

METHODOLOGY



The Oakville Community Foundation provides the Vital Signs® Report as a means to identify and educate our community about the specific needs and issues affecting Oakville and its residents. In partnership with those communities that choose to participate in the Vital Signs® program, Community Foundations of Canada gathers and shares data about these vital issues that commonly affect communities across the country.

To create Oakville's Vital Signs® 2015, we invited a cross-section of key stakeholders from the public and nonprofit sectors serving Oakville and Halton Region to participate in one of two "Community Conversations" at Sheridan College. Participants were led through a process called Creative Problem Solving (CPS) facilitated by staff from Sheridan's Faculty of Humanities. Those who were unable to attend the Sheridan sessions were invited to participate in one-on-one interviews with our consultant. Participants were asked to rank the 11 traditional Vital Signs® issue areas from their own unique perspective. Collectively, we were able to identify which, if any, of the 11 issues were relevant in Oakville. Next, we discussed what other issues existed in the local community and how they intersected. The conversations revealed a number of needs and gaps, as well as the most consistent challenges and themes. National, provincial, regional and local data were collected and reviewed to further refine the findings of the "conversations". Our process allowed us to combine local expertise with documented evidence to identify the four key themes presented in this report: Equity Gap, Affordable Housing, Mental Health and Inclusion.

Many Community Foundations across Canada and the United States have dedicated academic partners, allowing them to leverage academic expertise to inform and support their strategic directions, business processes and evaluate funded projects. Our partnership with Sheridan College was invaluable to the development of the Vital Signs® report and is just the beginning of a new approach to the mobilization of community knowledge.

