

The Resilience Project

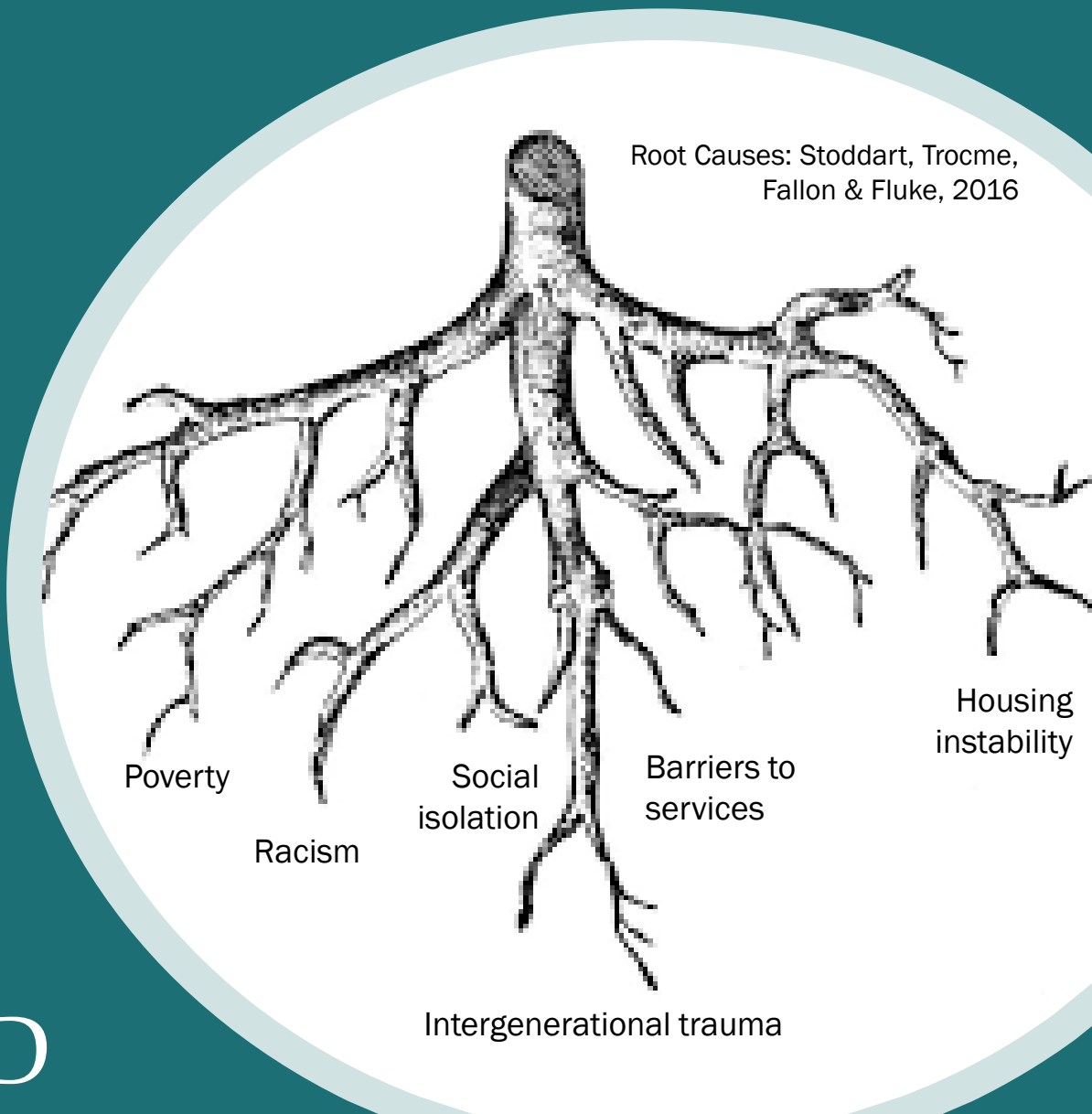


- Partners:
 - Adventure 4 Change
 - African Family Revival Organization
 - Bridges to Belonging
 - Canadian Aweil Youth Association
 - Eritrean Islamic Association
 - Family and Children's Services
 - Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery
 - Levant
 - Muslim Social Services
 - Women's Crisis Services
- Funded by:
 - Fairmont Foundation

YOUTH RESILIENCE PROJECT REPORT 2021

Addressing Root Causes of Child/Youth Maltreatment & Neglect

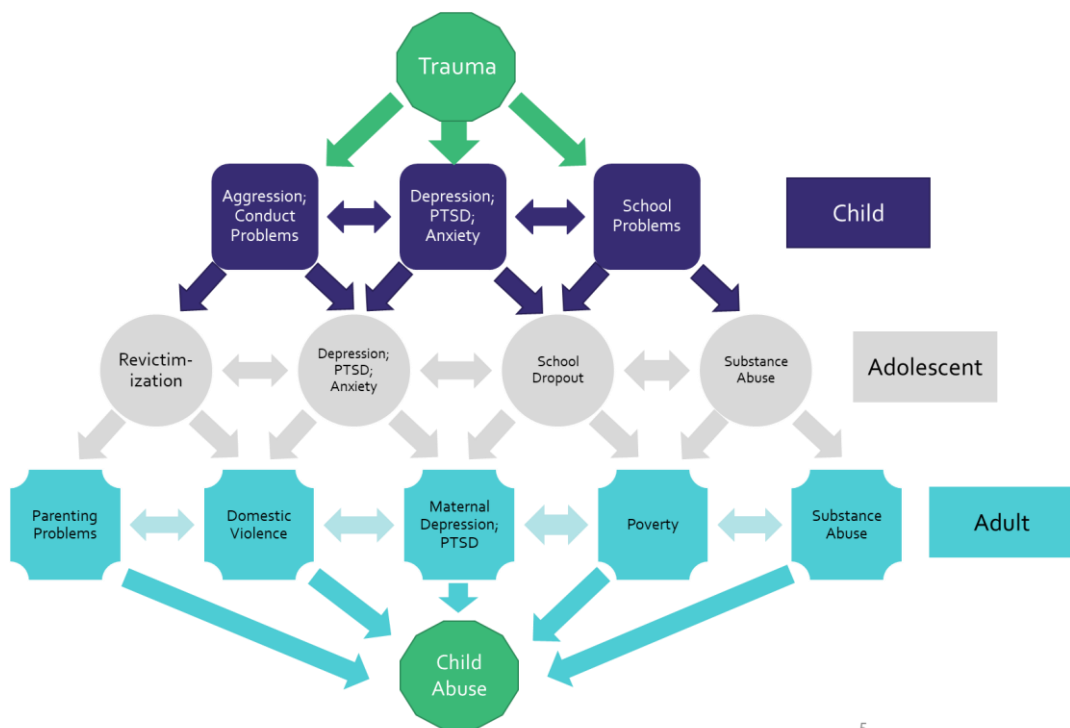
- To support a community to thrive means individuals must feel connected to one another. Since 2017, with support of the Fairmont Foundation the Resilience Project Partners have expanded our work to include a focus on youth. This has allowed us to work to reduce the root causes of child maltreatment and neglect through nonthreatening services and supports to this vulnerable population within the Waterloo Region community.
- We know that system inequities drive child maltreatment and neglect, and thus must not look to the individual to resolve solutions but cultivate collective resilience to support healing and prevention of abuse.



THE
NEED

Interrupt Intergeneration Trauma Transmission

- Youth we work with have experienced trauma (e.g., exposure to domestic violence, war and genocide, child abuse and neglect, poverty, forced migration, resettlement trauma, racial trauma etc.). The project aims to disrupt the transmission of intergenerational trauma (Putnam & Harris, 2008) by targeting trauma symptoms experienced in the adolescence stage that can continue to impact people as they transition to adulthood and become parents themselves. By placing the healing of youth at the center of our programming, we are investing into our collective futures.

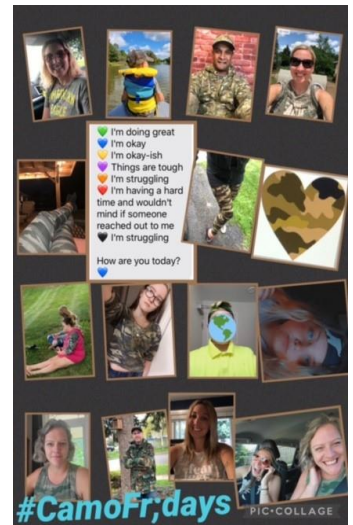


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THE NEED

When a flower doesn't bloom you fix the
environment in which it grows, not the flower.
Alexander Den Heijer

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?



THE SOLUTION

To define or not resilience?

