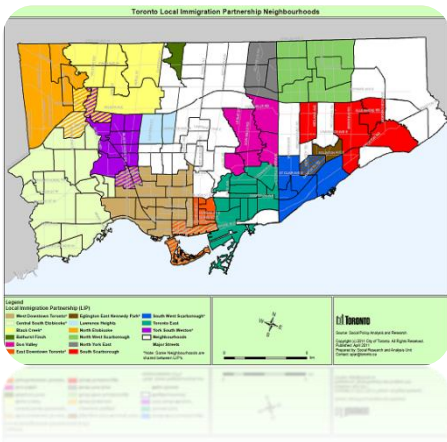




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Future CIC Changes to Toronto LIP's Structure



Map of the Current 15 Toronto Neighbourhood LIP's

In late 2011 CIC called a meeting with the lead agencies of Toronto Neighbourhood LIP's. During the meeting they shared that there would be major structural changes that would take place in the new fiscal year beginning April 2012 and onward.

Currently there are 15 LIP initiatives operating in Toronto, (as shown in the map above) which in 2012 will merge into four regional LIP's, with one already existing, City-Wide LIP, totaling five independent LIP's. This revised structure will promote the shared partnership model.

Additionally, CIC requested all lead agencies in each region to come up with their proposed governance structure, staffing and other details.

Following the CIC meeting, the four LIP lead agencies in Scarborough called for a meeting in mid December. The lead agencies explored the most appropriate structures that would help to maintain momentum of each project as well as continue the initiatives that each LIP Council in Scarborough had already established. They also decided that a model that focused on relating performance accountability to immigrant issues and desired outcomes was the best option for the new structure.

This accountability model will ensure that immigrants are empowered, their voices heard, and promote the sustainability of local initiatives. This model will also respect the work that has already taken place over the past three years and continue best practices. In addition, there will be an immigrant Council that works side by side with the Partnership Council.

The Scarborough LIP's have decided to conduct a joint Council meeting in March 2012 to debrief all its members and assist in the transition in to the new LIP structure.



Voice of Newcomers

February 1st 2012

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IMPORTANT DATES

- Management Committee Meeting
 - January 17th & March 13th, 2012, from 1am-12pm at ACSA - 4155 Sheppard Ave.
- Partnership Council Meeting
 - Partnership Council February 14th, 2012, from 10am-12:30pm at Highbrook Learning Ctr. - 39 Highbrook Dr.
- Working Committee #1: Access to Information
 - January 23rd & February 21st, 2012, from 2:30pm- 4:30pm at Agincourt Library - 155 Bonis Ave.
- Working Committee #2: Employment, Education, & Training
 - January 24th, 2012 & February 21st 2012, from 10am-12pm at Agincourt Library - 4155 Sheppard Ave.
- Working Committee #3: Health & Wellness
 - January 24th & February 22nd 2012, from 10am – 12pm, at : Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities - 4002 Sheppard Ave E Ste. 401
- Working Committee #4: Community Engagement & Social Inclusion
 - January 26th & February 23rd, 2012, from 10am-12pm at ACSA - 4155 Sheppard Ave.
- Working Committee #5: Family Settlement & Legal Support
 - January 26th & February 22nd, 2012, from 2:30pm-4:30pm at 42 Division - 242 Milner Ave.
- Scarborough Region Partnership Council Meeting
 - March 2012, details TBA

YouthLink Success Story

My Message of Hope



I know that there are lots of kids out there dealing with depression and anxiety, some even thinking of suicide.

I want to share my story to send out a message of hope and let them know they are not alone.

~ Jayna

I started feeling sad about five years ago, when I was in Grade 11. I didn't know I had depression; I just felt sad all the time and couldn't focus. At first, I didn't think it was anything, but then I kept on feeling that way and I realized something was wrong.

You can feel so alone and yet my feelings of sadness made me not want to be around other people. That made me isolate myself even more -no phone, no internet. Even with my family who would have understood, I just wanted to keep that away from them. I began having suicidal thoughts even then.

It became really hard for me to do simple things – like getting up for school every day. I had been a good student in Grade 9 and 10, going to class every day but then school just didn't seem important any more.

