

VitalSigns®

VITAL



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
GREY BRUCE

We're here for good.

FOCUS ON YOUTH



Inside

Information about youth in Grey Bruce including
Getting Around, Youth Voice, Youth Spaces,
Health & Wellness, Substance Use,
Economic Barriers, Identity & Belonging

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25



Driving change for youth in our communities.



Canada's job market is changing and it's taking a toll on young Canadians. We have a responsibility to help prepare young people for the unprecedented economic and technological changes taking place in the world today. They feel uncertain about their future and face three main barriers to success: a lack of relevant work experience, a lack of relevant skills and a lack of professional networks.

Young people are Canada's future talent and leaders of our country. Prosperity for all Canadians is directly linked to our ability to prepare young people to succeed in a fast-changing global economy. They have the ambition and the potential, and if provided with the right opportunity, they can innovate and transform our social and economic systems to shape a better future.

That's why we're investing in youth through RBC Future Launch, our commitment to empower Canadian youth for the jobs of tomorrow. Over the next 10 years, we're dedicating our knowledge, skills and resources to help young people access meaningful employment through work experience, skills development and networking.

Together with the Community Foundation of Grey Bruce, through our sponsorship of its 2019 Vital Focus on Youth report and joint initiatives throughout the year, we're working to shine a spotlight on the ways we can create positive change in our communities for current and future generations.



Francine

Francine Dyksterhuis, Regional President
Southwestern Ontario, RBC



A MESSAGE FROM COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GREY BRUCE

In our 2016 *Vital Signs*® report, we learned that a great number of Grey Bruce youth do not expect to find a job or live in the region after school. This reality reflects the youth retention problem that most rural communities face across Ontario. If we can focus on the quality of life that youth experience while they are here, a positive experience might prompt them to consider returning to build their lives here as adults. But, before they venture away, let's remember how important their voice is.

In November of 2017, the Foundation convened *Vital Conversations* with young people at two youth-friendly locations in our region: Lighthouse Youth Drop-In run by the Wiarton Salvation Army and Launch Pad Youth Activity and Technology Centre in Hanover. We had participation from almost 50 students — 13 to 18 year olds; Indigenous and non-Indigenous; students from both English school boards; participants from all levels including elementary, secondary and the Georgian College FLEX program. During the sessions, we engaged classrooms across the region through social media connectivity and online Twitter feed documenting the conversations with the hashtag #myvoicemycommunity. At both meetings, youth shaped the conversation while involved in a broad range of creative activities that opened dialogue.

Over the summer of 2018, Community Foundation Grey Bruce released a series of short videos created by Grey Bruce youth on issues of importance to them. Each video addressed a topic that had been advanced by young people at the two *Vital Conversations*. The videos urge adults to pay attention to youth, and they reinforce the fact that youth have lots to say on many topics — they just need to be invited to the table. The

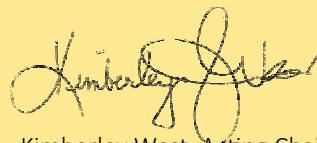
focus of the video clips range widely from regional transportation to the lack of safe youth spaces in our region. The concepts and scripts for the videos were developed by a group of high school students from Owen Sound District Secondary School, in consultation with Youth Facilitator Jason Cranny.

This *Vital Focus on Youth Report* digs deeper into the “issue clusters” that Grey Bruce youth brought forward in our conversations. This report brings together data on the topics that they identified as the most important to them. This report also highlights creative projects by and for youth that have been undertaken by other regional charities and non-profits.

Community Foundation Grey Bruce is grateful to *RBC Future Launch* for its visionary pledge to help Canadian young people become better prepared for a changing workplace and the challenges of adaptability in our contemporary world. RBC's support of this report brings the topic of youth preparedness to the forefront of community discussion and reinforces the impact of this *Vital Focus*.



Maureen Solecki, Board Chair



Kimberley West, Acting Chair/Past Chair



How to read this report

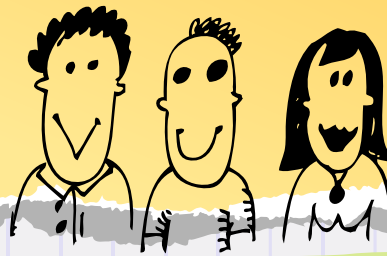
Issue clusters are supported by statistics from various sources. You can download the Indicators and Data Sources Report from our website. Supporting comments were recorded at the Vital Conversations with Youth held in 2017. Foundation Funding at Work describes recent projects that have received grants from our Community Foundation. Pop ups feature stories from local entrepreneurs and decision makers.



DREW MCIVER

Drew McIver is the founder of Can-Dairy Inc. He was born and raised in Owen Sound but developed and honed his brand development and marketing skills on the streets of New York City. Over the past decade, Drew gained experience in the apparel, entertainment, professional sport, and food and beverage industries, before deciding to move back to Canada to pursue his own ventures. He is now living in Grey County on a mission to continue driving innovation in the Canadian dairy industry.

THE FACTS



BRUCE COUNTY

In 2016 there were 14,180 children and youth under the age of 20, making up 21% of the population.

GREY COUNTY

In 2016 there were 19,060 children and youth under the age of 20, making up 20% of the population.

community foundation grants



<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Community Youth Theatre to Enable & Educate, Meaford

A grant to the Meaford Hall & Culture Foundation financed the cost of a two-week camp to help students, ages 8 to 14, participate in learning all aspects of theatre.

<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Meaford Thornbury Special Olympics Group

A grant to this group of young adults helped purchase athletic shoes, allowing them to participate in a fitness program along with their family members.

what we heard...

"All we want is a seat at the table, equal representation when talking about issues that directly affect us."

"You see, we live out loud, we are connected, and we are passionate."



Brockton Youth @ Launch Pad YATC

A transportation program started in Brockton for Launch Pad's Spring 2018 Program Session and continued to Winter 2019. Pick-ups were available at local high schools and youth were returned at the end of the evening to the same location.

13 of the 44 youth utilized the transportation.

This increased youth participation in Skills Development Programming by

30%



GETTING AROUND

The number one killer of Grey Bruce teens (15 to 24) is motor vehicle collisions - an average of 6 deaths per year (based on deaths from 2000 to 2012). The rate is significantly higher than the rate for Ontario. It is double (or 2 times) the rate for the rest of the province and the trend seems to be declining.



what we heard...

"So, let me get this straight, I ride my bike, wear my helmet and bike to work and all is good; however, if I skateboard, long board, or scooter to get to my friend's house, I'm one of THOSE kids. Let's think about embracing the idea of safe, accessible modes of active transportation. Sure, having motorized transportation for youth to get from point A to point B is ideal and, in a perfect world, youth could get from town to town within Grey Bruce, but we aren't there yet."

<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Transportation Access, The Women's Centre, Owen Sound

A grant covered transportation costs for women and their children to attend appointments, educational offerings, retraining and jobs in Grey Bruce.

SUBSTANCE USE

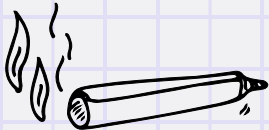
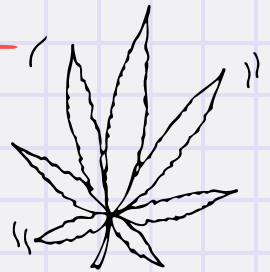


- 22% of Grey Bruce residents report regular heavy drinking.
38% of 18-34 year olds report regular heavy drinking.

- Males ages 12 and up, in Grey Bruce, are twice as likely as women to report regular heavy drinking (30% of men versus 13% of women).

According to the 2017 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey
43% of students between grades 7 and 12 report drinking alcohol during the 12 months before the survey, 19% report using cannabis, 11% report using an opioid not prescribed to them.

- 15% of Grey Bruce residents aged 12 and older report using cannabis in the past year. Cannabis use in the past year for 18-34 year olds is 44% (no different than rest of Ontario).



what we heard...

"There's nothing else to do here."

"The only thing to do is to drink and smoke weed. There are lots of drugs in our community."

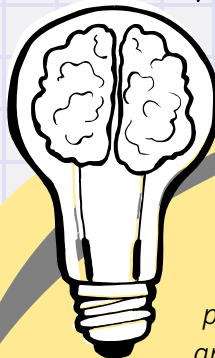
"Open communication across generations will end the taboo about discussing drugs and alcohol with those older than you. Talking things through and sharing information is the only way to change things, so we all need to work together to take this first step."

YOUTH SPACE

60% of children and youth aged 12 to 17 in Grey Bruce engage in over 2 hours a day of screen time.

The national recommendation is for two hours or less of these activities daily.

GOOD IDEA



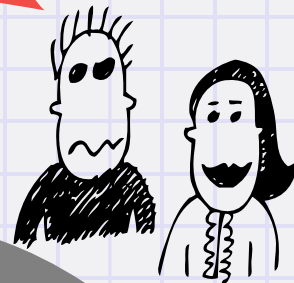
what we heard...

"If only there was a place for us to express ourselves and meet like-minded individuals. We need a place to talk to someone... to get information or support."

"Why do we always have to go to where the adults are?"

<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>
Lighthouse Drop-in Centre, Wiarton

In a rural area with few recreation options and gathering places for youth, the Drop-in provides a much needed free, safe space for youth to spend time, learn life skills, obtain homework help and receive support from caring adults.



YOUTH HAVE A SEAT AT THE TABLE

In spring of 2018, the United Way of Bruce Grey in partnership with Community Foundation Grey Bruce conducted a survey of regional charities and non-profits asking about challenges that they were facing in recruiting the next generation of volunteers. The purpose of the survey was to help us understand the barriers and opportunities for local charities and non-profits in engaging people under the age of 40 to contribute on boards of directors and to move into leadership roles.

The data revealed that organizations seem to have strong participation on boards of directors, with few reports of vacant directors' seats and low meeting absenteeism. Organizations in our region have, generally, an older cohort (50 years and older) of both management and directors. Many are interested in attracting younger board members but are unsure how to engage younger people.

According to our survey, they think younger people are too busy and that some are apathetic. At the same time, younger survey respondents stated they would bring fresh ideas, energy and enthusiasm, new perspectives and insights, technical skills (beyond social media), and connections to the table.

Sectors reporting active recruitment of those under 40 years of age were arts and culture, adult sports, social services, and heritage and historical organizations.

Survey responses gave a nod to concerns for the future of their leadership, but most organizations reported managing adequately at present. The involvement of people under the age of 40 is low and, unless involvement increases, there likely will be a volunteer recruitment crunch to meet board needs in the next 10 to 20 years.

We hope that the survey and its results will lead our charitable and non-profit sector to adjust recruitment methods and find new ways to communicate the merits of involvement. We need to listen to youth to understand the disconnect between our invitation to the table and young people's willingness to take up the challenge.

55% of respondents from non-profit agencies feel young people bring fresh new ideas to the Board Room table.

76% of key leadership position holders are 50 years and older.



Youth meet in Hanover to share their views about the strengths & challenges of a rural community
[#myvoicemycommunity](#) [#vitalsigns](#)



Huddles discuss leaders in community... teachers, coaches, politicians, volunteers, students, police, service clubs. Leaders motivate, take risks and may suggest a different path, are selfless. [#myvoicemycommunity](#)



IDENTITY/BELONGING



95% of children and youth aged 12 to 17 in Grey Bruce feel a strong sense of community belonging. This is higher than the percentage among Ontarian children in the same age group.



<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Making Grey Bruce Home, Owen Sound

This project supports social and economic integration of young refugees and their families into the rural community by offering training, workshops, and a Mentoring and Peer Support Network, along with a drop-in meeting place to help them feel at home.



<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Woodworking Skills Trade Start-up Program, Hanover

Through this grant, Launch Pad adds a 2400 square foot facility to its workforce readiness program to support woodworking skills development. A group of retired furniture manufacture employees and construction workers volunteer to manage the project.

what we heard...

"We see the same faces, the same people every day. We need more diversity like big cities."

"Racism exists."



EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

In the 15 to 24 and the 25 to 44 age cohorts the Stratford to Bruce Peninsula economic region has considerably higher participation rates at 72% than does Ontario at 60%.

The unemployment rate for youth (15 to 24 years of age) is the highest of all age cohorts in the Stratford to Bruce Peninsula economic region, at 10% in 2016.

Youth, 15 to 24 years old, have a permanent layoff rate that is almost three times higher than the layoff rate for workers aged 25 to 54.



CHARLEE ROY

"My name is Charlee. I'm the rebellious high school drop out turned honour roll nurse and entrepreneur. I started my journey of entrepreneurship while in nursing school to help pay my tuition. NakdBasics started in my old basement apartment with an idea and motivation. I had been making skin care products for myself as I always struggled with acne. I began selling my products at markets and local stores when the snowball effect began. I now proudly stand in my shop and can offer a wide variety of products and services to my community. Trust me, if I can do it, so can you. Cliché, I know. But it's the truth. Nothing is impossible with persistence and setting aside the fear of failure."





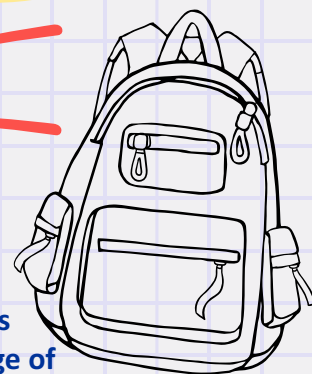
ECONOMIC BARRIERS

In 2015, 18% of children and youth under the age of 18 in Ontario lived in low-income households. The low-income rate among children and youth was slightly higher than Ontario in Grey Bruce at 19%.

what we heard...

"There are lots of things to do in our region, like Blue Mountain... but everything costs money."

About half of Grey Bruce municipalities have more children and youth in low-income households relative to Ontario. The highest low-income rates among children and youth are found in Huron-Kinloss, Chatsworth, Owen Sound, Southgate, and Arran-Elderslie, where around one quarter of children and youth live in low-income households.



<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Backpacks for Learning, Meaford

Backpacks filled with essentials such as toiletries and food are made available for students on Fridays to help them and their families get through times when supplies at home are low.

In 2018,
2,456 students
took advantage of
the **United Way of Bruce**
Grey Backpack Program
accessing support for
back to school.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

64% of 12 to 17 year olds
report getting enough exercise.



Bruce Grey Mentorship
Outdoor Adventure Club

<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

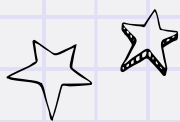
Bruce Grey Mentorship Outdoor Adventure Club and Mentorship Program for Youth, Hanover

The Outdoor Adventure Club is for youth 14 years and older to experience a variety of outdoor activities with the hope of sparking their interest in outdoor pursuits. As well, the participants are encouraged to become mentors to younger children in the program.

<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Owen Sound Lacrosse

A yearly grant helps local youth at various levels keep active by playing the sport of lacrosse.



LIFE SATISFACTION



LIVING WITH PARENTS

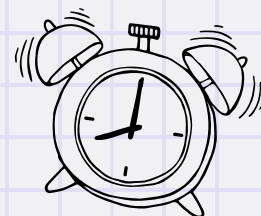
Young adults aged 20-34 living at home with one or more parents made up 33% of young adults in Bruce County, and 37% in Grey County, compared to 42% in Ontario.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

99% of children and youth aged 12 to 17 in Grey Bruce **feel** satisfied or very satisfied with their lives. This is higher than the percentage among Ontarian children in the same age group.

