPONSE

With a grant from the Victoria Foundation, the Farm Centre for Food Security will address identified needs on Salt Spring Island for local food storage, coordinated distribution, value-added processing and meals, and food literacy. When complete, the "community food hub" will support increased local food production, provide job experience for vulnerable individuals, improve access to healthy local food, and increase community resilience.



EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

Between 2010 and 2015, employment per 1,000 people in Greater Victoria grew by a modest **1.2%**. This translates into 147,100 employees in 2015, up from 145,300 employees in 2010.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

DID YOU KNOW?

Women in Construction in Victoria, a committee of the Vancouver Island Construction Association, is working to develop an informal network among women in the construction community to provide career and personal development opportunities, connect women and their supporters throughout the construction community, and promote a career in construction to the next generation.

SOURCE: CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

TOURISM SECTOR

2015 was a banner year for tourism in Greater Victoria with the highest average hotel room rate and hotel occupancy rate in five years. The Victoria International Airport, BC Ferries route between Tsawwassen and Swartz Bay, and cruise ships all recorded their highest traffic and/or passenger volumes in five years.

70.2%

HOTEL OCCUPANCY RATE

1,710,825

VICTORIA AIRPORT ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

227

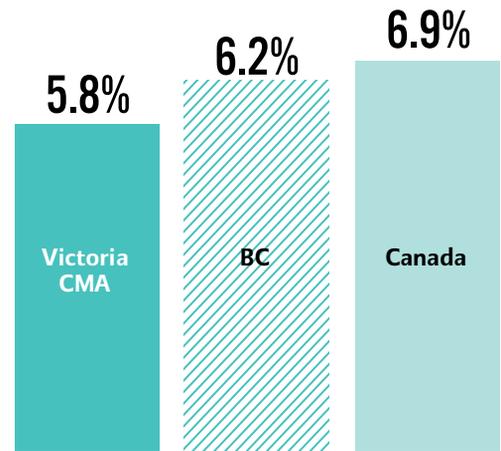
CRUISE SHIP ARRIVALS

5,882,599

BC FERRIES PASSENGERS, TSAWWASSEN/SWARTZ BAY ROUTE

SOURCE: CHEMISTRY CONSULTING GROUP

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN 2015



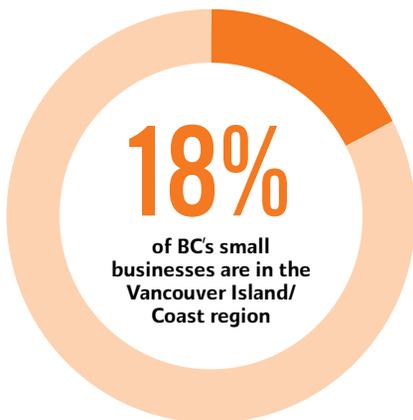
SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

SMALL BUSINESS SECTOR FACTS

Industry sectors driving Vancouver Island / Coast Region small business employment

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, TOURISM AND HIGH TECH

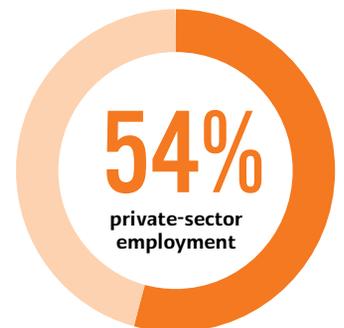
SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



BC had the highest number of small businesses per capita in Canada:

82.6
small businesses per 1,000 people in 2014

Over **1 million people** worked in small businesses in BC in 2014, equalling:



ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRIES

recorded the highest number of net **new small business jobs** between 2009 and 2014.

382,600

Approximate number of small businesses operating in BC in 2014, representing about **98%** of all businesses in the province. Four out of every five of these small businesses were **micro-businesses** with fewer than five employees.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B-

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Green spaces/walking paths/clean air and water
- > Access to farmers markets and locally grown food
- > Eco-conscious community

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Addressing sewage treatment
- > Reducing our reliance on cars
- > Supports for local food production

Left: Jane Styles, Executive Director of the Rocky Point Bird Observatory

Below: A banded Cassin's Vireo songbird – just one of many species of birds banded by the observatory for monitoring

THE ISSUE

Protecting the natural environment requires adequate monitoring.

THE RESPONSE

Birds are key indicators of the health and sustainability of the natural environment. With a grant from the Victoria Foundation, the Rocky Point Bird Observatory will continue to monitor the populations of birds breeding within the region. This ongoing project helps to assess whether natural or human caused changes are negatively impacting our natural spaces, and the long-term data will be used to assess changes in bird populations at a national and continental level.

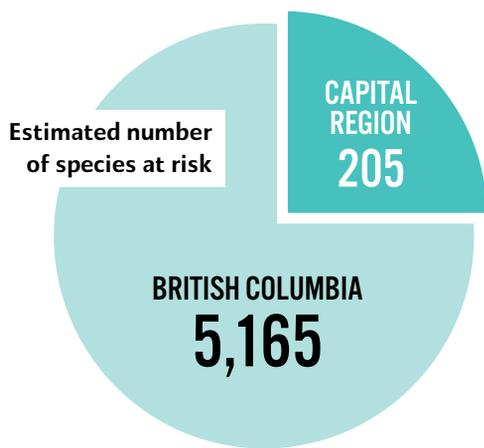


JANNA CHICK

SPECIES AT RISK

There are an estimated **205 species at risk** in the Capital Region. These are legally classified, native plants and animals that breed in the region. **49%** the region's species at risk are red-listed, or locally extinct, endangered or threatened, while the other half (**49%**) are blue-listed, or of special concern. **Less than 2%** of the region's species at risk are yellow-listed, with the least risk of extinction.

SOURCE: BC CONSERVATION DATA CENTRE



LOCAL RED-LISTED SPECIES

- American Water Shrew
- Northern Goshawk
- Painted Turtle
- Sharp-tailed Snake
- Northern Abalone

LOCAL BLUE-LISTED SPECIES

- Grey Whale
- Keen's Myotis Bat
- Western Screech Owl
- Northern Red Legged Frog
- Wandering Salamander

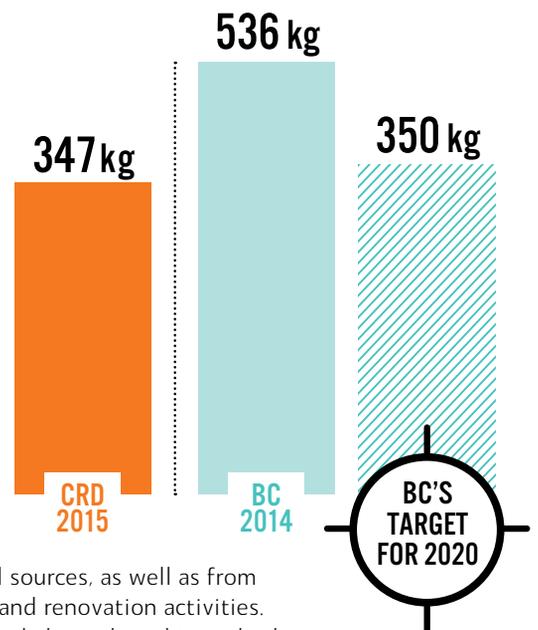
DID YOU KNOW?

The oldest of the three bird sanctuaries on the Pacific Coast of Canada, the Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary is also the largest and most urban. It was established to control hunting nine decades ago. Today, this sanctuary gives refuge to significant and valued wildlife in the city and a working harbour, including birds, mammals, fishes, molluscs, crustaceans and hundreds of invertebrates and plants, including several species at risk. Despite numerous challenges affecting these sanctuaries, clean-ups, ecological restoration and rewilding are improving regional conditions, particularly in and near Victoria Harbour.

SOURCE: ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE CANADA

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL RATES

Solid waste disposal rates per person



A solid waste disposal rate is an estimate of how many kilograms of solid waste one person sends to a landfill or other disposal site in a given year. Disposal rates include waste from the residential sector, institutional, commercial and industrial sources, as well as from construction, demolition and renovation activities. Disposal rates do not include hazardous, biomedical or agricultural waste, motor vehicles or components, or contaminated soil.

