Introduction and Research Goals

The Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) Report Card Coalition is a group of community service providers committed to raising the profile of children and youth in our communities. Data collected by the Coalition is published and updated regularly on the Coalition’s website (www.wdgreportcard.com) and is used by system planners and service providers to start conversations, answer questions, and understand the status of child and youth well-being in our community.

Research Findings

A selection of the research findings are presented below. All of the study findings can be found on the Coalition’s website.

Education Domain:
- 30% of senior kindergarten students in Wellington and 32% in Guelph scored vulnerable on the Early Development Instrument (EDI).1
- The Grade 6 EQAO Reading Test scores are improving among students across WDG. In 2010-11, 75% of students achieved or were above the provincial standard compared to 80% in 2013-14.2
- Approximately 9% of youth aged 15-19 in Wellington and 7% of youth aged 15-19 in Guelph are not in employment, education or training.3

Health Domain:
- Though exclusively breastfeeding an infant until they reach six months of age is recommended for all mothers, only 23% of mothers in WDG reported this behaviour in 2012.4
- More grade 7 students reported sleeping for 8 or more hours each night (79%) compared to grade 10 students (49%) across WDG.5
- More grade 7 students reported high levels of self-esteem (72%) compared to grade 10 students (59%) across WDG.6
- Self-reported chew tobacco use increased among grade 10 students in Wellington County; rates have nearly tripled since 2011-12. By 2014-15, students were more likely to try chew tobacco than smoking (Fig 1).7

Living Environment Domain:
- In 2014, more than 1 in 10 youth aged 14-18 experienced food insecurity, meaning that the quality or quantity of their food was decreased due to family income.8
- Last year, there were 44 children and youth experiencing homelessness in Guelph-Wellington, though many more children and youth may experience hidden homelessness.9
- In 2014, 13% of children, aged 0-18 in Guelph and 10% of children aged 0-18 in Wellington were living below the Low Income Measure (After-Tax) (LIM-AT).10 This percentage is much lower than the 19% of children across Ontario living below the LIM-AT (Fig 2).11

Safety Domain:
- 86-95% of senior kindergarten parents across WDG reported feeling that it is safe for children to play outside during the day.12
- Female students in grade 7 and 10 are more likely to report being bullied than male students. The likelihood of reporting bullying decreases as youth age (Fig 3).13
- Grade 7 and 10 students in Guelph (8%) are more likely to report feeling safe at school compared to students in Wellington (81%) and Dufferin (80%).14

Social Relationships Domain:
- Fewer senior kindergarten parents in Dufferin reported finding family time a challenge (31%) than parents in Wellington (40%) and Guelph (38%).15
- More grade 7 students reported high levels of positive family communication (66%) compared to grade 10 students (53%) across WDG.16
- There has been a decline in grade 10 students who report having good relationships with their teachers across WDG.17

Conclusions

The WDG Report Card Coalition’s domains of child well-being serve as a framework to highlight several areas of focus for service and system planning locally. These domains will be monitored and reported yearly to examine trends and evaluate the effectiveness of local initiatives.

References
1. Early Development Instrument, 2015
2. EQAO, 2010-14
5. WDG Youth Survey, 2011-12 & 2014-15
6. Canadian Community Health Survey, 2014

For more information, visit www.wdgreportcard.com

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