SLEEP

60% of children and youth aged 12 to 17 in Grey Bruce get enough sleep (8-10 hours per night)



HOMELESSNESS

In a recent enumeration of homelessness in Bruce County, 9 of the 11 respondents were under the age of 31.

The most commonly chosen response to the question of reason for homelessness was "conflict with a parent/guardian" from 45% of respondents.

In 2018, the YMCA Owen Sound Grey Bruce assisted 98 youth in Grey and 49 youth in Bruce in accessing a shelter.



<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>> Junior Achievement Financial Literacy for Grey Bruce Youth

Students learn about money management skills, investment and effective spending, with encouragement to consider long-term goals such as post-secondary education and career choice.

Meaford Hall & Cultural Foundation
Community Youth Theatre



BRANDON KOEBEL

is a passionate advocate for youth and a recently elected Councillor for the Town of Hanover. Brandon returned to Hanover in 2015 after attending Trent University and Queen's University and is currently finishing his Master of Education degree focusing on Education Technology and Leadership. Brandon is a Secondary School Math Teacher at Sacred Heart High School in Walkerton, and previously worked for Youth Roots, a non-profit youth advocacy organization. Brandon believes that youth are a vital part of every community's future.



AFFIRMING URBAN INDIGENOUS PRIDE

In 2018, M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre and the Centre for Environmental Health Equity at Queen's University collaborated on a research project. The objective was to explore how M'Wikwedong promoted wellness within the City of Owen Sound from the perspective of Indigenous youth. To meet this objective, five Indigenous youth and a graduate student worked together for eight months on a facilitated video-making process called 'digital storytelling.'

The involved youth selected a personally significant experience and created a story about it. Once the stories were ready, each youth directed the editing of their own video. The research finished when the team discussed M'Wikwedong's role in making those stories happen and how each story related to wellness.

The team discovered that, for some Indigenous youth, there were few places in Grey Bruce that felt welcoming and safe. In this context, the team identified two main ways in which M'Wikwedong supported youth to find

and affirm their place in Owen Sound area.

First, the Friendship Centre provided a facility where youth felt welcomed in Owen Sound. This facility was an entry point to enjoy other parts of Grey Bruce. For example, M'Wikwedong created the connections and comfort needed for youth to volunteer at various community events and access the services they required.

Second, M'Wikwedong supported youth in connecting with their Indigenous heritages. For instance, the Friendship Centre provided opportunities to participate in Indigenous ceremonies and learn from Elders. Further, M'Wikwedong helped youth to create awareness about topics that were relevant to them, such as 'two-spirit' gender identities.

Overall, this research demonstrates that M'Wikwedong contributed to make Grey Bruce a better place to live for Indigenous youth.



Learn more about Katrina's journey of self-discovery and about two-spirit people.
<https://youtu.be/kQoCAIn9y10>



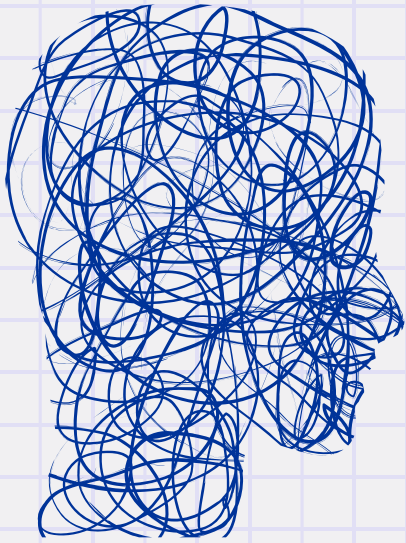
Watch James narrate his story of resilience and youth advocacy.
<https://youtu.be/9SiLCMjZ2zQ>



CARLENE KEESHIG

"Waabum Meegis Kwe is my Anishnabwe name, I am of the bear clan and Neyaashiinigmiing is my home. My given name is Carlene Keeshig and I am a band Councillor for the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation. As part of my role as a Councillor I've been selected to sit on the Huronia Area Aboriginal Management Board and the Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle where the primary role is to help support First Nation people of any age to follow their dream through upgrading, trades & apprenticeships opening doors and bridging gaps."

