
Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child

Strategic Overview

Revised: September 2007

20% of Hamilton's residents are living in poverty.
Rates are even higher for children under 14 (24%),
Seniors age 65 and older (24%),
the Aboriginal community (37%),
and recent immigrants (50%).
This is unacceptable.

We stand together as a community to find solutions.

(Source: Hamilton Poverty Matrix, 2005)

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction is co-convened by
the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Community Foundation.



Acknowledgements

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction is co-convened by the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Community Foundation. The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction acknowledges the following organizations for their financial support.

- City of Hamilton
- Hamilton Community Foundation
- Pictorvision
- Dofasco
- Turkstra Lumber
- The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
- Vibrant Communities
- Charles Johnson Charitable Fund
- Department of Canadian Heritage

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction acknowledges in-kind support received from the Social Planning and Research Council, Wesley Urban Ministries, City of Hamilton, Hamilton Community Foundation, Caledon Institute of Social Policy and Vibrant Communities.

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction acknowledges the leadership and contributions of the Starting Point Partners including the Hamilton Best Start Network, Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, School Aged Solutions, Skills Development Flagship, Hamilton Immigrant Workforce Integration Network and Affordable Housing Flagship. Finally, we acknowledge the efforts of many community organizations leading community solutions.

For More Information

Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
120 King Street West, Suite 700
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4V2

T: 905.523.5600
F: 905.523.0741

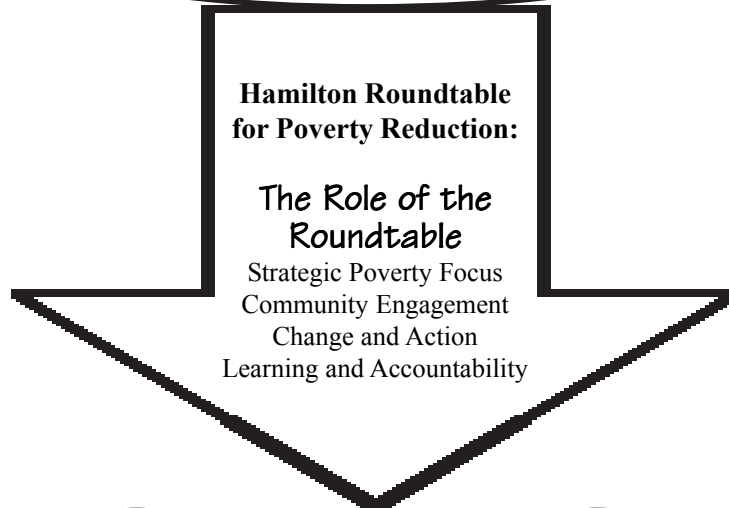
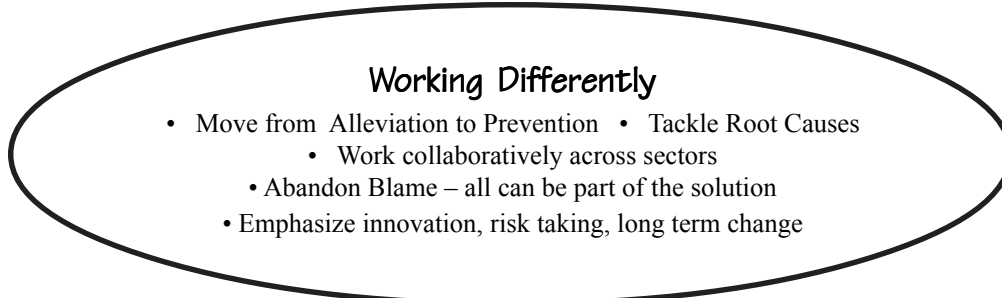
www.hamiltonpoverty.ca



The Aspiration: Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child

Tackling Root Causes:

Affordable Housing, Food Security, Income Security, Accessible Transportation,
Social Inclusion, Safe Neighbourhoods



Changes in: Structures Processes Policies Indicators	Community-Level Macro Strategy	Knowledge Transfer: Outputs Outcomes Evaluation Learning
	Critical Points of Investment Strategy	
	Local Strategies & Community Solutions	



Working Differently

As a community, this is how we need to work differently:

- shift our emphasis from alleviation to prevention
- think comprehensively and tackle the root causes of poverty including income security, employment, food security, affordable housing, accessible transportation, social inclusion and safe neighbourhoods
- work collaboratively across sectors
- abandon blame and acknowledge that people living in poverty have a role in creating solutions
- emphasize innovation, risk taking and long term change

The Role of the Roundtable

1. Promote a Strategic Poverty Focus

- We will develop and articulate shared poverty reduction aspirations and outcomes across all sectors of the community
- We will keep the focus on strategic community change
- We will influence decisions about poverty in the community

2. Encourage Broad Community Engagement

- We will engage the community in creating shared change goals and solutions
- We will create space for frank and open discussion across all sectors