SOURCE: CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

< 5 TONNES

AMOUNT OF CARBON DIOXIDE EMITTED YEARLY BY THE STANDARD FAMILY IN GREATER VICTORIA FOR GASOLINE AND ELECTRICITY

Greater Victoria is the **second least carbon-intensive city** out of 17 cities in Canada (behind Montreal), according to a 2016 study from the University of British Columbia.

SOURCE: UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ORGANIC FARMING

CERTIFIED ORGANIC FARMS IN THE CAPITAL REGION IN 2011

141

(EQUAL TO 14% OF ALL FARMS. THIS IS UP FROM 25 IN 2006.)

35

Number of farms in the region that have completed an **Environmental Farm Plan** to reduce the possibility of accidental harm to soil, air, water and biodiversity values.

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

GETTING STARTED IN OUR COMMUNITY

VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B-

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Excellent work of organizations and associations to support newcomers
- > General awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity
- > Accessible and welcoming school programs

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Access to affordable childcare
- > Foreign accreditation recognition
- > Job opportunities for newcomers

Left: Early Childhood Educator Marta Pascolin (in black) with mother Sophie and her infant, Willow, at Artemis Place

THE ISSUE

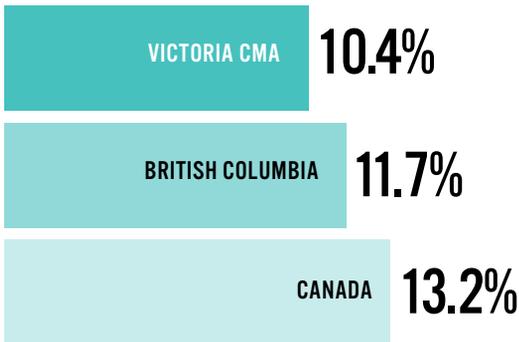
Access to affordable childcare and supporting youth in transition to adulthood.

THE RESPONSE

Artemis Place is an independent alternative school for teenage girls faced with obstacles such as anxiety, poverty, trauma, and issues related to foster care. Half of the school's students have children. The school has an onsite daycare where nurturing, responsive parenting skills are modeled. The school's most vulnerable mothers can't commit to full-time attendance and are not eligible for a childcare subsidy. A recent grant from the Victoria Foundation funded two flexible childcare spaces to support these young families with the goal that the mothers will eventually attend the program full time.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

IN GREATER VICTORIA, THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR YOUTH, 15 TO 24 YEARS, WAS **10.4%** IN 2015. THIS IS BELOW THE RATE FOR BC AND FOR CANADA.



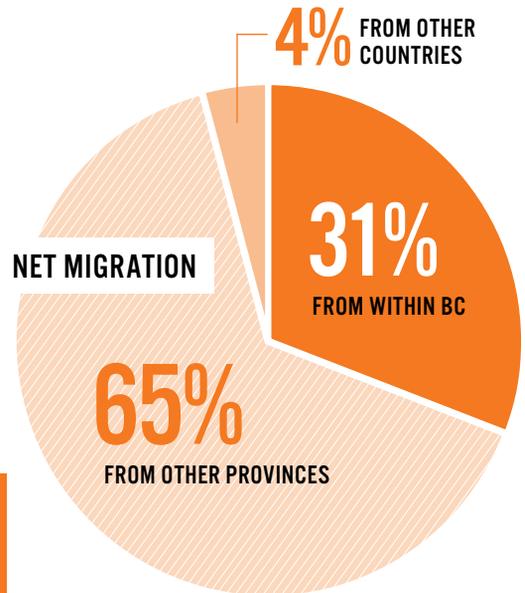
SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

DID YOU KNOW?

As one of several organizations assisting in the settlement and support of immigrants and refugees in the region since 1975, the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA) has provided services and support to more than **40,000** immigrant and refugee newcomers. In 2015 alone, ICA supported more than **1,600** newcomers with their settlement and integration process.

SOURCE: GREATER VICTORIA LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, Greater Victoria had a total net migration of **3,840** people, of which **1,207** came from within BC, **2,487** from other provinces and **146** from other countries.



TOTAL NET MIGRATION BETWEEN 2001 & 2015:

45,044

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

CHILDCARE FACTS

130
NUMBER OF NEW LICENSED CHILDCARE SPACES IN THE CAPITAL REGION FUNDED BY THE BC GOVERNMENT AS OF JUNE 2016 (PART OF 2013 PROMISE OF 13,000 SPACES IN BC BY 2020).

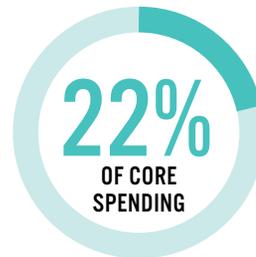
SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

In the calculation of the Capital Region's 2016 living wage,* childcare costs were the **second largest expenditure after housing** in a family's monthly budget.

*A living wage is modeled on a family of four with two children, one in preschool and the other in grade two.

SOURCE: COMMUNITY SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL

CHILDCARE COSTS



In 2016, the BC government launched its online **childcare mapping tool** (maps.gov.bc.ca/ess/hm/ccf) to help families locate licensed childcare providers in their community.

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

THE BC GOVERNMENT'S SUBSIDY SYSTEM IS ONLY AVAILABLE FOR VERY LOW INCOME FAMILIES. IN AN AVERAGE MONTH IN 2014/15, SUBSIDIES WERE ISSUED FOR **LESS THAN 4%** OF BC CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS.

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

\$798 - \$1,092

The average monthly fees for regulated childcare in the Capital Region in May 2016. This was for infants, toddlers and three- to five-year-olds. Infant care is typically the most expensive form of childcare.

SOURCE: VICTORIA CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL

70 Number of new, licensed spaces the Victoria Native Friendship Centre has created at the XaXe STĒLITĪKĒLĒ Daycare Centre, which provides a culturally appropriate environment for children to grow and identify with their Aboriginal roots.

SOURCE: VICTORIA NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

HEALTH & WELLNESS

VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B-

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Many opportunities for physical activity and outdoor recreation
- > Good healthcare system
- > Availability of care provided by health care professionals

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Availability of family physicians
- > Access to mental health services
- > Wait times for medical procedures

Left: Sharlene Law, Team Leader at the Umbrella Society, conducts a one-on-one client meeting at a local community coffee shop.



THE ISSUE

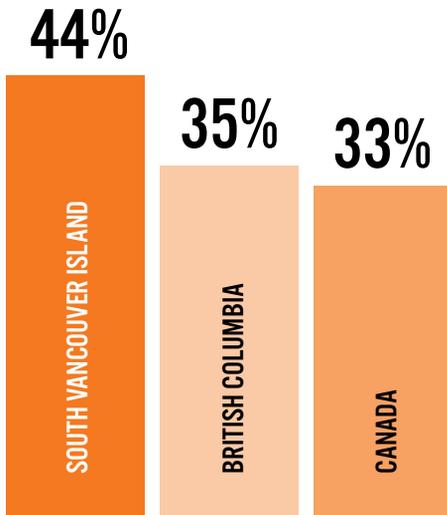
Improving access to mental health and addictions services.

THE RESPONSE

The Umbrella Society has many years of experience helping people struggling to navigate multiple systems of care. Family physicians, both in private practice and walk-in settings, are ideally placed to identify patients for whom substance use has become a problem, and to have that first, and often very difficult, conversation with them. Through a pilot project funded by a Victoria Foundation grant, family physicians have a path to refer patients to Umbrella, which will offer a variety of timely one-to-one supports to participants, and follow them closely in the community.

PARTICIPATION AND ACTIVITY LIMITATION

In 2014, approximately 44% of the population aged 12 years and over on South Vancouver Island reported being limited in selected activities (home, school, work, and other activities) because of a physical condition, mental condition or health problem which lasted six months or longer.



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

DID YOU KNOW?

