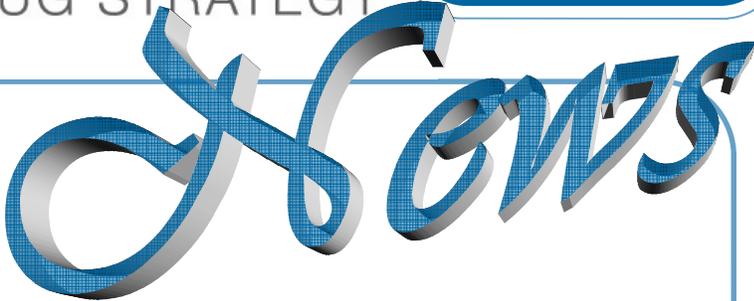




WGDS

WELLINGTON GUELPH DRUG STRATEGY

Working collaboratively towards a life free from the harms and impacts of substance use for all residents in the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington.



Winter, 2012

The Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy is a coalition of 30 partner agencies and members of the lived experience community, who are working to implement a **4-Pillars Drug Strategy** in the Wellington County and the City of Guelph.

The 4-Pillars include

- **Prevention**
- **Treatment**
- **Harm Reduction**
- **Enforcement**

Our 4-Pillars strategy recognizes that no one sector can effectively respond to substance misuse in isolation. Our cross-sectoral partnerships acknowledge the integral role that each pillar plays, and in many instances, weave the pillars together in our strategies and responses. In doing so, we have made many successful strides towards our goal of reducing the impacts of substance misuse in our communities.

Message from the Chair

The Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy Committee is pleased to report significant gains on many projects this past Fall and Winter. A strong partnership was built with the University of Guelph, involving 200 students in the work of the Drug Strategy. This partnership between the Drug Strategy and University of Guelph students will have a long lasting impact on the community as many students branch out into related fields of work through these valuable connections.

The Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy Website is quickly approaching its launch date. Our site will work to inform community members, people with lived experience and service providers of information regarding the four pillars of the strategy, as well as the resources available in the Wellington Guelph community.

Committee members are hard at work planning a forum to create a community framework for mental health promotion and substance prevention for Guelph and Wellington County. The forum will focus on evidence based practice with the intention of building capacity in the community, as well as creating a coordinated approach to children/youth prevention services. The Drug Strategy also continues to advocate for supports to individuals with addictions through its endorsement of a proposal for support coordination in the addiction system within our area.

We continue to be very proud of what we have accomplished. Much remains to be done, however with the continued support and engagement of our invaluable partners, we feel more committed than ever to the change we have started.

- Heather Kerr, Chair, WGDS/ Executive Director, Stonehenge Therapeutic Community

Website Launch

In the coming weeks, the WGDS will launch our new website, which has been in development over the past several months. We are very excited about this opportunity to promote our Strategy and projects more broadly. We will also use our website to promote many of the integral community supports, services and events that are provided by our partners. Look for us on the Web in Feb!

Addiction Support Coordination

Continued efforts are underway to develop a model for addiction support coordination services in Waterloo Wellington, a need identified by both the WGDS, as well as the Waterloo Wellington Addiction Services Group. This service would provide intensive, comprehensive support to local individuals who are considered most in need from an addiction perspective. Provincially, support coordination services are available to individuals with mental health issues; however support coordination services for addictions do not currently exist. Such a development in our area would place Waterloo Wellington as frontrunners in providing vital intensive support to those who need it most.

Developing A Community Plan for Drug Prevention & Mental Health Promotion

One of our prevention strategies calls for the engagement of the community to develop a “Coordinated, multi-level approach to delivering alcohol and drug education and prevention programs and activities in Wellington County and the City of Guelph.” This strategy acknowledges that prevention efforts can occur in isolated and often fragmented ways, and calls for a more cohesive and collaborative approach. We also know that prevention efforts should be evidence-based to have the desired impact. Together with our partners, we are working to plan a two day symposium, with the first day focusing

on increasing our knowledge of evidence-based approaches to drug prevention and mental health promotion efforts across the age continuum of infant-youth. The second day will involve the development of a coordinated, measureable, manageable community plan to guide substance use prevention and mental health promotion. The overarching goal of the project is to develop strengthened networks of community agencies working on evidence-based youth substance use prevention and mental health promotion in Guelph and Wellington County.

Issues of Substance 2011

In November 2011, WGDS Manager Raechelle Devereaux had an opportunity to present our efforts to sustain evidence-based prevention at the Issues of Substance Conference in Vancouver. This conference, hosted by the Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse, drew both national and international participants from across many disciplines. Our participation provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the leadership, collaboration and dedication that has contributed to our success in bringing evidence-based programming to over 75 families in our community over the past 18

months. Additionally, while in Vancouver, Raechelle had an opportunity to visit the Insite supervised injection site, and also participated in a number of stimulating presentations and workshops, with significant relevance to our local work.



