

# Families and Children in Leeds and Grenville



UPDATING CENSUS DATA TO 2006  
HEALTH AND SCHOOL DATA  
NATIONAL LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF YOUTH  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
CAS STATISTICS



# Making Sense of Trends



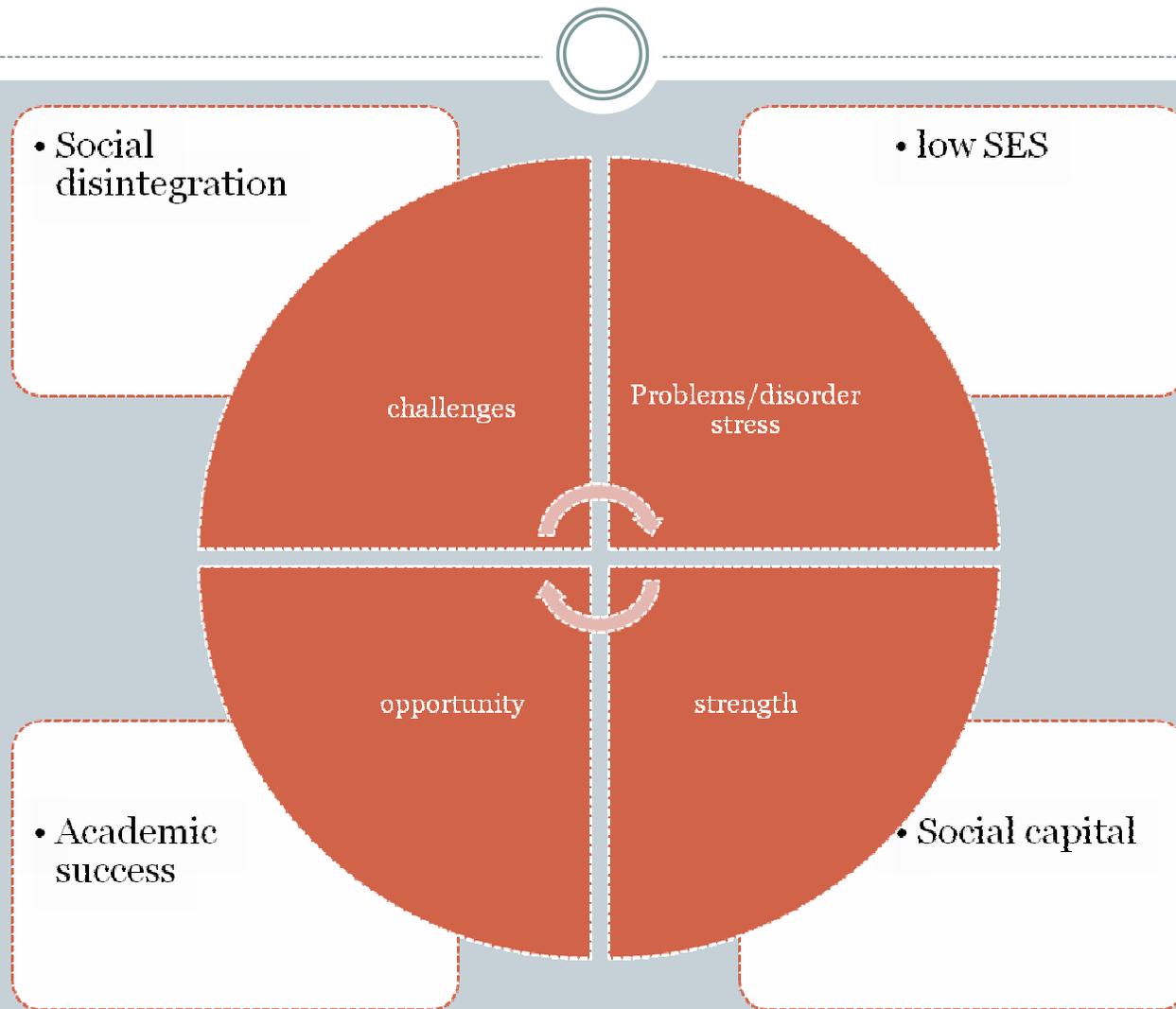
**BEST PRACTICE IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**COMMUNITY ASSETS**

**EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGES**

**GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES**

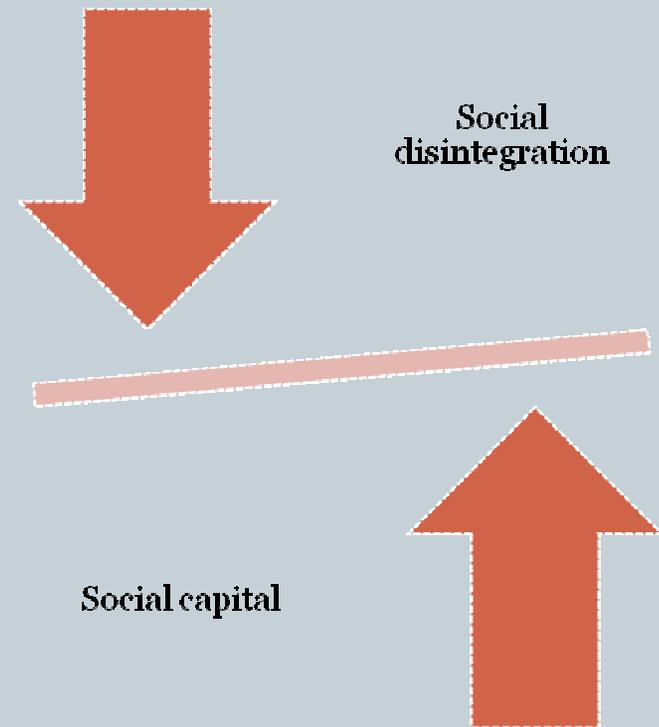
# Assets, risk and opportunity



# Why outcomes for children depend on community

**Enhanced risk/a solution**

**Balance of power**



# We can do it – today and beyond



- My presentation today is part of a larger community building process in Leeds & Grenville (everykid)
- Goal: to start a conversation not to provide the answer.
- I will summarize publically available data on the community. I will declare my biases or the “theoretical lens” through which shape my opinions.
- My presentation is not all the data – only part of the story. Your information – your thoughts – are also part of the story, hopefully part of this presentation.