In June, Canada's most innovative lab for T cell immunotherapy development opened in Victoria at the BC Cancer Agency. Immunotherapy is an approach that engages the patient's immune system to effectively eliminate disease. It is one of the most promising areas in cancer research and care today. Adoptive T Cell Therapy is a specific form of immunotherapy that amplifies the power of T cells – immune cells responsible for destroying viruses and tumors – extracted from an individual cancer patient. In a highly selective process, scientists identify the T cells already attempting to destroy the cancer and multiply them by the thousands in the lab. The end product is a supercharged batch of a patient's own T cells that can be delivered through an IV infusion. Phase I clinical trials for ovarian and cervical cancer are slated to begin in early 2017. SOURCE: BC CANCER FOUNDATION

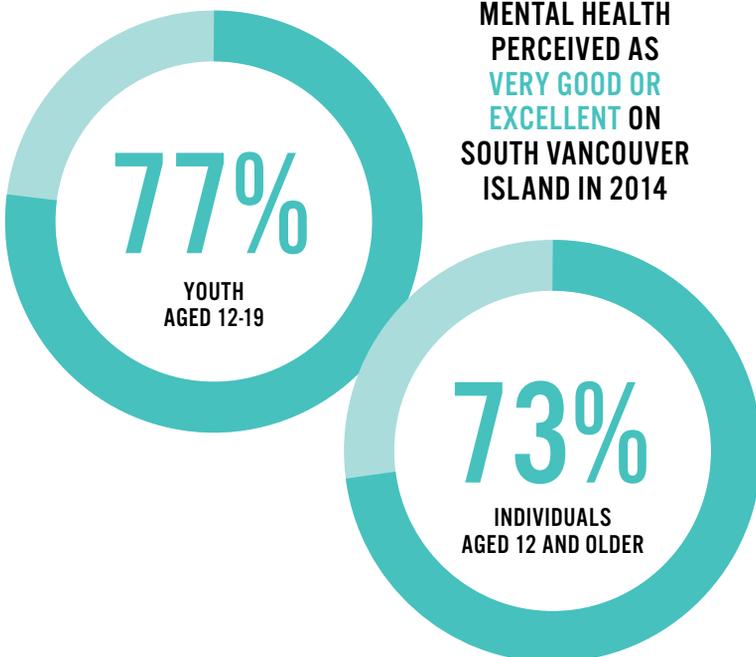
HIP FRACTURE REPAIR WAIT TIMES ON SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND

87% OF HIP FRACTURE PATIENTS UNDERWENT SURGERY WITHIN 48 HOURS OF ADMISSION TO HOSPITAL.

Patients 65 and older, between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014.

SOURCE: CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH INFORMATION

MENTAL HEALTH



MENTAL HEALTH PERCEIVED AS VERY GOOD OR EXCELLENT ON SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND IN 2014

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

RIISING ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Alcohol consumption has risen significantly in BC over the past decade and at a faster rate than the rest of Canada.

On South Vancouver Island, annual alcohol consumption per capita* was **10.7 litres** in 2014, the highest since 2002. This is compared to nearly **9L** for BC, which is equivalent to:

528 BOTTLES OF 5% BEER

(OR)

30 BOTTLES OF 40% VODKA

(OR)

100 BOTTLES OF 12% WINE

*Absolute alcohol consumed per person, aged 15 years and older, per year (one litre equals 58 standard drinks)

SOURCE: CENTRE FOR ADDICTIONS RESEARCH OF BC

HOUSING

SPONSORED BY
OAKCREST PARK ESTATES LTD.



VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

C-

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Access to rental options
- > Diversity of housing options (e.g. rental suites, social housing, assisted living)
- > Increase in new buildings, densification

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Affordability of rental housing
- > Affordability of home ownership
- > Alternative housing options (co-housing, co-ops, etc.)

Left: Executive Director Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi of the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness

Below: The Coalition cemented its existence in 2015 with a ceremony at Esquimalt Longhouse that brought together Aboriginal groups to sign this ceremonial drum.

THE ISSUE

Preventing homelessness and supporting pathways to stable housing.

THE RESPONSE

Thirty percent of those experiencing homelessness in the region come from an Indigenous background. Community partners with existing programs identified the need for a separate entity with the expertise and knowledge to develop culturally appropriate solutions. With a \$100,000 grant from the Victoria Foundation, the new Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness will have that expertise along with an Island-wide mandate to bring a First Nations voice to address Aboriginal housing and homelessness.



REGIONAL DATA

HOMELESSNESS

In 2014/15, at least **1,725** individuals in Greater Victoria identified as homeless and used an emergency shelter at least once that year.

On the night of February 10, 2016, there were at least **1,387** people experiencing homelessness in Greater Victoria, including **120** youth and **123** children.

78% were staying in a shelter

5% were turned away by a shelter

4% were provisionally accommodated

14% were completely unsheltered

NOTE: NUMBERS DO NOT ADD UP TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING.

Of the people enumerated in the 2016 homeless count, 52% participated in a survey about housing needs. **One third** of respondents identified as Aboriginal.

SOURCE: GREATER VICTORIA COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

DID YOU KNOW?

Greater Victoria is experiencing the highest level of rental construction activity since 1988. Between July 2014 and June 2015, **276** new purpose-built and secondary rental units were completed, compared to an average of **98** units a year from 2004 to 2013. Rental construction is also outpacing condominium construction. Updated statistics released in July 2016 confirm that **1,574** rental apartments were either under construction, approved or proposed in Greater Victoria, versus **926** condominium suites.

SOURCE: CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION AND COLLIERS INTERNATIONAL

HOUSING SALES & PRICES

1,289

NUMBER OF PROPERTIES SOLD IN GREATER VICTORIA IN MAY 2016. THIS IS A

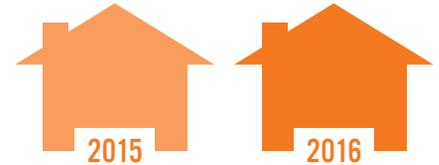
42.4%

INCREASE COMPARED TO THE **905** PROPERTIES SOLD IN MAY 2015.

SINGLE FAMILY HOME MEDIAN SALE PRICE

\$557,250

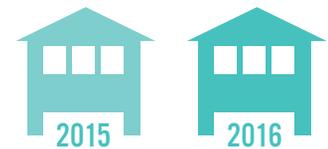
\$665,000



TOWNHOUSE MEDIAN SALE PRICE

\$385,700

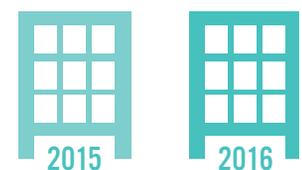
\$431,500



CONDO MEDIAN SALE PRICE

\$283,000

\$316,900



SOURCE: VICTORIA REAL ESTATE BOARD

THE AFFORDABILITY DIVIDE

THERE IS AN OVER-SUPPLY OF HOUSING FOR HIGH-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS AND TOO FEW HOUSING OPTIONS FOR LOW- TO MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS.

According to the 2015 Capital Region Housing Data Book & Gap Analysis, an estimated **64%** of the housing being built in Greater Victoria is affordable to only **25%** of households.

SOURCE: CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

RENTS & RENTAL VACANCY

\$742

AVERAGE RENT FOR A BACHELOR UNIT IN 2015

\$942

AVERAGE RENT FOR ALL UNIT TYPES IN GREATER VICTORIA IN OCTOBER 2015

\$1,384

AVERAGE RENT FOR A 3+ BEDROOM UNIT IN 2015

A person working 35 hours a week at BC's minimum hourly wage of \$10.85 would need to spend approximately **49%** of their gross monthly income to rent a bachelor apartment in Greater Victoria.

To affordably rent this apartment (e.g. spend no more than 30% of household income on rent), a person would need to work **57 hours** a week at minimum wage.

0.6%

THE AVERAGE RENTAL VACANCY RATE IN GREATER VICTORIA IN OCTOBER 2015

SOURCE: CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

LEARNING



VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Access to diverse educational opportunities
- > Dedicated and talented teachers
- > Positive learning environment

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Affordability of post-secondary education
- > Financial sustainability of school districts
- > Quality of school curricula

Left: Emily McFarlane and William Proia, two of the facilitators in the Boys & Girls Clubs' Literacy and Numeracy Program

THE ISSUE

Insufficient supports for childhood literacy.