MENTAL WELLNESS

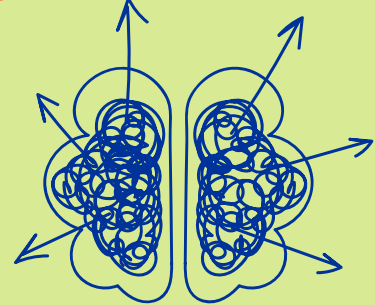


One third of Grey Bruce youth, aged 10 to 17, indicated that their family members' problems prevented them from talking about their own problems.

VitalSigns



youth told us...



Youth identified wanting to talk to adults when they were struggling, depressed or anxious.

Adults on the other hand, believed that youth would rather speak to their peers during difficult times.



76%



feel they can speak to their family for emotional help or support when they need it.

59%

feel they can speak to adults in their community for emotional help or support when they need it.



<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

The Grey Bruce We C.A.R.E. Project

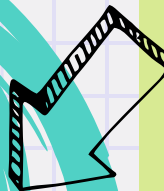
This project was an investigation into the root causes of youth suicide in Grey Bruce. Focus groups, one-to-one discussions, and surveys were used to collect information from more than 400 respondents.

STRESS

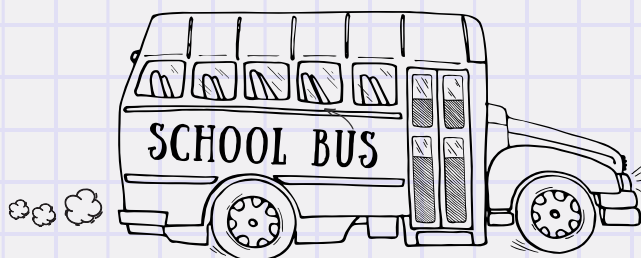
20%

The percentage of the population, aged 15 years and over, in Grey-Bruce, who reported that most days in their life were "quite a bit" or "extremely" stressful, was 20% in 2015-2016.

This is lower than the Ontario rate of 22%.



PLANS AFTER EDUCATION



MOVING AWAY

Between 2011 and 2016, Bruce County had a net loss of 757 people in the 18 to 24 age range, Grey County had a net loss of 572 people in the 18 to 24 age range. Bruce and Grey counties tend to lose more residents from the 15 to 24 and 25 to 44 age cohorts than they attract from other areas.

117 youth aged 10 to 17 provided information about where they planned to live after they had completed all of their schooling. Of these, one quarter planned to live in Grey Bruce (25%), just over one half planned to move away (53%), and just under one quarter were unsure (22%).



<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Waypoint Pilot Project, Ledge Leadership, Town of The Blue Mountains

This project is designed to help students find meaningful careers in Grey Bruce by "road-testing" an integrated system to directly link individual career interests with employer skill needs in the region.

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

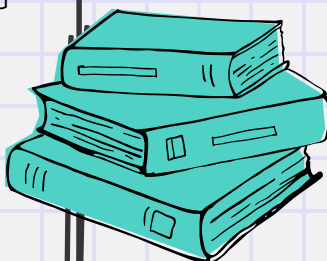
Grey Bruce students are more likely than Ontarians in that age group to have completed highschool, and equally likely to have postsecondary qualifications. This is unlike most age groups in Grey Bruce who tend to have fewer educational qualifications than Ontarians overall.

Grey Bruce school boards have an average 5-year graduation rate of 83%.

<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Community Outreach Support Materials, South Grey Bruce Literacy

With a grant for improved equipment and materials, SGB Literacy will more effectively display its programs and services to potential learners/families and volunteers, in order to raise awareness of its services and recruit volunteers and learners.