Then my friends started saying really mean things about me and spreading rumours. It really hurt. I guess they did that because I was behaving differently and they didn't know what was happening. Now I realize they weren't my real friends.

The bullying made it even harder to go to school and I started skipping classes.

My grades started going down and I failed a couple of courses. When I started Grade 12, I began turning to drugs – mostly MDMA (ecstasy). It makes you feel hyper and happy and I could manage being with friends. I took it every Friday so I could have a good time on the weekend, although I was still skipping school a lot.

But things stayed the same. I didn't graduate high school that year. I would spend most of the day in bed and then be awake all night – watching TV and just having too many thoughts to sleep.

The anxiety kept me from doing so many things and I had no social life. I put so much pressure on myself to be a certain way and say certain things that I just didn't want to go out. Especially with friends who had graduated from high school and were going on to university. I wanted to have something I could be proud of, but I wasn't doing that well and wasn't very proud of myself.

I could see the drugs were affecting my health. One day I looked in the mirror and said, "Oh my god, I don't like this! I don't look like myself, I don't feel like myself." So I stopped almost a year ago and haven't gone back.

I first heard about YouthLink last year from a doctor who suggested I come here for counselling. So I came for a couple of sessions and talked with Amy but I felt like I was being forced into it and didn't need help. So I didn't want to listen or try at all.

But I was thinking a lot about my life. Amy kept in touch with me and would often call just to say, "Hey, we're still here, if you need the help you can always come back." One day last May I decided to call her. Somehow I just felt ready. It was my choice and that made all the difference.

Since then I've been coming to counselling regularly. Now I'm seeing Shamsa because Amy is on maternity leave. It helps me think about things differently. Now I understand that my emotions are normal even if they aren't the same as my family and friends.

Shamsa has helped me realize that I am doing some things right. When I talked about the times I had seriously considered suicide, she helped me see

the steps I took so that I didn't end my life.

One of the most important things for me is the idea of having a "toolbox". We talked about different tools I was already using to help me cope and what else I can do when the anxiety starts building. We talked about physical tools like listening to music to distract me or going to the gym, social tools like making a point to spend more time with my family and friends and emotional tools like thinking about how well I'm doing and asking for help.

Now I feel that I'm always walking with that bag full of tools and all I have to do is pull one of them out and fix the situation for myself. I just didn't think of it that way before.

I have really changed from thinking that asking for help means you're weak – now I see it as one of the tools that makes me stronger.

For example, I'm now enrolled in adult school to get my last three high school credits so I can graduate. When I went back I started feeling overwhelmed by anxiety, but was able to speak to the teacher about it.

It's important to get the help you need and it's not a sign of weakness to ask for help. I was so worried about what my friends would think – they didn't think someone my age needed therapy they thought that you'd have to be crazy to go to a psychiatrist. They made me feel like it's not normal.

But I know if I hadn't come to YouthLink for counselling, I'd still be stuck back at home in bed, isolating myself thinking that there was no hope.

I just want to tell kids that everything's going to be okay. Lots of us are dealing with anxiety and depression and there is hope. It's important to tell people that I was feeling suicidal. Because I hope that if someone is thinking that way, then maybe if they hear my story and know that I felt that way too, they can realize there is hope.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT YOUTHLINK, PLEASE VISIT:

<http://www.youthlink.ca>

NWS LIP Meetings & Events

Partnership Council Meeting

Two Partnership Council meetings were held during the months of October and December 2011. The first meeting was held on October 18th at Highbrook Learning Ctr., 39 Highbrook Drive. The theme of this meeting was exploring food and basic needs. The LIP invited two guest speakers who specialize in these areas to discuss the topics in detail.

Barbara Emanuel, Manager of the Food Strategy, through Toronto Public Health (TPH) shared the Food Strategy initiative governed by the City of Toronto. They discussed the six areas of action central to TPH Food Strategy, ways to support food friendly neighbourhoods, making food a centerpiece in Toronto's green economy, eliminating hunger in Toronto, connecting city and countryside through food, empowering residents with food skills and information, and urging federal and provincial governments to establish health-focused food policies. Also expressed was the interest TPH has in working with community organizations to help increase community gardening, mobile vending, developing community based health trainers, promoting world crop gardens, food handler training and certification.