## Past challenges now improving

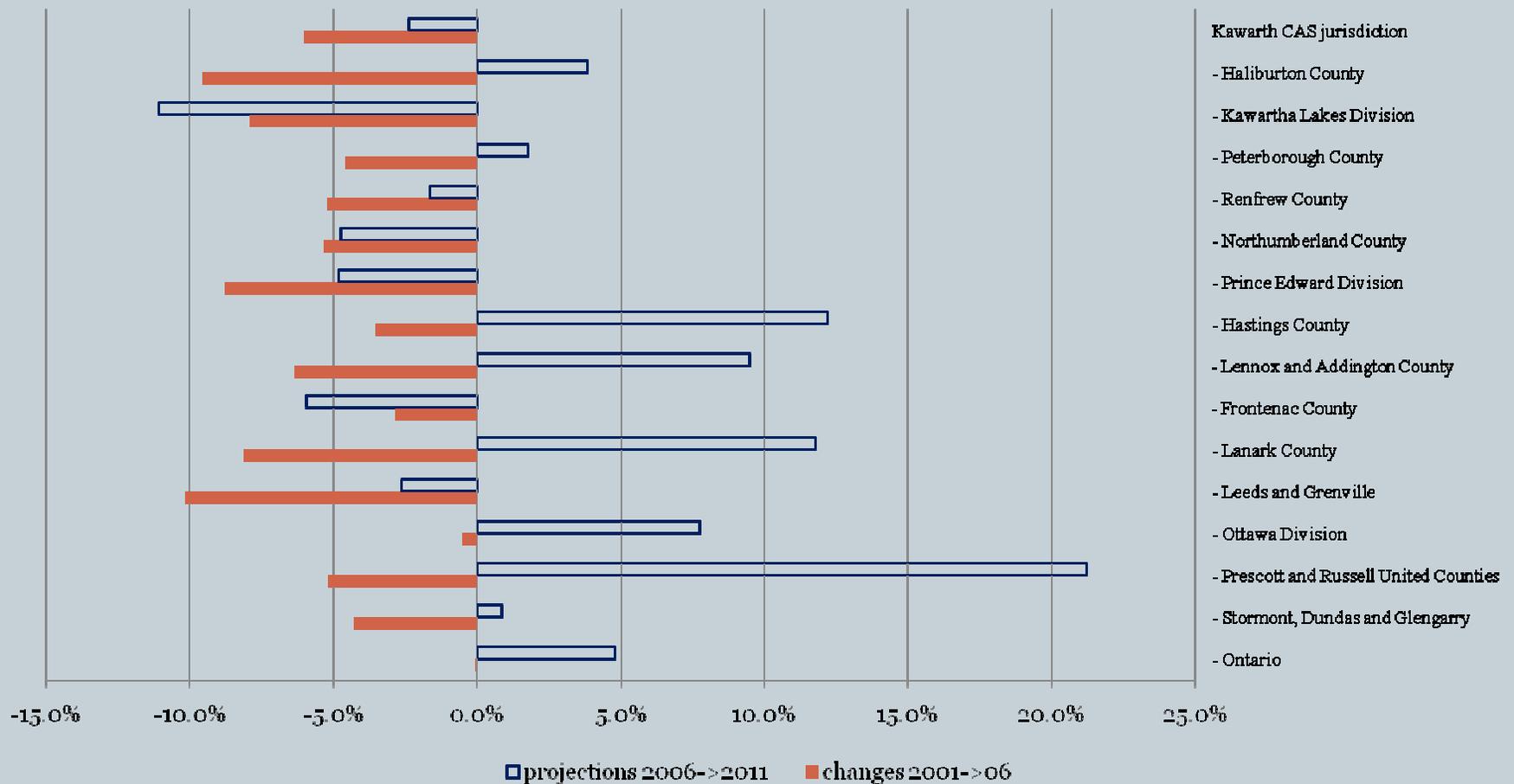


- In previous Census periods, Eastern Ontario (except for Ottawa) was growing very slowly . This is usually bad for community life and the economy.
- We now see significant changes from 2001.
- All Eastern Ontario counties are growing at an average of 3.9% in 2006.
- The youngest age group is still declining, but even this group is projected to grow again. See the next slide.