3. Leverage Change and Action

- We will identify barriers that block progress and strategies that provide solutions
- We will link organizations and sectors that are crucial to effective strategies
- We will leverage resources, attract community investment, and encourage alignment of resources to support change

4. Ensure Learning, Communication and Accountability

- We will facilitate exchange of knowledge that informs and drives change
- We will communicate to the community about poverty and change strategies
- We will measure progress (outcomes and process) and report back to the community
- We will provide administrative support to keep the change initiative moving forward

Three Levels of Strategy

As we move forward, the Roundtable will initiate strategies at three levels:

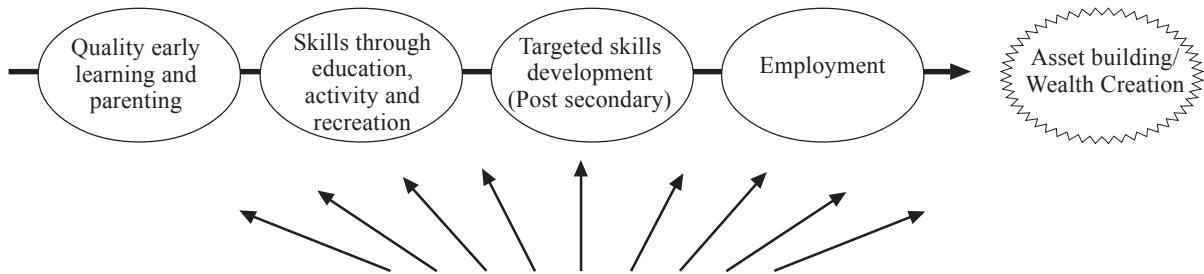
- √ The “**macro**” strategy is a broad community-level approach focused at the foundational community supports, policy and systems level change required for poverty reduction
- √ **Five Critical Points of Investment** will be driven by specific strategic outcomes, each defined by a starting point partner
- √ **Local strategies and community solutions** will be assessed to build community knowledge, synergies and best-practice approaches

See page 5-6 for details.



Change Framework

Our change framework provides a strategic vision for the community and describes five critical points of investment as children progress through life. The progression rests on important foundational community supports as illustrated below.



Foundational Community Supports

Civic engagement and broad social inclusion

Universal access to health care supports that focus on prevention, early intervention and mental health

Strong educational institutions

A solid economy producing quality employment and a living wage

Affordable housing opportunities in neighbourhoods across the city

Accessible and reliable transportation system

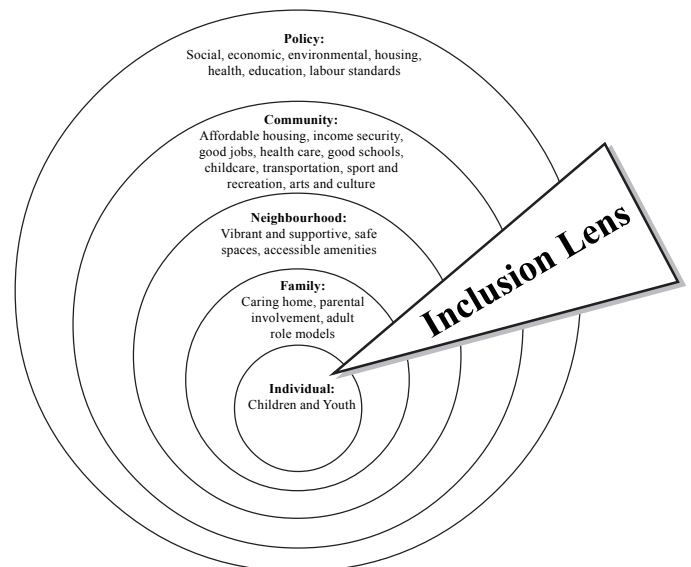
Accessible amenities at the neighbourhood level (supermarkets, pharmacies, banks, libraries, recreation, etc.)

Adequate and responsive income security programs

Institutional and community behavior that values the participation and contributions of youth

Not Just Individual Children

To make significant change in the chances for individual children, we must look at the community and the systems that surround them. The notion of the child at the centre of a series of concentric circles (individual, family, school, neighbourhood, community, policy) helps us focus on the various systems of support—and potential barriers—that affect a child’s development and progression toward adulthood and that either create or prevent poverty. An inclusion lens informs our view of all the systems.



Starting Point Strategies, 2007

Strategy	Community Lead/Partner	Community Gap	Community Outcomes
Macro Strategy			
Macro Strategy: The Big Picture	Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction	By discouraging silo efforts and bringing sectors together, we will be able to strategically focus on poverty reduction including setting measurable goals, addressing the root causes of poverty and reporting our progress to the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child is an aspiration shared across the community • The community is actively involved in identifying change goals and solutions • A civic space exists for dialogue about poverty reduction • Strategies and solutions are developed to address barriers that block progress to achieving the aspiration • Organizations and sectors are linked to effective strategies and solutions • Resources are aligned and leveraged to support poverty reduction efforts • Knowledge and best practices are disseminated to inform and drive change • Progress is measured and reported to the community

Critical Points of Investment

Quality Early Learning and Parenting	Hamilton Best Start Network	The HRPR will support the development of Neighbourhood Early Learning and Care Hubs in all low income neighbourhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More high quality Early Learning and Care Hubs in low-income neighbourhoods • Better availability, accessibility and integration of services in Early Learning and Care Hubs in low income neighbourhoods • Increased community understanding of the importance of high quality Early Child Development opportunities
Skills through Education, Activity and Recreation	School Aged Solutions	The HRPR will work with partners to promote access to existing out of school programs , identify program gaps in low income neighbourhoods and align resources to fill those gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School age children of Hamilton will have access to high quality out of school programs in their neighbourhoods • Out of school programs are recognized as a key component for a healthy community • There is a continuum of community programs and services, from cradle to career, for all children and their families which makes Hamilton the ‘best place to raise a child’.



Strategy	Community Lead/Partner	Community Gap	Community Outcomes
----------	------------------------	---------------	--------------------

Critical Points of Investment (cont'd)

Targeted Skills Development	Skills Development Flagship	The HRPR will support a partnership to establish an innovative skills development program for at-risk youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a program that integrates identified best practices for skills development in youth at risk • Identify an agency or agencies in Hamilton for the delivery of programs through the City’s request for proposal process • Secure funding for the delivery of the program • Pilot the model with at risk youth in Hamilton • Evaluate the success of the model
Employment	Hamilton Immigrant Workforce Integration Network	The HRPR will support the development of a multi-stakeholder table that focuses on creating opportunities for meaningful employment for new immigrants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships and support employers to hire immigrants and to integrate them into their workforce • Create awareness of immigrant issues and engage key stakeholders in the activities of the network • Create opportunities for collaboration in the community that support a seamless pathway to employment for immigrants
Asset Building/Wealth Creation	Affordable Housing Flagship	The HRPR will help low income families build savings and assets which move them along the housing continuum (including social housing, rental housing and home ownership).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of people participating in asset building programs (50 emergency shelters, 50 in rental housing, and 50 in Hamilton HomeStart) • Decreased number of low-income families who spend over 30% of their income in housing • Increased understanding of the key role that affordable housing plays in asset building and poverty reduction

Community Solutions

Local Strategies and Community Solutions	Community Partners with ideas and commitment	The HRPR will focus on a shift from alleviation to prevention and encourage all community members to support a collaborative, multi-sector problem solving approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child is an aspiration shared across the community • Organizations and individuals throughout the community are implementing strategies, working together, and playing their unique part in making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child • Knowledge and best practices are disseminated to inform and drive change • Progress is measured and reported to the community
--	--	---	--

For more info: www.hamiltonpoverty.ca



Early Results June 2006 – September 2007

The following are early community impacts resulting from the efforts of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and our many community partners. The Roundtable is committed to evaluating community impacts and reporting results.

Impact on Individuals

- **6,418 low-income families receive \$962,000** through the City of Hamilton return of the National Child Benefit.
- **\$5.9 million dollars invested annually in poverty reduction efforts** by The Hamilton Community Foundation, United Way of Burlington, Greater Hamilton and the City of Hamilton.
- **New services are established in low-income neighbourhoods** including a health centre in the Keith Neighbourhood and an early learning and parenting centre in the Beasley Neighbourhood.
- **8 partnerships developed to support at-risk schools** in Hamilton including The Hamilton Spectator, Kiwanis Club of Greater Hamilton, Hamilton Community Foundation, Hamilton Police Service, Hamilton Port Authority (and partners) and Marks Work Wearhouse.
- **9,755 low-income children, youth and families received targeted programs and services** through the Hamilton Community Foundation’s Tackling Poverty Together investments in community organizations.

How We Work/How We Work Together

- **Over 60 community-led, poverty focused solutions are initiated.**
- **4 organizations establish youth advisory committees**, including the involvement of youth living in poverty, at the City of Hamilton, Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, Hamilton’s Centre for Civic Inclusion and Building a Resilient Community by Engaging Youth.
- **5 community collaborative networks representing over 300 private and public organizations** join with The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction to drive change for children, youth and their families living with low income.

Policy and Systems Change

- **Municipal policy change efforts focus on poverty** include supporting the return of the National Child Benefit Claw back to low income families, policy recommendations have also moved forward in the adoption of a living wage procurement policy, and the adoption of a ‘Low Income Tenant Tax Rebate Program.
- **Ontario Poverty Strategy** is proposed by The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction Policy Working Group.
- **Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction is a community problem solving model** for municipal, provincial and federal government leaders, national and international foundation leadership, and municipalities including Brantford, Kingston, Halton, Red Deer and New Zealand.