Christine Hewitt, Program Coordinator of the Daily Bread Food Bank was another guest speaker who firstly gave the PC an overview on the daily operations of the food bank organization. They also expressed the willingness of the Daily Bread Food Bank to work with community agencies to meet ethnic and local food needs of a community, creating health projects and building capacity.

To end the 3rd quarter, the NWS LIP organized another Partnership Council meeting on December 6th, 2011 at Mary Ward ESL & LINC Centre - 44 Kelvinway Drive. The theme of this meeting was Housing Needs and Services for newcomers. Two organizations specializing in housing gave presentations and shared their service provisions.

Scarborough Housing Help Centre (SHHC) and Fred Victor were invited to

share their experiences on the different housing needs of newcomers living in Scarborough and throughout Toronto, the services they provide, the challenges faced by newcomers and their organizations surrounding housing.

SHHC specializes in providing service to residents of Scarborough but will make accommodations for those that live outside these boundaries through referrals. Fred Victor, another housing organization based downtown also gave an overview of their newly launched housing program and service expansion to Scarborough. Both of the organizations expressed that they were willing to provide information sessions at the community level to raise public awareness on affordable housing and tenants rights.



Working Committee Meeting

NWS LIP conducted five Working Committee meetings in the last week of October and one in the beginning of November 2011. In each Working Committee meeting the overall discussions were surrounding previous quarter's progress (July to September) and how to expedite some of the selected activities.

As of September many project activities were well under way, with some nearing completion. Those that were lagging, members were consulted in the committee meetings and asked to spend some additional time in getting them up to speed or finding ways to adjust the working process to accommodate the activities.

There was an additional focus group held in October to review the report developed by Working Committee #1: Access to Information: Effective Outreach Tools. Based on the feedback from the focus group the

report was updated and shared with the Partnership Council for final feedback. The final report will be made available on the NWS LIP website in January 2012.

Education Roundtable

The Education Roundtable was held on November 25th at Highbrook Learning Centre and was attended by five major educational institutions: Medix School, Seneca College, Centennial College, TDSB, and TCDSB. The LIP organized this meeting with the intent to initiate a dialogue on how educational institutes can provide better skills training to newcomers making them more competitive in the Canadian labour market.

Topics which came up during the discussion were credentials (assessment processes), referrals and pathways to education which lead to employment, and the need for a further coordinated approach to education and employment. Participants also identified issues faced by newcomers in finding jobs and that there is potential for education institutions to participate in helping newcomers become better integrated into the Canadian workplace. To close, the roundtable discussion gave education institutions the opportunity to share and learn what types of services each other are providing and to come up with possible solutions for the existing gaps and unaddressed issues our newcomers face while preparing for employment.

Participants suggested we explore the possibility of working on some selected areas such as unpacking pathways between languages versus training, organizing information fairs at education institutes to showcase the services available to newcomers, capacity building for frontline staff, and organizing sector specific information fairs for service providers.

FOR MORE DETAILS ON ALL NWS LIP EVENTS YOU CAN ACCESS MEETINGS MINUTES AT:

<http://www.nwslip.com/service-providers/publications.php>

Our Involvement In and Around the Community

Systemic Issues and Social Change Committee

The Systemic Issues and Social Change Committee was established by the West Downtown LIP in April 2011. This committee was formed to address the systemic issues facing newcomers in accessing services.

The committee met in April and July and discussed the possibility of supporting existing coalitions by providing them with a support letter, or by designating individuals to join those coalitions as a member representative of the committee, or other possible approaches. They also identified existing social networks and community campaigns that are already in place and that may be related to or working on some of the identified systemic issues or social change matters.

The committee has reviewed the list of systemic issues and practices that affect accessing services and related campaigns and advocacy activities already in place. The committee has thus decided to focus on the two identified areas in 2012:

1. Campaign to sequester ESL funding in elementary and secondary schools
2. Advocacy on newcomer scams and fraud

The NWS LIP has taken the lead on the second activity and East Toronto LIP will lend its support. The NWS LIP plans to develop a report on popularly used scams and fraud that financial affect vulnerable members of society (ex: newcomers) and share with its Working Committee. It was proposed by the committee to possibly conduct educate sessions for the community using the report after making the appropriate changes.