# The youngest age group (0-4)



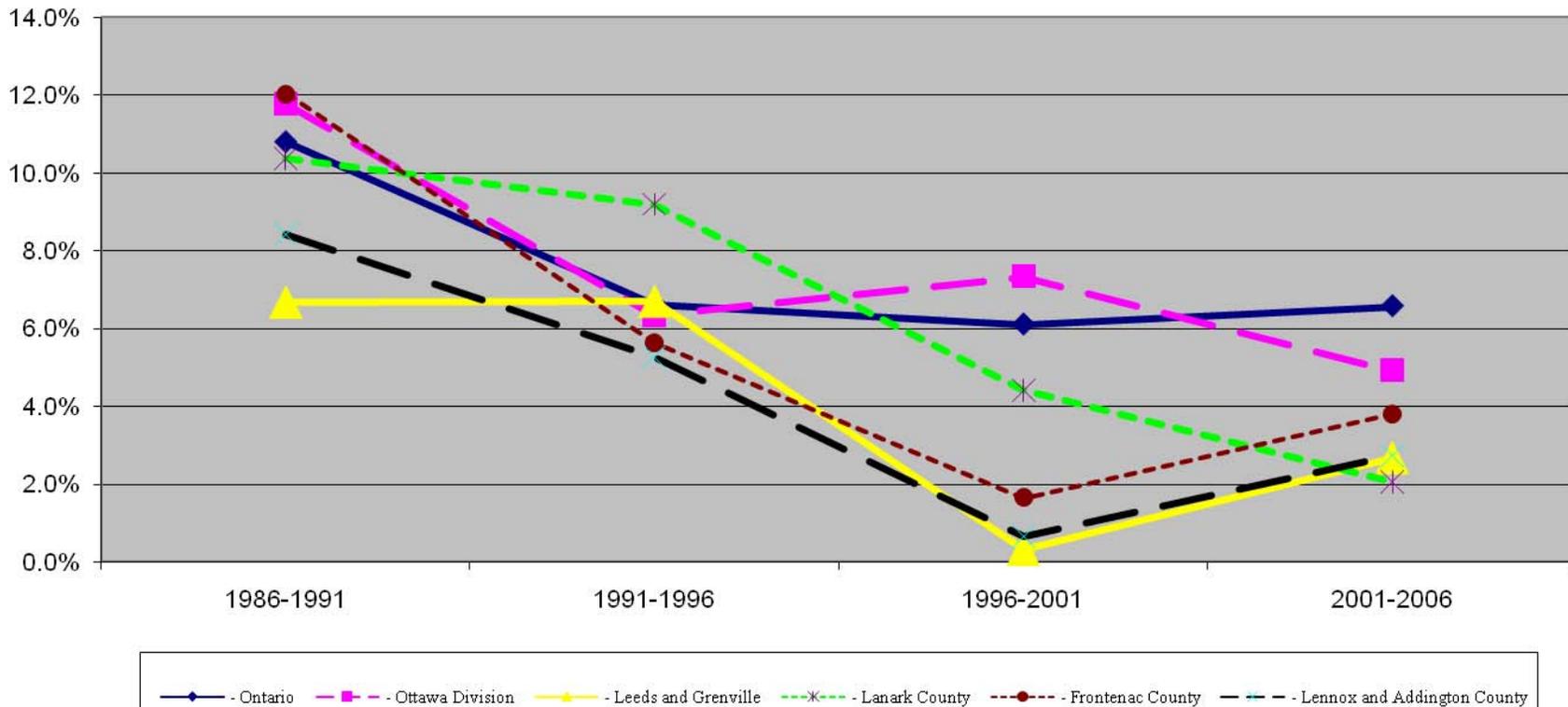
Actual & Projected changes in pop 0->4



# 4 decades of change



4 Decades of Change



## Pop projections = good news



- **The Ontario government is projecting very strong growth for the Province as a whole in the years ahead (10.4% growth by 2011).**
- **Leeds & Grenville is expected to grow by 5.5% by the year 2011. In general, this level is a good indicator for the economic and social well being of Leeds & Grenville.**

## *Young Children (0 to 10 years)*



- a significant decline (25%) in the number of children age 0 to 4 years over the last decade
- repeated for almost every county in the East
- the rate of decline in the youngest age group has slowed down considerably, suggesting that we may be approaching a return to growth in the next five years
- Kids age 5-9 declined by 17%
- Province projects a further decline of 2% (100) in 2011 in kids 0-4

## Teens (10-19)



- Young teens (10-14 years old) have increased across the decade by 3.9% in Leeds and Grenville; however, the pattern within the county is marked by wide variation from a growth of 24% in North Grenville to a decline of 37% in Westport
- There has been a significant growth in ages 15-19, extending over all but one town within Leeds & Grenville. Across the decade, older teens have grown by 14%.

# Trends in Adult pop



- Younger adults have declined significantly in the East and generally across Ontario
- The exception is in major cities – where they are increasing, suggesting this is migration effect
- The turning point for adult trends is age 45-49, when the population starts to grow everywhere.
- This is also the age of greatest wealth accumulation which is contributing to the robust economic growth

# Families: a new challenge



- The absolute number of married couples has not changed in L & G (by much) in 15 years
- Common law unions have grown strongly and now equal 20% of the married couples
- Lone parents up 27% in L & G – in 10 years: a leader in the East
  - **Ontario = 28% increase in LP**
  - **Ottawa = 20% increase**
  - **Frontenac = 13%**
  - **Stormont = 3%**

## Lone parents in Leeds



- LPs = 26% of all families with children
- Prescottt = 39%
- Brockville = 36%
- Athens and Augusta at 11% (note wide variation)
- 20% of all LP's are males (800 in L & G)
- Unlike females, male LPs are spread out across county

# The youngest and oldest parents



- **Couples with children, under 25 years = 1% or 175**
  - **In the 25-34 year old bracket = 16% or 1,870**
- **Lone parents, under 25 years = 4% or 125**
  - **In the 25-34 year old bracket = 16% or 500**
- **Young LPs located in only places:**
  - **Brockville = 90 parents under 25 or 8% of all LPs**
  - **Prescott = 15 parents under 25**
  - **Edwardsburgh = 15 parents**
- **Grand parent led (no parent) = 1%**
  - **150 homes and 75 of these are lone parents**

# Children by Individual Ages in 2006



- significant variation (growth and decline) town by town, age by age.
- Brockville had a 21% increase in children under the age of 1 year – Brockville has 235 babies currently.
- Brockville has the highest concentration of young female lone parents and young married couples
- In 16% of all households , all children are under 6 yrs
- These facts suggest that ***a surge of parent education and parent support programs in Brockville is a critical need.***

# Good news on housing stats



- Leeds & Grenville has seen a 4% increase in new housing against a total pop increase of 2.7%.
- When new housing grows faster than the population, a number of social assets are promoted:
  - **Less over-crowding**
  - **Fewer homes in need of major repairs**
  - **Greater home ownership**
- The opposite of these assets are risk factors for conduct disorder and other social problems

# Rural Needs



- 61% of pop in L & G live in a rural household away from even a small town (60,797)
- 10% of pop live in a small town <5,000
- difficult to find informal sentinels that can keep their eyes on vulnerable children and provide early warning of problems
- problems, such as domestic violence, tend to escalate to greater levels of seriousness in rural households.
- But there are many social assets in rural places

# Risks of rural life



- high prevalence of boys being overweight or obese.
- one in four boys report heavy drinking practices
- Rural families have lower incomes,
- But the distribution of income is “more equal” than in urban areas (some good news)
- Rural residents receive relatively more in social transfers and pay relatively less in taxes.
- The highest rates of crime are found in small cities (population 15,000 to 50,000). The lowest rates are found in the big cities (over 100,000).

## More risks



- Prescott (19.2%) had the highest rate in Eastern Ontario of families living below the low income cut-offs in 2001, which are adjusted for the cost of living by community size. The next highest rates are in the vicinity of 15%. On balance, having nearly 20% of your families below the low income cutoffs is an unusual, highly disadvantaged community.
- Rural places have less access to mental health, formal social support, more stigma, less access to shelters for domestic violence

# Rural life also has positives



- Please download from Stats Can: *Social Engagement and Civic Participation: Are Rural and Small Town Populations Really at an Advantage?* Vol. 6, no. 4 ([21-006-XIE](#), free)
- Rural families are more likely than their city cousins
  - **to know all or most of their neighbours**
  - **to trust their neighbours**
  - **to have done some volunteer work**
  - **to have a strong sense of belonging to their community**
- This is the definition of social capital

# Farms and the rural economy



- Employment on farms has increased by 4,000 plus in 2006 in Eastern Ontario
- 40% of the land in Leeds is farmed - #17 in Province
- Number of farms = 1,305
- Very little reduction in “farming space” across decade

# Migration



- 18,650 people (20%) moved into Leeds from some other city
- L & G has the best of both worlds: a high % who remain in their own homes over 5 years (65%, compared to 60% generally) and high rate of new migrants from outside (20% compared to 14% for Ottawa)
- The difference is that 5% of people in Ottawa are immigrants compared to 1% for Leeds

## Safe Sex



- In 2006, Health Canada found that Leeds/Lanark had the second best record of safe sex: 59% of males always use a condom
- Teen childbirth in 2006 = 4.8 per 1,000 compared to 19 per 1,000 in 1996

# School Performance



- Province wide standardized testing of our kids in grades 3, 6 and 9 have produced mixed results:
- Province wide: 62% meet standard in reading
- In L & G, 60.3% met standard
  
- In Province, 12% of kids have *special needs*, where only 21% meet standard
- In L & G, 21% of kids have special needs. Actually, the lower overall academic performance in L & G is pretty good in that context.

# How to improve readiness to learn



- the National Longitudinal Study has found that children from rural and small towns, from low socioeconomic groups and low income families scored below their peers on basic academic skills and social competency (even after a good beginning by age 3).
- Researchers also found that the bad outcomes could be reversed if ...
- Children who were *read to daily* performed well in reading regardless of family income level
- Communication skills were greater when children participated regularly in organized sports

# How to improve readiness to learn



- Number skills were highest when children were read to daily, participated in organized sports and in lessons in the arts
- Copying and symbol use scores were highest when children participated in organized sports and in lessons in the arts
- Cooperative play was highest with regular participation in *unorganized* sports
- All of the above was highest with high positive parent-child interaction

# Implications



- Many of these events can be facilitated outside of the family by the community. Many of these events are very difficult for families to enable in rural and small town places. This is why EDI scores are lower in rural and small town places.
- Secondly, the quality of parent-child interaction is clearly a critical driver in the child's readiness to learn. This suggests that parent supports and parent education programs are very important.

# Recommendations



- target intervention at
  - young parents
  - new parents
  - parents with other social disadvantages (including lone parents and poor parents) – esp Brockville
  - parents living in rural and small town locations
- Best interventions are
  - **providing organized and unorganized sports,**
  - **involvement in the arts, such as music, drama and drawing)**
  - **parent education and parental supports to improve the parent-child interactions and increase parental “reading to children”**

# People with Special Needs



- Statistics Canada asked people if they had limitations: *because of a physical condition, mental condition or health problem which has lasted or is expected to last 6 months or longer.*
- 40% of the population over 12 years in Leeds & Grenville has limitations. This places the county in rank #4, quite a bit above the Provincial average (32%). This result is worse than other counties in the East and Eastern Ontario, in general.
- Note: in schools, L & G has many more special needs children (21%) versus 12% across Province

# Substance abuse



- A total of 21.3% of students from grade 7 to grade 12 report binge drinking at least once a month – across Eastern Ontario
- The public health unit of Leeds & Grenville and Lanark counties has a rank of #8 in percentage of heavy drinkers (20.2% or 28,000 people over 12 years of age). Compared to the Provincial average (16.2%) and every other county in Eastern Ontario (which are lower by 2% to 3%), this outcome for Leeds & Grenville and Lanark PHU is very serious.

# Injuries – all ages



- The public health unit of Leeds & Grenville and Lanark counties has a rank of #2 in serious injuries.
- This is also a grave concern to CAS agencies, since a high level of accidents are highly correlated with accidental death, accidents among younger children and death from child abuse.

# Children in need of protection



- Almost 10% of families in Leeds & Grenville (9,553 per 100,000) are under the supervision of the CAS – compared to 6% across the province.
- Compared to other counties, Leeds & Grenville is ranked as #12 in rate of families served.
- CAS agencies operate under a high degree of supervision by the courts and require strict (province wide standardized) “eligibility” criteria for children to be designated in need of protection service.