<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Quiet Room Creation for Students at Dundalk Public Library

This grant supports a space for distance education, a meeting place for students to gather and work on projects, and a place to focus on after-school homework. The project also provides educational programs for community members by bringing in speakers on various topics for adults, kids and youth.

TUITION

\$362K

Since 2004, Community Foundation Grey Bruce has distributed over \$362,351 in scholarships and bursaries to 301 Grey Bruce students.

Since its inception in 1994, Community Foundation Grey Bruce has granted **\$1,038,000** to agencies and projects that support children and youth.

<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Community Foundation Grey Bruce disburses scholarships and bursaries to help Grey Bruce students pay tuition for schooling in fields such as healthcare, agriculture, literacy, skilled trades, media, music and general post-secondary studies.



Thanks and Acknowledgements

Community Foundation Grey Bruce extends its sincere appreciation to all the young people, adult allies, organizations and individuals that provided input, guidance, data and support for the creation of this *Vital Focus on Youth Report*.

Special thanks go out to our Youth Facilitators that led the *Vital Conversations*, Jason Cranny and Melri Wright; as well as to the students from Owen Sound District Secondary School who worked on the scripts for the *#JustAskUs* videos: Layla Hillyer, Alisson Kerker, Mae MacNeil, Alex Pinch and Sarah Pinch.

We are also grateful to our *Vital Conversations* hosting partners: Launch Pad Youth Activity & Technology Centre, Hanover; and Lighthouse Youth Drop In at Salvation Army, Wiarton.

Thanks to all those who proofread this report including Joan Eaglesham and David Sereda.

Vital Signs Advisory Committee

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Alison Govier, Community Drug & Alcohol Strategy
Alanna Leffley, Grey Bruce Health Unit
Gemma Mendez-Smith, Four County Labour Market Board
Emily Morrison, Launch Pad Youth Activity and Technology Centre
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Bring Back the Bees & Butterflies Project in Brockton

<<< FOUNDATION FUNDING AT WORK >>>

Bring Back the Bees & Butterflies Project, Brockton

Children & youth work with a project leader from the Municipality of Brockton to plant shrubs and build "bee hotels" to help the declining bee and butterfly populations for the pollination of native plants.



EMILY MORRISON

Born and raised on a strawberry farm in Bruce County, it was not until she left home to study business at university that Emily realized she had been living and practising the values and principles of entrepreneurship since her dad told her to help plant the new field of strawberries when she was 8 years old. With that experience and textbooks in hand, she had the confidence to utilize the Summer Company Program to open an ice cream store at the age of 21. Now Executive Director at Launch Pad YATC, she is bringing that entrepreneurial spirit in hopes of inspiring other young entrepreneurs to follow their passions.

Thanks to our Partners!

This *Vital Focus Report* is part of our ongoing *Vital Signs* initiative.

Vital Signs® is a community check-up conducted by Community Foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities, identifies significant trends, and supports action on issues that are critical to our quality of life. Special thanks to the Toronto Foundation for developing and sharing the *Vital Signs* concept and Community Foundations of Canada for supporting a coordinated national *Vital Signs* initiative.

For more information about *Vital Signs* across Canada, visit www.vitalsignscanada.ca

For more information regarding *Vital Signs* indicators and data sources, please visit our website.

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Vital Conversation at Launch Pad in Hanover
[#myvoicemycommunity](https://twitter.com/myvoicemycommunity)



COMMUNITY
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GREY BRUCE

We're here for good.

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BUSINESS
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boomers
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INTEGRA
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Established in 1994, Community Foundation Grey Bruce builds community vitality now and for future generations. We encourage endowment building and facilitate philanthropic partnerships within Grey and Bruce counties. The Foundation grants to a wide variety of non-profit organizations that, in turn, provide necessary initiatives and services for the people of this region. Additionally, the Foundation offers leadership to identify community issues and convene discussion.

communityfoundationgreybruce.com