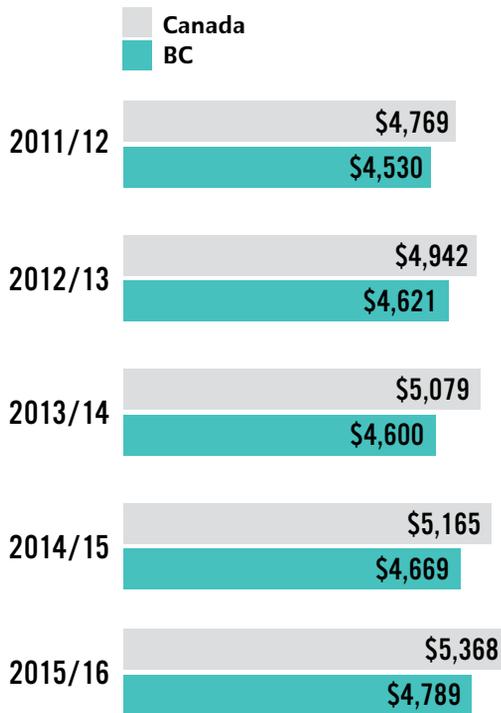
THE RESPONSE

A recent grant from the Victoria Foundation helped capital region Boys & Girls Clubs provide a Literacy and Numeracy Program to children in elementary schools in Esquimalt, VicWest, Langford, Colwood, and Central Saanich. A total of 118 students participated in the program, resulting in increases of 15 to 35 percent in areas of vocabulary, letter recognition, number recognition, phonic awareness and other vital skills. The successful project is now looking to expand throughout Greater Victoria and to develop program curricula for grades K to 8.

TUITION COSTS

The average cost of undergraduate tuition for both University of Victoria and Royal Roads University in 2015/16 was **\$6,490** for Canadian students – higher than the average tuition rate for BC and Canada – and \$16,667 for international students.

Average cost of tuition for Canadian full-time undergraduates in humanities programs

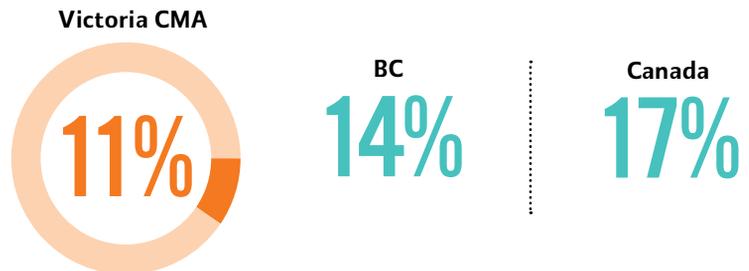


SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA & ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OF CANADA

DID YOU KNOW?

A school-based bullying prevention program, developed in the 1990s by Victoria-area educators and University of Victoria psychology professor Dr. Bonnie Leadbeater, has been given top marks by researchers from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. WITS stands for Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out and Seek help. Researchers found that WITS delivered stronger effects than other programs at a lower cost, and showed long-term benefits in the reduction in bullying perpetration or victimization. The WITS program was initially geared to students in kindergarten to grade 3 and has since expanded to grades 4 to 6 with WITS LEADS. The WITS programs have spread to more than **600** schools across Canada and the US, including **280** in BC. SOURCE: CBC NEWS AND WITS PROGRAMS

% OF POPULATION, 15 YEARS AND OLDER, WHO HAD NOT COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL IN 2015



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

% OF POPULATION, 15 YEARS AND OLDER, WHO HAD COMPLETED POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN 2015



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

READING, WRITING & NUMERACY RATES

In 2014/15, grade 4 and 7 students across the Capital Region's four school districts met or exceeded expectations for their grades in reading, writing and numeracy at levels generally consistent with BC performance levels. SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

EXCEPTIONS:



SAFETY

SPONSORED BY CREST



VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Safe place to live
- > Community policing efforts
- > Sense of community

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Illegal drug use
- > Emergency preparedness
- > Traffic/road safety

DID YOU KNOW?

CREST
(Capital Region
Emergency
Service

Telecommunications) is implementing its technology upgrade to further strengthen the working relationships and inter-operability between public safety organizations throughout the Capital Region. There are only two jurisdictions in BC (Capital Region & the Lower Mainland) where multiple emergency responders (police, fire, ambulance) can talk to each other on a shared communications (radio) platform. Not only can 50 different organizations share information throughout the lower island, our emergency responders will soon be able to back up the lower mainland, and vice versa, should help be needed in a large-scale emergency.

THE ISSUE

Access to crisis support for youth.

THE RESPONSE

Online emotional and crisis support provided through the chat and text service available at youthspace.ca reaches youth under 30, including when other services are unavailable. Research shows the online modality allows increased accessibility and disclosure around issues involving shame and blame, specifically suicide, self-injury, anxiety, depression and sexuality – compared to face-to-face and phone support. This service often de-escalates the risk of youth in crisis (suicide and self-harm) and serves as a portal to intervention by emergency responders. A grant from the Victoria Foundation helped to ensure youth in Greater Victoria and beyond continue to have access to this invaluable service.

Above: Youthspace.ca Manager Liz Radermacher of Need2, a suicide prevention education and support network for youth under 30

REGIONAL DATA

CRIME RATES IN GREATER VICTORIA

1,264

NUMBER OF YOUTH, AGED 12 TO 17 CHARGED WITH A VIOLATION, PER 100,000 YOUTH IN 2015, DOWN 28.5% FROM 2014.

The youth crime rate in the region has declined **152%** since 2004.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

1,206

Violent criminal code violations per 100,000 people in 2015, up 11% from 2014

60.8

Sexual assaults per 100,000 people in 2015, up 23% from 2014

PROPERTY CRIME RATE

In 2015, there were **3,896** property crime violations per 100,000 people in Greater Victoria, **up 8%** from 2014. Greater Victoria's property crime rate has declined by **51%** since 1998.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

DID YOU KNOW?

British Columbia is located in one of the most seismically active regions in the world with more than **3,000** earthquakes occurring every year. While most earthquakes are too small to be felt, the risk of a major one causing significant damage is real and all British Columbians must know how to be prepared. The Great BC Shakeout, Canada's largest "Drop, Cover and Hold On" Prepare-Yourself earthquake drill, takes place each year on the third Thursday in October. In 2015, **770,000** people throughout BC participated in the Shakeout. Prepare Yourself, a regional guide to emergency preparedness is available from the CRD website. SOURCE: SHAKEOUT BC

WORKPLACE SAFETY

4,625

NUMBER OF CLAIMS IN THE CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT FOR SHORT-TERM DISABILITY, LONG-TERM DISABILITY AND WORK-RELATED DEATH IN THE WORKPLACE IN 2015, CONTINUING A STEADY DOWNWARD TREND SINCE 2011.

7

Single-incident work-related death claims in the region between 2011 and 2015, compared to 325 for all of BC

47

Number of days paid per claim in the region for short term disability in 2015, compared to 54 days for BC

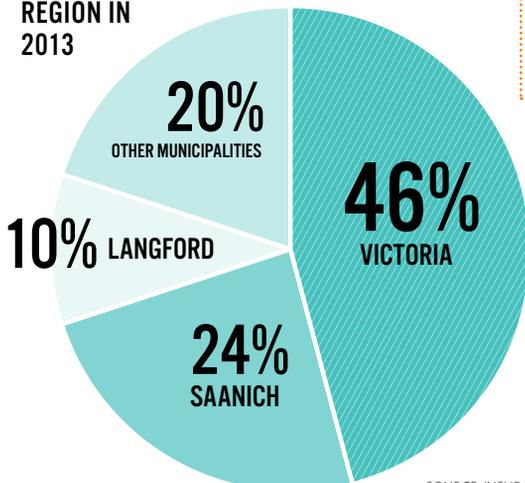
SOURCE: WORKSAFEBC



Time-loss claims in the region for serious injury in 2015, compared to 13% for BC

ON THE ROADS

MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES WITHIN THE CAPITAL REGION IN 2013



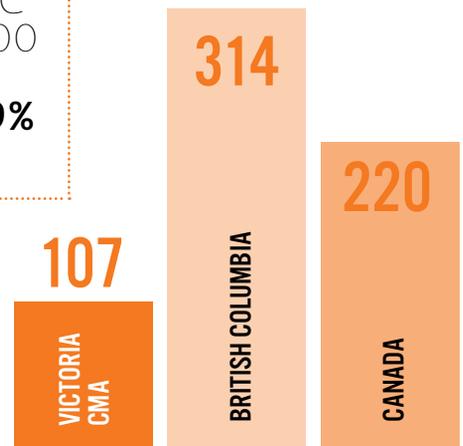
SOURCE: INSURANCE CORPORATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

THERE WERE **304** CRIMINAL CODE TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS PER 100,000 PEOPLE IN GREATER VICTORIA IN 2015, **UP 9%** FROM 2014. SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

TOTAL NUMBER OF CRASHES IN THE REGION

17,220

75% OF CRASHES ARE TYPICALLY REAR-END COLLISIONS



NUMBER OF MOTOR VEHICLE THEFTS, PER 100,000 PEOPLE IN 2015

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

SPORTS & RECREATION

SPONSORED BY
BEAR MOUNTAIN



VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B+

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Plenty of access to sports and recreation facilities
- > Availability of outdoor recreation options and beautiful green spaces
- > Quality and variety of activity programming for children and adults

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Access to low-income programs
- > More affordable opportunities
- > Improving pathways and bikeways

Left: Emily Rand, Manager of Special Projects at the Sport For Life Society, an organization dedicated to improving the quality of sport and developing physical literacy

THE ISSUE

Insufficient supports for vulnerable populations to access sports programs.

THE RESPONSE

The Canadian government has resettled over 25,000 Syrian refugees in 23 communities across Canada this year. Many of these refugees are children and youth. Linking into community sport and accessing the resources available is often complex, yet sport can play a vital role in newcomers' sense of belonging. With a \$27,000 grant from the Victoria Foundation, the Refugee Sport for Life Program is being piloted in Victoria. The Sport for Life Society is working closely with community partners including the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria and KidSport Victoria to help refugee children and youth get involved with existing sport and physical activity programs.

SPORT PARTICIPATION

According to the Community Foundations of Canada's 2016 *National Vital Signs Report on Sport and Belonging*, **85%** of Canadians agree that sport participation builds stronger communities, yet sport participation is declining across the country.

GENDER GAP

In 2010, **1 in 3 men** and **1 in 6 women** regularly participated in sport. When mothers participate in sport in any way, their children's participation rate is much higher (**71%**) than that of children whose mothers do not (**29%**).

\$998

The average amount a BC family spends annually for one child to play an organized sport

90%

of parents agree that organized sport is too expensive.

20%

DECLINE IN SPORT PARTICIPATION AMONG CANADIANS, AGED 15+, BETWEEN 1992 AND 2010

PERCENTAGE OF BC POPULATION INVOLVED IN SPORT AS SPECTATORS IN 2010

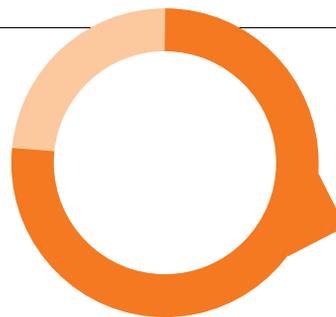


THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN SPORT DROP-OUT RATES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH, AGED 5 TO 19 YEARS, ARE **LACK OF FUN, STRESS, TOO MUCH COMPETITION, AND NEGATIVE COACH OR PARENTAL BEHAVIOUR.**

SOURCE: COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA AND TRUE SPORT FOUNDATION

LEISURE STRENGTHENS SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

According to the 2014 Victoria Capital Region Community Wellbeing Survey, residents reported that they **agreed or very strongly agreed** with the following perceptions of their leisure time:



76%

"PROVIDES ME WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION"

"HELPS ME DEVELOP CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS"

58%

"HELPS ME LEARN ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE"

56%

"IS MOST ENJOYABLE WHEN I CAN CONNECT WITH OTHERS"

55%

SOURCE: CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING AND UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

STANDARD OF LIVING

SPONSORED BY **MNP**

VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

B-

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Beautiful climate and natural environment
- > Sense of community
- > Accessible recreation opportunities

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Affordable housing options
- > Adoption of a "living wage"
- > Income disparity between highest and lowest earners

Left: Heidi Hartman, Vice-President of the Wear2Start Society

Below: The Wear2Start website serves as a reference for those wanting to volunteer or donate clothing or money to the organization.



THE ISSUE

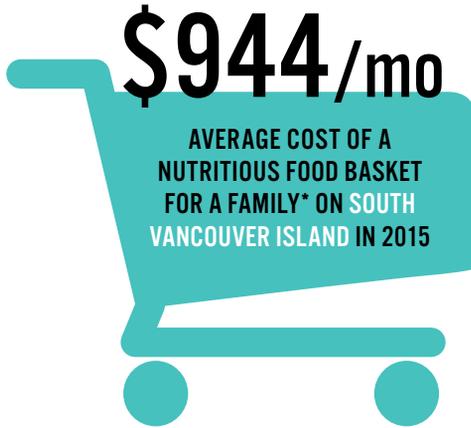
Financial barriers to seeking employment.

THE RESPONSE

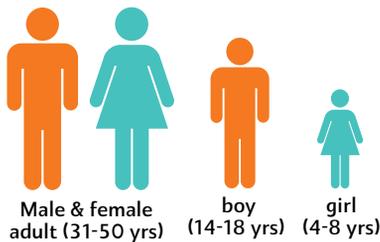
The Wear2Start Society helps women who have completed a job training program make their best impressions in job interviews and the workplace by providing them with a wardrobe and hair and makeup services. Over the years, Wear2Start has assisted thousands of women in need to gain confidence and increase their chances of employment through a more polished appearance. With a grant from the Victoria Foundation, a new website (wear2start.com) has been created. Along with helping clients and agencies to easily access information about Wear2Start services, the website has online donating capability and social media links.



THE COST OF NUTRITIOUS FOOD



*REFERENCE FAMILY



SOURCE: PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

DID YOU KNOW?

According to a 2014 report from Statistics Canada, people with disabilities remain less likely than others to be employed. In 2011, the employment rate for Canadians aged 25 to 64 with disabilities was **49%**, compared with **79%** for Canadians without a disability. Among Canadians with a disability, **12%** reported having been refused a job in the previous five years as a result of their condition. In 2010, the self-reported median total income of persons, aged 15-64 years with disabilities was just over **\$20,000**, compared to just over **\$31,000** for those without disabilities. Over one third of persons with disabilities reported that non-employment income was their only source of income. SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

LIVING WAGE

THE HOURLY WAGE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN AN ADEQUATE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE CAPITAL REGION IN 2016:

\$20.02

BC'S MINIMUM HOURLY WAGE IN 2016:

\$10.85

The calculation of a living wage assumes two adults each working 35 hours per week, year round, while providing a home for two young children, one in preschool and the other in grade two.

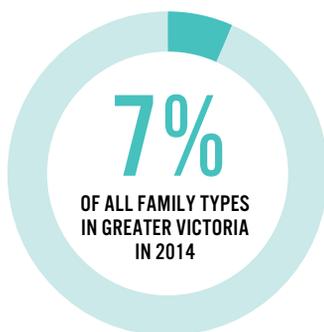
SOURCE: COMMUNITY SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF GREATER VICTORIA AND GOVERNMENT OF BC

THE MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE IN GREATER VICTORIA IN 2015:

\$22.50

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

LONE-PARENT FAMILIES



In 2014, roughly 12,000 Greater Victoria families, comprising **30,000** individuals, were lone-parent families. The 2014 median total family income of lone-parent families in the region was **\$42,900**, compared to \$51,340 for all family types (or \$81,510 for couple families).