Health Services Workshop

South Scarborough LIP organized an orientation session in partnership with The Scarborough Hospital, Toronto Public Health, TAIBU Community Health Centre and Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities on October

11th at the Scarborough Civic Centre. The session was attended by mainly settlement workers and other staff members of newcomer service providing organizations. The NWS LIP promoted the event through its website and encouraged Council members to participate.

Newcomers' Health Fair

Later in the month of October, The Scarborough Hospital in partnership with the Toronto Public Health and Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities organized another health fair on October 20th at The Mid-Scarborough Hub for the general public. A number of health service providers showcased their services which was very useful to the participants. In November, Steeles/L'Amoreaux NAP has organized a community speak on health services in partnership with The Scarborough Hospital to educate the community about available services at the hospital and how to navigate different services.

Leadership Training: A Building Block

The Maytree Foundation has launched a new project called, *Building Block Diverse City Leadership Initiative*, in which a NWS LIP staff member is participating. The Maytree will train up 30 leaders from diverse and low income neighbourhoods throughout the GTA. In turn, these leaders will disseminate the training to 900 individuals over a two year period between 2012 and 2013. The course also works with community organizations to identify local leaders and build neighbourhood capacity for change. The aim of the project is to raise civic awareness among the newcomers and residents so that they are aware how government make decisions and how to impact those decisions. Together they will lead local collaborations to address challenges collectively identified in their communities.

For more information about The Maytree Foundations' *Building Block Diverse City Leadership Initiative*

Please visit:
<http://diversecitytoronto.ca/>



3rd Quarter Wrap up

- An external consultant conducted the midterm project evaluation and the report will be shared with Council
- The LIP will finalize reports to be made available as resources tools on its website:
 - effective outreach methods review and recommendations on the newcomer welcoming package and online resources
 - draft report on newcomer scams and fraud
 - resource centre guide for service providers to provide excellent services
- The Education Roundtable conducted opened an avenue to connect educational institutes and other newcomer service providers
- An evaluation was conducted on the LIP website as an effective communication tool and feedback will be incorporated into the projects overall communications strategy
- Continual updates to members on the future of Toronto LIP's and plans to organize a debriefing of all Scarborough LIP's in March 2012

Complete List of NWS LIP Partners

Member Organizations

ACCES Employment

Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre

Agincourt Community Services Association (ACSA)

Arab Community Centre of Toronto (ACCT)

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT)

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)

Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association

Catholic Cross Cultural Services (CCS)

Canadian Tamil Youth Development (CANTYD)

Centre for Information and Community Services (CICS)

Chinese Family Services of Ontario

City of Toronto

East Metro Youth Services (EMYS)

Elizabeth Fry Toronto

Hong Fook Mental Health Association

Medix College

Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto (MNLCT)

Operation Springboard

Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services (PICS)

Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC)

Scarborough Housing Help Centre (SHHC)

Seneca College

Toronto Employment & Social Services (TESS) – Scarborough North

Settlement Assistance and Family Support Services (SAFSS)

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH)

The Tamil Eelam Society of Canada (TESOC)

Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) - Continuing Education Department

Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

Toronto Park, Forestry and Recreation

Toronto Police Service (TPS)

Toronto Public Health (TPH)

Toronto Public Library (TPL)

TransCare Community Support Services

VPI inc.

West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre

YMCA Newcomer Information Centre (Scarborough, Milner)

Youthlink

Resource Partners

Action for Neighbourhood Change – Steeles/L'Amoreaux (ANC S/L'Am)

Community Resource Connection Toronto (CRCT)

Correctional Services of Canada

George Brown College

Muslim Welfare Centre

South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)

Steeles L'Amoreaux Youth Empowerment (SLYE) Network

The Salvation Army – Agincourt Community Church

West Scarborough Community Legal Services

Recognitions to:

Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)

Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC)

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