- Traditionally, resilience is thought as an **individual** dynamic where a person overcomes or “bounces back” from their environment.”
- The Resilience Project acknowledges the individual realm, but also places great emphasis on the environment, including systems, structures, and supports a person has to become resilience: **Collective Resilience**.
- The Resilience Project also acknowledges **Hidden Resilience** as a superpower of adolescents. Hidden Resilience can appear as defiance, avoidance, aggression or other traditional negative behaviours, but are actually pathways that the youth uses to illicit support from the environment (Ungar, 2008).
- No matter the context, we must challenge ourselves to use a collective impact approach to understand:
 - What does resilience mean for the group we are working with?
 - How does resilience manifest?
 - How can our services and systems be dynamic to promote all types of resilience?



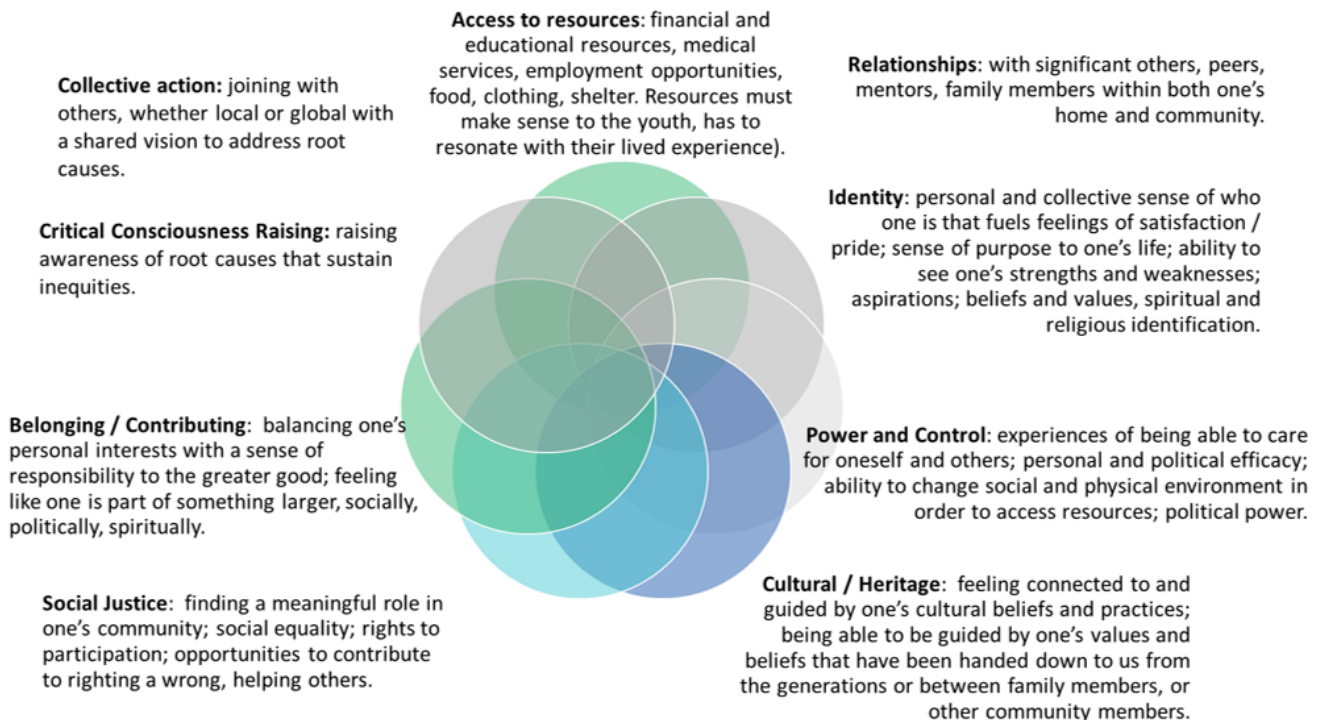
Resilience is Interconnected

THE SOLUTION

Promoting resilience in our future

Using previous research, we provide programs designed to promote resilience through strengthening relationships, encouraging powerful identities, strengthening sense of belonging, promoting social justice, hope, and life, as well encouraging sense of culture and historical roots (Masten, 2010; Search Institute, 2018; Stoddart & Wilson 2016; Ungar, 2018)

9 Resources / Tensions that must be kept in balance when Promoting Youth Resilience:



THE SOLUTION

Summary of Programs

- 20 unique programs across 12 partner organizations
 - Eritrean Association of KW
 - African Family Revival Organization (AFRO)
 - Women's Crisis Services (WCSWR)
 - Adventure 4 Change (A4C)– Waterloo
 - Levant
 - KW Art Gallery (KWAG)
 - Bridges to Belonging
 - Hummingbird Centre for Hope
 - Bereaved Families of Ontario – WR
 - Canadian Aweil Youth Association (CAYA)

Arts

Murals

- Partners:
- KWAG
- Family Centre

Cooking,

- Partners:,
- Levant
- FACS

Sports

Soccer

- Partners
- Eritrean,
- Levant,
- A4C

Mountain Biking

- Partners
- A4C
- FCS

Other Sports

- CAYA

Relationships

I AM

- Partners
- Women's crisis center
- FCS

LINKS Program

- Bridges to Belonging

Teen Grief

- Partners
- Hummingbird Centre,
- Bereaved Families

Mentorship

Young Queens

- A4C

Cultural Enrichment

- AFRO

Volunteering

- FCS

Crafting Your Own Story

- FCS, FCS Foundation

Tutoring

- Eritrean Association

THE IMPACT



IN 2021, 602 youth were served by the Youth Resilience Project.

However, we must recognize that impacting one youth has a ripple effect on the Waterloo Region Community. Each youth we invest in building resilience in spreads the spirit of collective resilience into all those they may interact with.

This is because, for every one youth impacted, there are

- 1-2 parents,
- 1-2 aunts and uncles,
- 0-2 grandparents,
- 0-3 siblings, and
- 1-2 friends

that the youth may interact with in a different way that promotes resilience

RESILIENCE THROUGH ARTS

Youth came together with the Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery Article Nicole Benson to create a mural that represented their experiences throughout the pandemic. Being able to express feelings and experiences an artistic way allowed for youth to engage with emotions and experiences in a nonthreatening way, yet still articulate what they felt and experienced.

Youth who participated in the Mural Project said:

- I enjoyed collaborating with other youth because we were really good at building on each other's ideas, and it was cool to be able to make a mural with different art pieces combined.
- Meeting new people with the same interest as me- the arts- and getting to create art that will be publicly displayed.
- Getting to know different ideas from different artists
- Working with others to create a piece that will be displayed in the city

Artists' Statement

This mural is based on the experiences we've had in the past year as we battled COVID-19 and much more. It is a recollection of our experiences as we lived through a difficult and unpredictable time. We have expressed our chaotic time during the pandemic as the dark wall. Incorporated into this wall are representations of our experiences – staying at home, feeling isolated, our best friends, masks and hand sanitizers, and our feelings and emotions seen through various textures, paintings, collages, text, and photographs. Despite being apart, we were connected, as is shown by the six feet and the hands connected by a blue thread. Our hope bursts through the hole in the middle. It is filled with excitement and the idea of rebirth as we, hopefully, near the end of this pandemic



YOUTH COUNCIL ARTISTS

Anika Sharma
Nishi Patel
Jennifer Phan
Janvi Patel
Amira

Anna
Autumn D-F
Yashasvi Modi
Clarissa
Chamberlain

ARTIST MENTOR
Nicole Beno

THE IMPACT

RESILIENCE THROUGH SPORTS



SOCCER

Supporting **family integration** into the community through sports

*"My family and I moved to Kitchener from Toronto recently due to covid. **Social integration and resilience** were among our concerns when moving to a new place. We were happy to find an Ethiopian community where our kids could participate in the **soccer program**, celebrate and learn their parents' culture and learn the Amharic language. We felt **sense of belonging instantly** as the Ethiopian community was very welcoming, accepting, and supportive. We hope to give back to our community." – Admas Mekuria*

Ethiopian Association of Region of Waterloo



MOUNTAIN BIKING

Promoting **resilience** through exploration of physical activity and nature

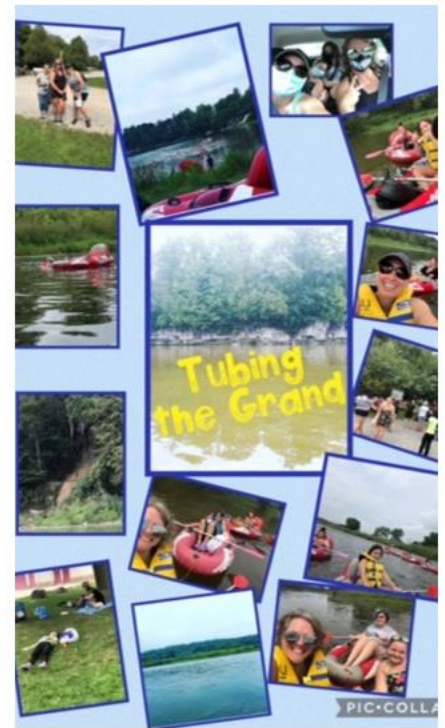
BASKETBALL
Resilience through **connection** and **activity**

