



Vital Signs: What Can I Do?

Think about it. Discuss it. Act on it. If something you've read in our national report or in a local Vital Signs report has raised your curiosity, please don't stop there.

As the saying goes, every journey starts with a single step. Here are three simple ways you can take action. Today.

- 1. Pass it on.** Share and discuss this report with your co-worker, your teacher, your best friend, your boss, or your elected representative. Post it on your blog or Twitter feed. Add a link to Facebook. Help us get the word out about the issues facing Canadian communities.
- 2. Stay informed.** Keep your finger on the pulse of community issues by following Vital Signs on our blog or Twitter. Building vital communities is our passion and our purpose, so we'll share the latest news with you year-round.
- 3. Get in touch.** Connect with your community. Visit the website of a local organization doing great work in your community. Is there something you can do to help? If you're not sure where to start, contact your local community foundation. If you're looking for ways to make a difference, we can help. You can find your local community foundation at www.cfc-fcc.ca.

What Can Community Foundations Do?

As one of Canada's largest grantmakers, we take our responsibility to our communities, and our country, very seriously. With more than 165 community foundations in cities, towns and rural areas from coast to coast, we are able to contribute to community vitality in so many different ways. Vital Signs helps us:

- Identify common issues, trends
- Share key needs and priorities with concerned donors and citizens
- Distribute grant dollars in areas that will have maximum impact
- Bring the community together to explore and discuss local concerns

Vital Signs, like the markers along a trail, helps us determine if we're headed in the right direction.

Following each publication, community foundations use Vital Signs findings to raise key issues with citizens and community leaders in their own communities. They will drill deeper into the findings, promote discussion and brainstorming and encourage personal and community action to bring about positive change. In a year's time, community foundations will take stock of the data again, reflect on their strategy and progress, renew dialogue and keep on moving forward.

Seven Goals for the next Seven Years

Community foundations believe that every person has a job to do in ensuring that we all enjoy the quality of life Canada is capable of achieving and we want everyone to have the chance to do their part. We're working to make sure that:

- Young people are fully engaged in community life, through voluntary work, civic participation, philanthropy or a personal passion that contributes to our shared quality of life;
- Residents, community groups, funders, government and others are collaborating on shared solutions to environmental issues across Canada;
- Foundations of all kinds, and the donors they work with, are digging deeper to identify and tackle the roots of pressing problems in our communities like poverty;
- Diversity is celebrated and reflected in every aspect of our society, from boardrooms to classrooms and beyond;
- Communities that are often excluded or marginalized, such as newcomers and Aboriginal peoples, experience new hope, opportunity and respect in our society, so that we can build a shared future together;
- Our communities are vital places that are set to meet their most important needs, challenges and opportunities, today and in the future;
- More Canadians identify ways they can make a personal contribution to the vitality of their communities and their country.

Most importantly, we hope that we will take risks together to try to build better communities. We might make mistakes, but we will learn from one another. And find some answers.