# What are the social causes?



- Some of the problems and disabilities on earlier slides are caused by environmental, genetic and strictly idiosyncratic forces.
- Science has identified that social forces cause some of these bad outcomes.
- The following slides identify these social causes and some of the 'solutions' that communities can access to deal with the risk

# Cause #1 – low SES



- Low SES refers to the proportion of the population that have qualities that place them at a serious disadvantage socially and economically.
- SES = *social economic status*
- The qualities that place people at social/economic disadvantage are:
  - **Unemployment**
  - **Low status/ low wage earning jobs (labourer)**
  - **Low educational attainment (did not graduate, or got no further than high school)**

## Low SES acts by:



- **Creating economic hardship ... poverty**
- **Shaming the individual/leading to social isolation: (ie) stigma**
- **Promoting risk taking behaviour to escape from the hardship**
- **Promoting substance abuse in males (2x the average)**
- **Promoting antisocial conduct in males (2x the average)**
- **Promoting depression in females (40% of women in low SES households)**

# Moving in and out of low SES



- People can move from higher levels of SES to low SES: a married woman with a house, good income, a job – can lose it all after a marriage breakdown, ending up in poverty in rental accommodation, with no job: feeling and being made to feel the blame for her situation.
- Skilled workers in well paid positions can lose  $\frac{1}{2}$  their income when the plant closes – ending up unemployed or in low status jobs.

# Labour Market



- Ontario's unemployment rate is 6.3%
- The situation for youth in Ontario has worsened since 2002, becoming the worst across the nation.
- The job prospects are especially weak for the following groups: immigrants, youth, Aboriginal People, people with disabilities, less educated workers and those with poor literacy skills
- The wealth and job creating power of the Ontario economy is not evenly distributed by location with some communities facing high rates of unemployment and low rates of employment growth

# Labour (2)



- 63% of the “working age” population in Eastern Ontario had jobs
- 80% of employed workers in Eastern Ontario work full-time
- About 61,600 people in the Eastern region are unemployed, a 5.8% unemployment rate (much better than the Provincial average of 6.3%)
- The major industries in Eastern Ontario are:
  - Trade (14%)
  - Public administration (12%) – compared to 5% for all Ontario
  - Health care (11%)
  - Manufacturing (10%)
- The greatest job losses were in the trades, transportation and equipment operators and in public administration
- One of the big employment gainers were the primary industries (farming) which showed an increase of 4,000 plus jobs in Eastern Ontario in 2006.

# Manufacturing in Leeds & Grenville



- In 1996, 11% of all jobs were in manufacturing (5,015)
- In 2006, only 7% of jobs were in manufacturing (3,670)
- 19% of these jobs were lost between 2001 and 2006
- Across the decade,
  - 27% fewer manufacturing jobs
  - 21% fewer Machine operators
  - 53% fewer assemblers

## Young people under 25



- **Forty-one percent (41%) of all unemployed people in Leeds & Grenville are youth between 15 and 24 years. Youth unemployment has moved from 14.7% (2001) to 15.3%.**
- **Today, youth unemployment in Leeds & Grenville is much higher than in Ottawa (13.8%), Stormont (13.2%), Lennox (12.3%) and the Province as a whole (14.5%).**

# Economic Distress uneven



- job losses have fallen unevenly on *machine operators* and *assemblers* (the skilled trade workers). In Leeds & Grenville, *assemblers* have borne the brunt of job losses (-51%). Assemblers also lost jobs in Ottawa, (-59%), Stormont (-30%) and in Lanark (-29%). Internally, the job losses for assemblers are even higher in certain places:
  - **North Grenville (-81%)**
  - **Augusta (-64%)**
  - **Front of Yonge (-64%)**
  - **Elizabethtown (-62 %)**
- For people in these townships, the unemployment feels far more hopeless because of how widespread the job losses are for specific sub-groups.

