



SUPPORTING INCLUSION *through*
INTERGENERATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



Annual Newsletter

2021-22



Working
together
to address
social
isolation

A year in review

AFRO: Support through the Generations

Support through the Generations is a program that supports Black/African Origin/Newcomer older adults with dementia and their care partners and builds meaningful relationships with our community's youth. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).



Highlights:

- Increased program participation through in-person activities.
- Supported program participants with system navigation, such as: housing, nutrition, mental health, and health care, providing reassurance during the pandemic and beyond.
- One senior participant was nominated and selected for the Kitchener's 2022 Senior of the Year award.

Alzheimer Society of Waterloo Wellington: Sharing our Voices

Sharing our Voices is an intergenerational art collaboration for persons living with dementia and youth. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).



Highlights:

- Introduced monthly "creativity workshops" to allow participants to try out the program without a long-term commitment. This resulted in increased engagement of new participants to the Alzheimer Society.
- Provided an opportunity for youth participants to lead components of the program, which helped to create a supportive environment for deeper conversations between youth and older adults.
- Heard from participants that they felt safe to explore creative ideas without fear of judgment, encouraged by other group members and drew inspiration from their fellow participants.

Conestoga College: Taking Interest in People

Taking Interest in People is an online, virtual group activity program for youth, faculty, people living with dementia and their care partners. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).

Highlights:

- Developed a promotional video to raise program awareness, and support recruitment efforts.
- Created a new, virtual co-op opportunity for high school students throughout Waterloo Region.
- Hosted 118 virtual sessions that have included engagement between youth, older adults, people living with dementia and their care partners.



"More often than not, society assumes that old age is depressing and entirely about loss, but **participating in the club brought new life** and meaning to this age group for me."
- youth participant, Virtual Village

Support.
Sharing.
Interest.
Engagement.

Fairview Parkwood Mennonite Homes: The Virtual Village

The Virtual Village promotes intergenerational learning and social connection through a virtual community. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).

Highlights:

- Introduced and engaged older adults in individual virtual programming, encouraging independence and freedom.
- Used technology to promote stronger bonds between older adults and students.
- Provided in-person leadership opportunities for students, supporting their professional development.
- Presented at the Cooperative Education and Work Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Conference to kick-off knowledge mobilization and accepted to present at the Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario conference in October 2022.



Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging: LIVING the Dementia Journey for Young Adults

LIVING the Dementia Journey for Young Adults is an evidence informed, three hour online course that increases understanding of dementia and shares strategies to support those living with it.

To learn more about this program, [click here](#).



Highlights:

- Piloted the course in Spring 2021 with 22 youth and received positive feedback about length, content, design and teaching methods. Additional course revisions were made for improved learning.
- Launched the LIVING the Dementia Journey for Young Adults in Winter 2022, among community groups and youth-focused organizations.
- Accepted to present at the 2022 Canadian Association on Gerontology conference in October 2022.
- Developed plans to expand the program within and beyond Waterloo Region.

“Really great course! As someone who didn’t know much about dementia, I feel way more knowledgeable and would be able to work with someone who has dementia.”

- youth participant, LIVING the Dementia Journey for Young Adults

Support.
Sharing.
Interest.
Engagement.

SIIP successes

The SIIP collective impact project experienced a number of successes throughout the year. Below are some of the most notable.



Technology lending library launched in Waterloo Region

In April 2022, the SIIP Backbone Team partnered with the Waterloo Public Library to create a technology lending library, which will support the technology needs for older adults and address barriers created by virtual programming. Program participants can borrow devices and/or internet hotspots to access SIIP-funded programming.

Learning together to build capacity

To support the ongoing shared learning needs of the collaborating organizations, the SIIP Backbone team arranged for speakers from the SIIP community advisory committee to share their expertise at monthly team meetings on a variety of topics that included: program planning and evaluation for individuals with lived experiences, and youth engagement and volunteer recruitment and retention.

The participants also took part in a Collective Impact workshop hosted by [Tamarack Institute](#).

Isolation to inclusion challenge

Community input and involvement was an important part of our progress this year. The first Isolation to Inclusion (I2I) event was hosted in February 2022 with the focus of identifying barriers and co-creating solutions on how to actively include people living with dementia and their care partners in the community. The following were identified as potential solutions to create a more inclusive community for people living with dementia:

- Establish a Community Hub to function as a resource repository location that can be used by community-dwelling older adults living with dementia, care partners, community members, and the general public.
- Create an advocacy campaign that focuses on raising awareness about the impacts of social isolation on people living with dementia and their care partners.
- Develop and promote educational and training resources available on the [Community Hub](#) and [SIIP website](#).



Evaluation updates

The SIIP evaluation uses a mixed method approach, exploring evidence from different stakeholder perspectives. Data is collected in relation to the overall initiative impact, as well as from each of the collaborating organizations.

Evaluation criteria includes: participation in and satisfaction with the program activities, social inclusion and benefits from participating in program activities, sense of belonging and well-being, and success, challenges, and lessons learned from the collective impact approach. This criteria is used to assess the implementation process, initiative impact and success of reducing social isolation of older adults living with dementia and their care partners.

Participant engagement

Older adults:
493

Care partners:
67

Young adults:
303

Support.
Sharing.
Interest.
Engagement.



Research resources

Creating Intergenerational Dementia Programs: A Guide for Community Organizations

This guide supports the development and implementation of programs designed for socially isolated older adults, including those living with dementia and their care partners. To access the guide, [click here](#), scroll to the Intergenerational Resources section.

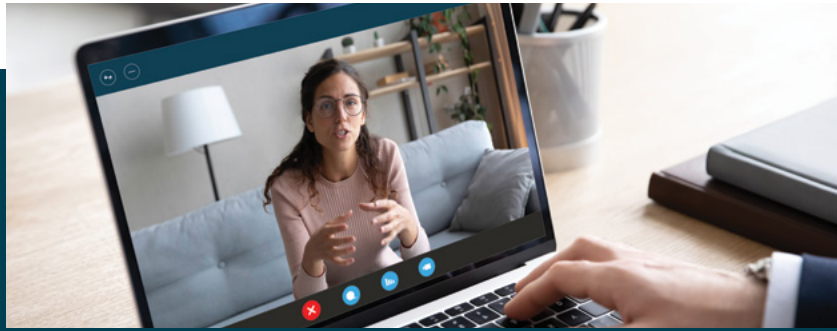
Supporting Your Neighbours: A Community Conversation Guide

Conversations with key stakeholders throughout Woolwich Township, which included community consultations and primary funding from the RTOERO Foundation, helped the team to create the conversation guide. Initially developed for Woolwich Township, the guide provides valuable information to help people in all communities identify and support older adults and their care partner who may be socially isolated.

To download the guide, [click here](#).

Looking ahead

We have seen the successful impact that SIIP programs have in the lives of older adults living with dementia, their care partners and youth. During the next year, we will focus on:



- Building community awareness around available programming opportunities by strengthening connections with services and organizations, as well as individuals who can identify those who are socially isolated.
- Sustainability has always been a key area of planning for the SIIP projects. In an effort to ensure sustainability beyond the Backbone Team support, the programs will engage in more intentional and coordinated planning, developing plans to allow for the most impactful program elements to continue into the final year of unfunded programming.

Funding acknowledgment

The SIIP project is funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program.

Funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program



Stay in touch

If you would like to stay up to date with SIIP activities, sign up to receive news and event updates on the SIIP [website](#).



Enhancing Life