Sharing Our Progress on a National Stage: Vancouver 2011

Sustaining Evidence-Based Prevention

The WGDS is continuing our efforts to sustain evidence-based prevention programs in the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington. We continue to lead the expansion and implementation of the Strengthening Families Programs, and also offer support to sustain Families and Schools Together Program (F&ST), which is administered by Family Counselling and Support Services.

In June 2011, Wellington County Council approved the Wellington County Police Services Board's commitment of \$30 000 to support these two programs in our community. This investment in evidence-based community prevention programming was a demonstration of considerable leadership, and was recognized as a significant shift in the ways that police services typically invest. As result of this funding, an F&ST program has commenced in Mount Forest this winter, with a Strengthening Families program targeted to roll out in the County in March 2011.

In the summer of 2011, the WGDS turned its attention to the Strengthening Families for Parents and Youth (SFPY) program, which had been recently condensed and rigorously re-evaluated by Parent Action on Drugs (PAD). SFPY, which is designed for at risk youth aged 12-16 and their families, appeared to be a good fit for the Youth Options suspension and expulsion school in Arthur. With funding contributions from the UGDSB, the program was implemented between October and December of 2011, offering

considerable support to the families who attended.

As a result of funding contributions from Family and Children's Services, Trellis Mental Health and Developmental Services and Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health, as well as the proceeds from the 5 K Run (see page 4), it was also possible to deliver a Strengthening Families for the Future (SFF) program in Guelph this fall. The SFF program is geared to children aged 7-11 and their families. This program will wrap up in late January, with planning for potential spring programming underway.

The implementation of these programs would not be possible without the continued support of our funders, our partners who provide staff to facilitate the sessions, and the many organizations who support the groups in other ways, including transportation support, economically priced space and meals, volunteer support and assistance with child care. We sincerely thank you all for your contributions!



SFF Christmas Dinner

SFF Program Partners

- Wellington County OPP
- Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County
- Trellis Mental Health and Developmental Services
- Upper Grand District School Board
- Wellington Dufferin Public Health
- Community Resource Centre of North and Centre Wellington
- The County of Wellington Social Services
- Guelph CHC
- Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis
- Homewood Community Addiction Services
- The Mount Forest Family Health Team
- Stonehenge Therapeutic Community
- Boston Pizza
- First Baptist Church
- HomeStyle Catering
- Market Fresh

Harm Reduction Forum 2012

Planning is underway for our annual Harm Reduction Forum, which will take place this coming Spring. This year's forum will focus on harm reduction approaches with youth, particularly looking at bridging the divide between marginalized youth and the services designed to serve them. To guide our planning of the event, several youth consultations are being conducted, where both great food and vibrant discussions have been shared. We look forward to continued youth engagement in what we trust will be a great day.

Research Shop Partnership

The WGDS is very excited about our newly developed relationship with the University of Guelph Research Shop, which came to fruition in the fall of 2011. Through this relationship, dedicated student research interns have begun developing an array of research briefings, which have provided a foundational layer of evidence for our projects. We are very grateful for this partnership, and look forward to its future potential.

For More Information Please contact:

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WGDS Runs a 5 K Race

In September 2011, the WGDS entered a team into the Guelph CHC's Downtown 5 K Run in order to raise awareness and funds for evidence-based prevention programming in our community. As a result of the team's hard work and dedication, \$5000 was raised, which helped to support a SFF program to take place in Guelph during the fall of 2011. A special thanks to all of those who ran, and to those who supported their fundraising efforts.



Team members included youth from the STEPs program, and partners from Guelph Police Services, Wellington County OPP, Homewood Health Centre, F&CS, Family Counselling and Support Services, Guelph CHC, the Waterloo Wellington Addiction and Mental Health Network, WDG Public Health, the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington, as well as MPP Liz Sandals.

4 Pillars at the University

During the fall of 2011, the WGDS had the opportunity to present the 4-Pillars drug strategy model to 200 students at the University of Guelph. Presentations were made in panel format, with participants bringing a breadth of perspectives from the enforcement, prevention, treatment and harm reduction pillars.



Harm Reduction Panel

One student commented, "*The panel presentations were a life changing experience.*"

In addition to the inherent benefit of knowledge exchange, the WGDS was also provided with the opportunity to develop the final research project for the class, which was subsequently geared to the strategies that we are working on. Following the completion of the course, we have 200 literature reviews and policy papers that we are beginning to synthesize into project briefings. Additionally, several students have since begun volunteering with the WGDS, bringing valuable perspectives to the initiatives that they have joined. Thank you to the students, and to Professor Donna Maidment, for this excellent opportunity.

Funding for the WGDS provided by:

