

# Neighbours get the Tools to Connect across Diversity



*Neighbours meeting at the Cherry Park Neighbourhood Forum in March 2017 to talk about being active in their community and about how to unleash the power of neighbours. This event, co-hosted by the Cherry Park Neighbourhood Association and the Social Development Centre was the result of the Neighbourhood Connections Award that they won at the Festival Celebration in the Fall of 2016.*

## *The Neighbourhood Connections Award has had a Deep Impact in Neighbourhoods across Kitchener*

The Neighbourhood Connections Award was introduced in 2000 by the Social Development Centre to inspire neighbours to improve social cohesion and the quality of life for everyone. This award is presented annually at the Festival Celebration in November to a neighbourhood that expresses a clear wish to connect people of different backgrounds and involve neighbours across diversity. With this award, the Social Development Centre facilitates an engagement process and addresses neighbourhood concerns about equity and community capacity. The solutions that arise are as varied as the neighbourhoods themselves.

Valley View neighbours connected youth and adults in a photo-voice exploration of their community. Cherry Park built connections between long-standing residents and families new to the neighbourhood. Traynor-Vanier neighbours worked to build solidarity across culture and language to improve safety and property standards in their buildings. This is just a small sample of the sorts of solutions that have emerged over the years in other neighbourhoods.

Victoria Park Neighbourhood is this year's winner of the Neighbourhood Connections Award. They are exploring ways to strengthen the social cohesion in their neighbourhood around equity and inclusion.



*Kitchener's Festival of Neighbourhoods encourages everyone to organize inclusive activities in their immediate neighbourhood. Contact us for tips and resources in Kitchener to help bring your neighbours together and to ensure that your activity qualifies your neighbourhood for the \$20,000 capital improvement grant draws. **Register** your inclusive neighbourhood gathering (held between October 1st, 2018 and September 30th, 2019) with the Festival before October 5th, 2019 and join us at the Festival Celebration at Kitchener City Hall on Sunday, November 17th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. when the draws for the \$20,000 neighbourhood grants will be held and the winners announced.*



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