## young adults who have not graduated from anything



- 32% of teenagers in Ontario dropped out of school between 1999 and 2003.
- Many have returned to school and completed their grade 12 , but the delays cost a chance to go further
- Across Ontario, 18% of people ages ~~20-24~~ did not graduate from anything
- In Leeds & Grenville, 16% did not graduate from anything
- In Brockville, 19% of young people did not graduate

# Has total low SES increased?



- **Yes, for the first time in decades**
- Across the province, 44.6% of the population over 20 has high school or less in 2006, compared to 39.9 an *increase of 4.8% in this indicator of low SES.*
- *Corresponding % decreases were evident in people graduating from trades and community colleges.*
- *University graduates holding steady as % of pop >20*

# Low SES among 25-64 age group



- 43% of adults (25-64) had high school or less (2006)
- 39% of adults across Ontario had high school or less
- Other jurisdictions:
  - Ottawa = 28%
  - Lanark = 41%
  - Lennox = 46%
  - Frontenac = 36%
  - Prescott & Russell = 48%
  - Renfrew = 48%
  - Stormont = 50%

# What can we do?



- 1) ***Harm reduction strategy*** (to reduce substance abuse, depression and anti-social behaviour)
- 2) ***Intensive recovery strategy***: Target Young People (20-30 years old) support upgrading their education: *better late than never*
- 3) ***Strategy to improve our high schools***: support government education strategy, especially by building academic enablers

# Harm Reduction



- 1. Ameliorate the hardship of poverty:** through actions such as “religious” based income supplements for LPs on welfare (there are no clawbacks for religious based support to low income families).
- 2. Implement an anti-stigma campaign:** target skilled workers and construction workers who lose their jobs in the current downturn (it is stigma and shame that causes the most damage to low SES pop)
- 3. Provide intensive family support** to young FLPs

# Intensive Recovery



- Target young people 20-30 who have only achieved high school or less
- 1. Reach out with offers from trades and community colleges to upgrade their skills – make it attractive for them
- 2. Employers can help by offering job guarantees and flexible working conditions if their workers go back to school
- 3. Share the blame (for our education system) and take back the shame

# Support kids in High School



- The Province has a number of initiatives to improve high school graduation rates; they is succeeding.
- The community can enhance these efforts and make them even more successful by targeting the academic enablers:
- Diperna, James Clyde (2006), “Academic Enablers and Student Achievement: Implications for Assessment and Intervention Services in the Schools”, *Psychology in the Schools*, Vol. 43(1), 7-17

# Academic Enablers



- *To be motivated* (i.e. promote interest in the subject or the assignment and increase self-efficacy)
- *To be engaged* in class: (e.g.) get involved in class discussion
- *To have study skills* : recording, organizing, synthesizing, remembering, and applying information
- *To have social skills* : sharing, helping, initiating communications, requesting help from another person, and giving compliments.

# Conclusion (1)



- *Every Kid in our communities*
- is a community project that builds social capital
- Social capital: defn (Putnam, 2000) *Positive interaction or interpersonal connectedness within Communities*
- Originally invented by L. J. Hanifan, in 1913, to describe how a rural community developed social capital and improved its recreational, intellectual, moral, and economic conditions

## Conclusion (2)



- The reason social capital is so important is that the *active ingredient* is outside the family. Children need positive interactions within their family. Positive interactions outside the family (in school, at the workplace, in the community centre, places of worship, etc.) complement the family and may also compensate for deficiencies within the family.
- By connecting people within the communities and Leeds & Grenville on a common project, *everykid* makes us all richer

## Conclusion (3)



- By acting together:
  1. To provide parent support to female led lone parents in Brockville, Prescott and Edwardsburgh
  2. To provide parent education programs to male led lone parents, young parents <25
    - **To help these parents to read to their children every day**
  3. To set up programs outside of academics in school
    - **providing organized and unorganized sports,**
    - **involvement in the arts, such as music, drama and drawing)**

## Conclusions (4)



- ***Harm reduction strategy*** (to reduce substance abuse, depression and anti-social behaviour)
  - **Ameliorate the hardship of poverty**
  - **Implement an anti-stigma campaign**
  - **Provide intensive family support**
- ***Intensive recovery strategy***: Target Young People (20-30 years old) support upgrading their education: *better late than never*
- ***Strategy to improve our high schools***



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