In 2014, the median income of low income lone-parent families in Greater Victoria was **\$16,990**.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA



TRANSPORTATION

VITAL SIGNS
CITIZEN SURVEY SAYS:

C+

LET'S CELEBRATE

- > Cycling opportunities and expanding cycling infrastructure
- > Good public transit service
- > High level of walkability

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- > Investment in light rail/rapid transit
- > Regional coordination of new transportation infrastructure
- > Service and affordability of buses

Left: Sarah Webb and Lindsay Taylor of the Active & Safe Routes to School project – a national movement dedicated to children's mobility, health and happiness

THE ISSUE

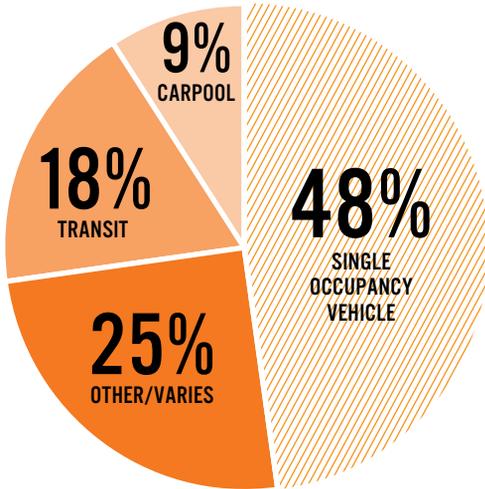
Support for alternative transportation options.

THE RESPONSE

The Active & Safe Routes to School project is working to increase cycling, walking, rolling, and public transit use among children, youth and their families travelling to and from school. With a grant from the Victoria Foundation, the project will look to map safe routes to schools, identify needed infrastructure such as bike racks and pathways, and engage and educate students about needed skills such as bike riding and maintenance. Up to 20 elementary and middle schools will participate in the 2016/2017 school year.

VEHICLE USE & COMMUTING

METHODS OF COMMUTING TO WORK OR SCHOOL, 2015/16



63%

Percentage of Greater Victoria residents who reported that vehicle use was their main mode of non-work/school transportation in 2015/16.

SOURCE: BC TRANSIT

DID YOU KNOW?

Besides the obvious bicycle lanes on roadways, there are many features and services that are helping to make the Capital Region more cycle-friendly. For example, there are currently more than **1,000** sidewalk bicycle-parking opportunities in downtown Victoria, plus more than **100** spots within **5** city-owned parkades. And cyclists who use BC Transit to commute from outside the core can use bike lockers available at the McTavish Road Park and Ride near the Airport, at the Western Exchange Park and Ride in Colwood, or at the Langford Exchange on Station Avenue.

SOURCES: CITY OF VICTORIA AND GREATER VICTORIA CYCLING COALITION

2015/16 TRANSIT USE

51% OF TRANSIT RIDERS IN GREATER VICTORIA REPORTED RIDING TRANSIT BY CHOICE, UP FROM **46%** IN 2014/15.

SOURCE: BC TRANSIT



IN 2015/16, THE VICTORIA REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM PROVIDED **809,000** SERVICE HOURS AND **25.8** MILLION PASSENGER TRIPS THROUGH ITS CONVENTIONAL TRANSIT SERVICE.

Greater Victoria's transit system continues to out-perform similar-sized transit systems across Canada with **38.3%** more passengers per capita, **12.4%** more passengers per service hour and **13.5%** lower operating cost per passenger.

SOURCE: BC TRANSIT

DID YOU KNOW?

Victoria Regional Transit Commission



No matter where you are in Victoria, the familiar glimmer of BC Transit buses is always within view – and we wouldn't have it any other way! BC Transit's mission is to connect people and communities as they continue to work with customers and federal, provincial, and local partners to build a sustainable future.

Last year alone, well over 25 million trips were taken on BC Transit conventional

buses in Victoria, while over 350,000 were taken with BC Transit handyDART. This means that Victorians, more than ever before, are choosing sustainable transportation options to explore the beautiful city we call home.

While proud of the past, our transit future is what's truly exciting. Through the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF), the federal and provincial governments have secured \$26 million for transit

improvement projects in Victoria.

Over the next three years, the PTIF investment will fund the extension of bus lanes on Highway 1 from Tolmie Avenue to the McKenzie interchange, an upgraded handyDART maintenance and operations facility, and the installation of CCTV cameras and automated vehicle location technology on conventional vehicles in Victoria. This is designed

to make the transit journey safer for operators and customers, as well to improve customer service.

BC Transit is proud to be part of this community, and honoured to be trusted to take Victorians to where they need to be. Whether it is a punctual morning commute to school or work, or a leisurely weekend trip to the ferry terminal or the beach, BC Transit connects you to your community.

4 PROFILES OF BELONGING

“ We are most fully human, most truly ourselves, most authentically individual, when we commit to the community. It is in the mirror of our community – the street, the neighbourhood, the town, the country – that we find our best selves.

Adrienne Clarkson, 26th Governor General of Canada (1999-2005)

Belonging isn't just a feeling, it's a powerful catalyst – for creating healthier citizens, stronger communities and, ultimately, a more inclusive country. A greater sense of belonging has the capacity to transform us: When we truly belong, we step up to actively participate in the social, economic and cultural pulse of our communities; we make better life choices and find meaning more easily; we build networks of sustaining relationships; and we create safer and more resilient neighbourhoods.

But to really foster a sense of belonging – to give everyone, in equal measure, that feeling of being a part of a greater whole – communities need to send signals of acceptance and inclusion. In turn, individuals need to cultivate connection with other people, and agree to engage deeply in their community.

When we think about belonging in Greater Victoria, we think about what it means for the general population, as well as for key population groups. What does belonging mean for Indigenous people? For newcomers? What about our young people and seniors? Belonging is a big concept, so we decided to unpack it. Like the Community Foundations of Canada, the Victoria Foundation approaches belonging from the perspectives of reconciliation, inclusion and connectedness. What follows is a snapshot of four population groups in the region using available data and examples of local efforts to strengthen the different aspects of belonging.

Percentage of Canadians who do not feel that they have a stake in their local community, according to research for the 2015 National Vital Signs Report



Aboriginal Early Education and Nutrition Programs Coordinator Rebecca Mabee (right) chats with a family at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

Number of distinct First Nations in BC:

198

The **50** First Nations on Vancouver Island belong to three cultural groups: **Coast Salish** (South Island); **Nuu-chah-nulth** (West Coast); and **Kwakwaka'wakw** (North Island).

23 Approximate number of First Nations traditional territories on which the Capital Region sits.

Within these, **11** have reserve lands and of those **9** have settlement populations within the region.



Percentage of people who self-identified as Aboriginal in Greater Victoria in 2011.

In 2011, **46%** of Aboriginal people, age 15 years and over, in the Capital Region had a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree, compared to **60%** of the total population.

Of those Aboriginal people with post-secondary qualification, **27%** had university credentials at the bachelor level or above, and of those, **31%** had advanced degrees.

58%

Percentage of the Aboriginal population of Greater Victoria, aged 15 and over, employed, compared to **61%** of the total population (2011).

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

CHECK-UP ON BELONGING

Belonging starts at the family level, says Mavis Underwood, a band councillor with the Tsawout First Nation. "Unfortunately, that's where we've run into problems, because many people don't have that rootedness; they don't have a family structure to lean on — and that's where your security and belonging comes from."

Underwood points out the family's centrality in building foundational skills in managing relationships, developing self-esteem and furnishing a sense of pride. She sees the current statistics for Aboriginal poverty and homelessness as key examples of what's undermining belonging. "Many of our children live in poverty every day," Underwood says. "I know many adults who only eat one meal a day when the kids are in school, because all their resources go to providing for the children." Finding resolutions at the community level that are more supportive of families will help keep families together, which furthers a sense of empowerment and ability.

Improving the state of housing is a big part of the equation. "People have to have safe, affordable housing," says Underwood. Without a safe home to operate from, that sense of belonging and security are compromised; people are limited in their ability to advocate for their rights and needs — and well-

intentioned community services won't find a landing place." How useful is that anger management counselling if you don't have access to safe, secure housing?

"People don't get what they need in terms of mental health support if they don't have a place to go back to," she says. The strain of living without a home spills outward in a stress-compounding ripple effect, affecting the individual's wellbeing and, ultimately, life expectancy.

