

# A Poverty Free Region



**Poverty Free  
Kitchener-Waterloo**

It costs less to keep people healthy and housed than it costs to address social, health and economic impacts of poverty. The loss of well-paying jobs, inadequate social assistance rates and significant cuts to

government funded support services mean more people must survive on limited resources.

It has been calculated that *Ontario Works* recipients in Waterloo Region need an additional \$200/month to cover their basic food and shelter costs.<sup>1</sup> Current social assistance rates, and the minimum wage, fail to ensure a decent quality of life that includes adequate shelter, food, clothing, transportation, communication, recreation & culture, and participation in the community.

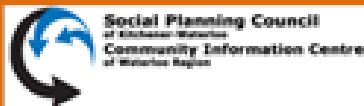
Each local municipal government (the region, cities and townships) and school board has an immediate and crucial role to play in contributing to quality of life in the community and ensuring dignity and respect for those who live in poverty.

## We've still got a way to go ...

- Endorse increases to social assistance and to minimum wage and adopt a living wage.
- Ensure there is an adequate community infrastructure for healthy and resilient living.
- Build & maintain affordable & supportive housing that includes outreach programs.
- Adopt policies that will improve availability of, and access to, healthy food in the region.
- Make sure people get help, when and how they need it, by improving collaboration between social services, non-profit community groups and peer support groups.
- Ensure ample free & low-cost recreation/cultural activities and programs are available.
- Open up or create more public spaces that are welcoming and accessible for everyone.
- Collaborate with experienced community partners, such as the Social Planning Council of Kitchener-Waterloo, to ensure inclusive public engagement for creating and implementing local strategies to eliminate poverty.

## Things to talk about:

- What role do municipal governments and school boards have in reducing the impact of poverty?
- How can everyone (local public bodies, community organizations and community members) work together to eliminate poverty?
- What can local elected officials do to advocate for a greater equality of income distribution?



How, where, when & why to vote:

[www.waterlooregion.org/municipal-elections-2014](http://www.waterlooregion.org/municipal-elections-2014)

contact [spckw@waterlooregion.org](mailto:spckw@waterlooregion.org)

519-579-1096/\*3010

<sup>1</sup> Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 2014