Adventure for Change

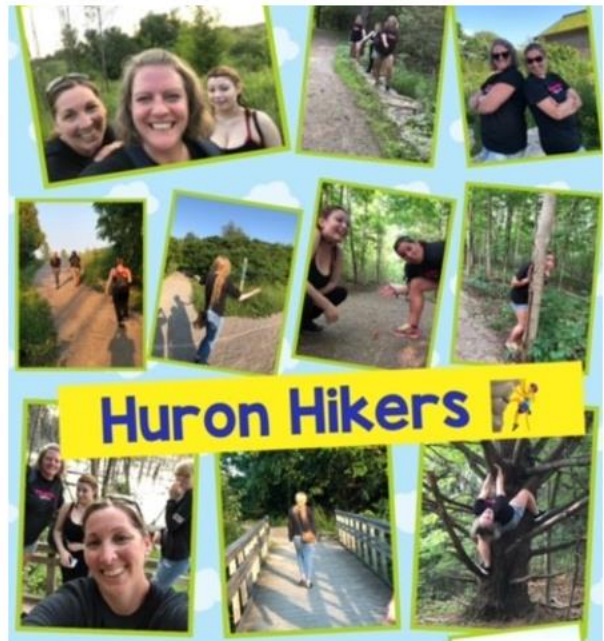


THE IMPACT

RESILIENCE THROUGH SPORTS



Experiencing nature through mastery of skills instills the idea that one has the ability to build and be.



THE IMPACT

RESILIENCE THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

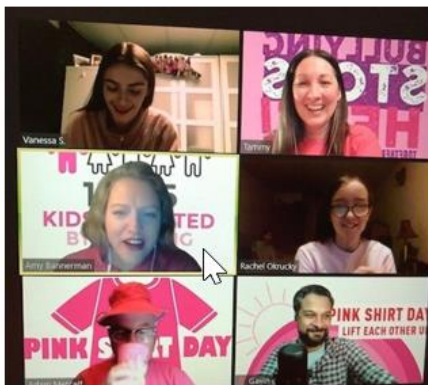
Youth are drawn into programs through **connection and relationships**, using this as the foundation we engage in multiple activities of **activism** that shows we all must have a **sense of social justice** to support **collective resilience** in our society:

"All the more power to you that she actually worked hard. She does absolutely nothing around the house unless I do it side by side with her. Maybe that is the key (that was an ahh hah moment). I am impressed that she has stuck it out since she often starts things and then tires of the activity. I guess your team comes up with new things and fun ways to do it, especially during covid. This group is good for her social skills. I still can't imagine what kind of part time job she might do but we have time before that happens. I'm hoping that the good deeds will fill up her bucket and help her to see the bright light we all see inside of her. She is an amazing kid once you peel off some of those layers of protection she has around her."

~ Foster Parent, Resilient Rebel Youth



Activism through relationship building supports collective resilience



THE IMPACT

RESILIENCE THROUGH MENTORSHIP

Adventure for Change



Resilience through understanding one another and what we have to offer



Mentorship is a cornerstone of promoting resilience our future generation

Mentorship takes many forms and many activities



Connection is at the heart of mentorship

Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region



THE IMPACT

SUMMARY

By raising awareness about social inequities, the Resilience Project connects local to global adversity and resilience experiences. The project involves program planning and implementation, and research and knowledge dissemination components. The Resilience Project aims to break down barriers and provides collective learning on a larger scale that paves the way for new services and systems that the partner organizations can develop.

NEXT STEPS

- We need to continue to seek opportunities for meaningful engagement, not just with youth serving organizations, but also with youth-led organizations.
- The Resilience Project will continue to seek space for youth-led organizations, and youth led visioning to be at the core of Resilience Project program planning and implementation.
- The Resilience Project will continue to push for collaboration that pushes social service organizations beyond silos
- We have received \$145,519 in requests for Youth Programming for 2022. Any support the Fairmont Foundation is able to provide will make a significant impact on our ability to continue this work.



In our world we believe in the phrase – growing together... Overtime our interconnectedness has strengthened our resolve to build and blossom together, a process that is best reflected by the rooting system found underneath any garden.



Growing Together.

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Resilience Project Report: 2021.