"I would like to see more affordable housing for the working poor — the people who are totally without [supports]," adds Underwood. "That there be some way they could have decent and supportive housing with hubs of social service around them."

Siem Lelum (Respected House), a pilot project by the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC), is a start. The 40-unit "urban village" housing complex offers affordable housing for multi-aged Aboriginal people who are working, raising children, at risk of becoming homeless or who otherwise would benefit from living in a supportive environment. The project offers safe, affordable and holistic living that both encourages healthy lifestyle choices and moves the CRD toward its goal of eliminating homelessness. It's also a vehicle for re-empowering Aboriginal people on their traditional lands.

““ There is a paradox of belonging for First Peoples. On one hand, from birth we have a deep sense of belonging to a people, to a community, to a particular place. On the other hand, we receive subtle reminders of 'non-belonging' every day. Institutions do not reflect who we are. Curriculum in schools does not reflect our sense of geography or history. When we walk into a store or get on public transit, we never know if we will be welcomed. This can reinforce a sense of being second-class citizens in our own country.

Roberta Jamieson, OC, CEO, Indspire

NEWCOMERS

“ Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgment of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour ... Reconciliation must inspire Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to transform Canadian society so that our children and grandchildren can live together in dignity, peace and prosperity on these lands we now share.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Final Report (2015)

regaining a sense of belonging, and closing the gap between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community.

“Siem Lelum provides a place where tenants can gather, celebrate, and learn basic life skills, like cooking,” says Bruce Parisian, executive director of the VNFC. “Many young people don’t have parenting skills, yet they are parents themselves. We’re teaching them basic life skills, like how to cook and how to can fish. We’re trying to put an Aboriginal slant to that facility so that maybe in the future they won’t have to depend on this Friendship Centre – they can help themselves.”

It’s all about strengthening community and belonging, says Parisian. “The *Indian Act* and residential schools were about taking the Indian out of the Indian,” he says. “We’re trying to put that back. If we can create that sense of community and give it back to individuals, we can help people feel proud of their cultural identity, and of who they are.”

As an Aboriginal organization serving all generations, the VNFC provides an opportunity for people to practice their culture, no matter what tribe or band they call their own. “It’s just being in a place where there are other Indigenous people. It’s communal—that’s an integral part of Aboriginal society no matter where you go.” Having a safe space to gather is one way to strengthen belonging. “Everyone has a cultural identity, no matter who they are,” says Parisian. “But people tried to eradicate the Indian, and so much has been lost. Aboriginal people in some ways feel ashamed of who they are because of the past.”

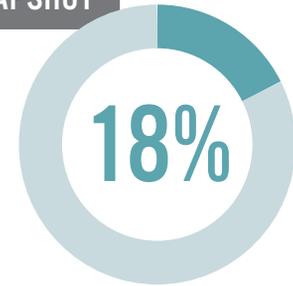
WINDS OF CHANGE

In July 2015, all BC Health Authority CEOs signed a declaration to demonstrate their commitment to advancing cultural humility and cultural safety within health services, striving for respectful engagement and a commitment to address power imbalances in the health care system. The declaration holds up the importance of forging relationships based on mutual trust, and of humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another’s experience. Also, in 2013, the First Nations Health Authority became the first province-wide health authority of its kind in Canada.

The CRD has been listening – to elders, knowledge keepers, elected leaders and hereditary Chiefs – and learning that Indigenous peoples are inextricably tied to the land: it is reflected in their languages, ways of knowing, medicines, the foods that make them healthy, and their spirituality. Local governments are committed to making decisions with First Nations governments at the table, side by side, and supporting Indigenous resilience.

The Victoria Foundation is one of 57 signatories to the Philanthropic Community’s Declaration of Action. Established at the close of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2015, the Declaration is a call to action inviting others to join in moving forward in an atmosphere of understanding, dignity and respect towards the shared goal of reconciliation.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

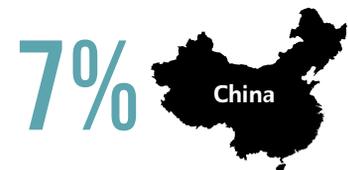


Percentage of immigrants in Greater Victoria (2011)

Recent immigrants, or those who arrived between 2006 and 2011, accounted for **11%** of all immigrants in the region and nearly **half** of recent immigrants were born in Asia.

In 2011, the employment rate for immigrants age 15 years and over was **53%**, compared to **61%** for the total population.

3 most common countries of birth of immigrants living in Greater Victoria:



In 2011, **69%** of immigrants age 15 years and over had a post-secondary credential. **50%** of all immigrants with post-secondary qualifications obtained their qualifications outside Canada.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA



Volunteer Kathi Thompson (in green), facilitating an ESL class at the Victoria Immigrant & Refugee Centre

CHECK-UP ON BELONGING

While local agencies are doing incredible work to welcome newcomers, there are places where more government involvement and organization could streamline or improve community functioning. At times, enormous gaps result from a siloed view of responsibilities, says David Lau, executive director of the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre.

Here's an example. Newly arrived citizens who lack their permanent residency (PR), either because they are temporary foreign workers or because they are waiting for a spouse or family member to carry out their sponsorship – sometimes even because they've been smuggled into the country through the sex trade – are at times incarcerated for not having the proper paperwork. "Over 300,000 people in Canada – 300 of them youth – are in criminal detention for not having their paperwork," Lau says. Yet no level of

government has taken ownership of the problem.

"School districts could make a policy stating, say, within three weeks of arrival all youth must be in school. Or it could be the province, saying the same thing," he says. "This happens on multiple fronts in multiple locations in Canada, and is part of an examination of how Victoria stacks up as a sanctuary city. Do our newcomers have access to city services? To schools? To policing?"

Clearly, a lack of clear policies presents an obstacle to belonging. But there are other, more day-to-day barriers to belonging too: longtime Victoria residents who carry an "accent bias"; a reluctance on the part of employers to accept foreign credentials; a lack of support for newcomer youth, whose parents may be working three jobs; a newcomer's fear of coming forward after witnessing an assault because they lack a PR card.

“ Canadians understand that diversity is our strength. We know that Canada has succeeded – culturally, politically, economically – because of our diversity, not in spite of it.

**Right Honourable Justin Trudeau,
Prime Minister of Canada**

“ No one agency or level of government can do this alone. The power in being able to approach the development of belonging and social connectedness comes from having as many stakeholders in the room as possible – police, libraries, businesses, school districts. It allows different players to have that conversation. Out of that, all kinds of things start to happen that you couldn’t do alone.

Steven Baileys, Community Development Coordinator, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

WINDS OF CHANGE

The Greater Victoria Local Immigration Partnership (GVLIP) is a community-based coalition working to make Greater Victoria more inclusive and welcoming so newcomers can realize their full potential. The purpose of the federally-funded GVLIP is to create and implement a regional immigration strategy to attract newcomers and ensure long-term settlement and integration. The GVLIP builds on the work of the Inter-Cultural Association and the 200+ member Community Partnership Network.

Started with provincial seed money seven years ago, the Community Partnership Network (CPN) pulls community stakeholders together to find ways of helping newcomers. Spanning health care, education, business, faith and cultural groups, nonprofits and all five regional police forces, the CPN meets regularly to collaborate and problem-solve, and offers workshops and seminars for community members.

Established in 2003 to improve relationships between police and diverse communities, the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee comprises community representatives and police officers from all police agencies in the region with the aim of fostering trust and building positive relationships.

YOUTH

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

In 2013, most students in grades 7 to 12 on South Vancouver Island felt their family had fun together (**68%**), understood them (**60%**) and paid attention to them (**76%**). Students who felt their family paid attention to them were more likely to feel good about themselves and their abilities.



Percentage of students who indicated that there was an adult in their family they could turn to if they were having a serious problem.

Percentage who felt they had an adult outside their family they could turn to if faced with a problem.



In 2013, the majority of students on South Vancouver Island (**63%**) felt they were a part of their school and **68%** were happy to be at their school. For the first time since 2003, more students felt safe at their school (**81%**).

In 2013, **37%** of students in South Vancouver Island reported that they felt quite a bit or very connected to their community.

SOURCE: McCREARY CENTRE SOCIETY

CHECK-UP ON BELONGING

A sense of connection, then, breeds belonging. As social animals, humans evolved to grow up and live in community. All the evidence points to increasing connectedness for youth as resulting in improved outcomes in all the important areas of life. “Youth who feel more connected to their community have lower rates of stress, feel less despair and are less likely to have self-harmed or attempted suicide,” says Petra Chambers-Sinclair, coordinator of the Child and Youth Health Network (CYHN) of the Capital Region. Getting youth connected to place and community bolsters that sense of belonging, confers advantages in terms of educational outcomes and carries over long into their adult lives.

But not all our children and youth experience that beneficial sense of social connectedness. “The experience of belonging varies enormously for children and youth in the Capital Region,” says Chambers-Sinclair. “All people need to feel that they belong, but there are enormous disparities in the degree of healthy social

“ My biggest inspiration comes from youth who are inspired to make a difference: the sixth grade student who stands up to a bully; the sophomore who doesn’t laugh at the racist joke; the group that rallies the community for food bank donations. It’s these types of stories and local heroes that remind me why we’re doing the work that we are.

Craig Kielburger, co-founder, Free The Children

supports available to youth in our region." Young people need mentorship from adults, she asserts, because the health and resilience of the entire community depends on successful transition to adulthood by its young people. Chambers-Sinclair states, however, that nowadays mentors are scarce for many children and youth—and in many communities, the mentors they do have are overworked and burning out. "Ultimately, we all need to work together to support the successful transition to adulthood for the next generation, and I believe creating resilient networks of social connectedness for young people is one of the best ways to approach that."

Adults increasingly feel that they don't know how to support young people through the process of becoming successful adults, says Chambers-Sinclair. "We end up with a situation where adults feel alienated from youth, youth feel disconnected and abandoned by adults, and the successful transition to adulthood remains incomplete for many young people through their 20s, 30s and even longer," she says. "All of these factors create fragmented and weak systems that lack resilience at the individual, family and community levels. At a time when we are facing some of the most complex challenges in human history. We need to wade into this space and work with young people to figure out how to help them."

THE WINDS OF CHANGE

The CYHN has a mission of increasing connectedness to improve the wellbeing of young people in the Capital Region. In 2016, the CYHN began developing an Index of Connectedness as part of its shared measurement system. The index comprises a comprehensive review of indicators for measuring connectedness in young people, with the aim of creating a single composite index that will then identify gaps to be addressed as well as recommendations for using the results.

The City of Victoria Youth Council, one of several in the region, is a youth-driven, grassroots program that gives a voice to

“ The leverage point we have been missing, the thing we need to focus our collective efforts on to improve the mental and physical health of young people, is their level of connectedness to family, school and community.

Greater Victoria Child and Youth Health Network



City of Victoria Youth Council Executive Members (2015-2016) at the organization's 10th anniversary celebration held at City Hall

JODI MUCHA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF BC HEALTHY COMMUNITIES SOCIETY

youth 14 to 24 years old. They work with Victoria's mayor, council and city staff to include youth perspectives in municipal processes and decisions, and to take action about issues important to youth. Recent activities include hosting a Q&A with mayoral candidates, holding a mental health forum for youth, facilitating a youth art mentorship program and running their second employability skills fair.

The Victoria Native Friendship Centre has raised three totem poles, each representing one of the Island's cultural groups. "We've carved these poles through engaging youth and building pride in who they are as individuals," says Parisian. "We provided training in things like the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and first aid so they can get jobs."

Seventy-two youth aged 16 to 18 participated in the program, resulting in a 98% success rate in job placement. "That's unheard of in the Aboriginal community," says Parisian. "Friendship Centres are trying to support our people by giving them a sense of belonging, culture and who they are. Then we move them into a process where they can get themselves to a stage where they are successful: finding employment or a roof overhead, or taking care of their kids so they don't get taken away. We are supporting families to then become successful."

SENIORS

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

In 2015, **20%** of the population in Greater Victoria were aged 65 years and over, compared to 18% in BC and 16% in Canada. The senior population in the region has increased just over **17%** since 2001.

Percentage of the population in Greater Victoria aged 65 years and over who reported a somewhat strong or very strong sense of belonging to the local community in 2014.



CHECK-UP ON BELONGING

Strong social connections bestow positive impacts on an older person's life and health, ranging from better immune response and lower blood pressure to the prevention of chronic disease and lower mortality rates. People who enjoy a strong sense of belonging are more able to navigate the journey of aging by connecting with local services and resources, and by increasing their health literacy.

Conversely, social isolation is a major risk to an elder's wellbeing. "When people are isolated, they are less likely to seek out resources, or to even know what to look for," says Lori McLeod, executive director of the Victoria Eldercare Foundation. "There's a lot of confusion." Without a strong network, people have difficulty weathering transitions such as retirement or downsizing. "A social network including friends, family and neighbours helps to expand people's horizons with their knowledge of resources and wealth of experience from which to draw," says



Recreational Therapist James Benson with a resident of the Eldercare Foundation's Therapeutic Gardening Program

VICTORIA ELDERCARE FOUNDATION

McLeod. "But if people feel disconnected from friends and community, they have nowhere to turn and no one to trust."

It's a different world nowadays, too. "It used to be that people would live together or in close proximity and the grandparents would look after the kids while the parents worked," says McLeod. But we're working farther into our retirement years now. We change jobs. We change cities. We lose touch. And for all its promise of community building, social media ultimately provides a false sense of connection because it lacks the emotional power of face-to-face interaction.

Seniors migrate to Victoria from all across Canada to retire, but if a major transition occurs before they've built a sense of community — the death of a spouse, say, or a change in health — they can quickly find themselves in a strange environment with no support. "We've lost our neighbourhoods," says McLeod. "How many people are living in apartment buildings where they don't know anybody? If something happens to them, who's going to know about it? We don't have that close family anymore, so our family needs to be our community and neighbours and friends." Banding together as neighbours to share our knowledge, expertise and time is something we must commit to, says

McLeod, in order for everyone to feel they have value — and that they belong.

THE WINDS OF CHANGE

As part of People Power, the CRD's Active Transportation and Healthy Communities Program, the Connecting Older Adults Map offers an online resource for older adults and their caregivers highlighting services, facilities and places for social connection. Icons denote places for recreation, lifelong learning, volunteering, support groups and social centres, and show public transit routes serving these locations.

Every March, the Eldercare Foundation shines the light of awareness on Embrace Aging Month, which highlights resources, activities, educational opportunities and ways for seniors to connect with others to help them navigate the journey of aging. Promoted by local media and supported by numerous resource and service providers, Embrace Aging Month showcases the myriad options for seniors to get involved in the community, guided by the Foundation's four pillars for better quality of life: health and wellness, financial and personal security, enhanced social opportunity and an enriched cultural/spiritual experience.

“ Making cities inclusive of older persons means generating opportunities for their economic and social participation in accessible and safe environments. It also means providing affordable housing, as well as the health and social services needed to support ageing in place.” – **UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon**

COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE CENTRE



CONNECTING PEOPLE WHO CARE WITH CAUSES THAT MATTER®



Discover charities working on local issues that matter most to you.

The Community Knowledge Centre (CKC) is an online resource for our community and our community leaders, business people, donors, non-profit organizations, and education institutions on the different organizations working in various areas of need in our community.

Visit the Community Knowledge Centre site ckc.victoriafoundation.bc.ca and...

DISCOVER a comprehensive list of organizations that matter most to you. Search by region, people or *Vital Signs* issue areas.

CONNECT through reading amazing stories, watching videos and linking with the people and organizations who understand the issues and are making an impact.

GIVE to a cause that matters and donate directly from a CKC profile page, or contact the Victoria Foundation for assistance with your giving decisions.

comprehensive list of organizations



engaging videos

Start your search with this user-friendly site ckc.victoriafoundation.bc.ca

IslandSavings

Island Savings' newest GIFT to the community.



The Full Cupboard is an innovative program designed to raise food, funds and awareness for food banks in our communities. Let's ensure no Island child goes hungry.

Donate today in branch or visit: islandsavings.ca/TheFullCupboard