



Community Safety

Community safety plays a vital role in the wellbeing of a family and a community. Community safety influences the decision for families to move into a neighbourhood, retain existing residents in a community and decreases stress which influences other factors (e.g. mental and physical health).

Crime is detrimental to a community's wellbeing and has high financial and human costs. Crime rates can be reflective of multiple adverse economic, social and family conditions (e.g. poverty, lack of housing, lack of social supports, family strain, and poor health).

Crime can be reduced and safety increased through innovative approaches such as early intervention, community development, mentorship programs, and increased access to recreational opportunities.

This factsheet will examine trends in community crime rates, crisis service utilization, and child protection referrals.

Highlights

- The crime rate in Waterloo Region has decreased for the past five consecutive years, to 4,107 (non-traffic) criminal code incidents per 100,000 people in 2013.
- The majority of crime committed in Waterloo Region between 2012 and 2013 are crimes against property. Crime against property increased 33.4% between 2012 and 2013.
- Since 2009, there has been a 45% increase in the number of investigations and consultations by the Elder Abuse Response Team.
- Women's Crisis Services Waterloo Region had a slight decrease in crisis calls in 2013-14. The decrease in crisis calls can be attributed to the fact that women are not making repeat calls, but more often call when they are ready to access shelter. There are also more women accessing information online instead of calling.
 - ⇒ The total number of days women in crisis spent in shelter decreased 4% from 25,775 in 2012-13 to 24,775 in 2013-14.
- Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region's protection referrals have decreased by 12% in 2013-14 from the previous year. This decline is consistent with an economy which has stabilized in this community.

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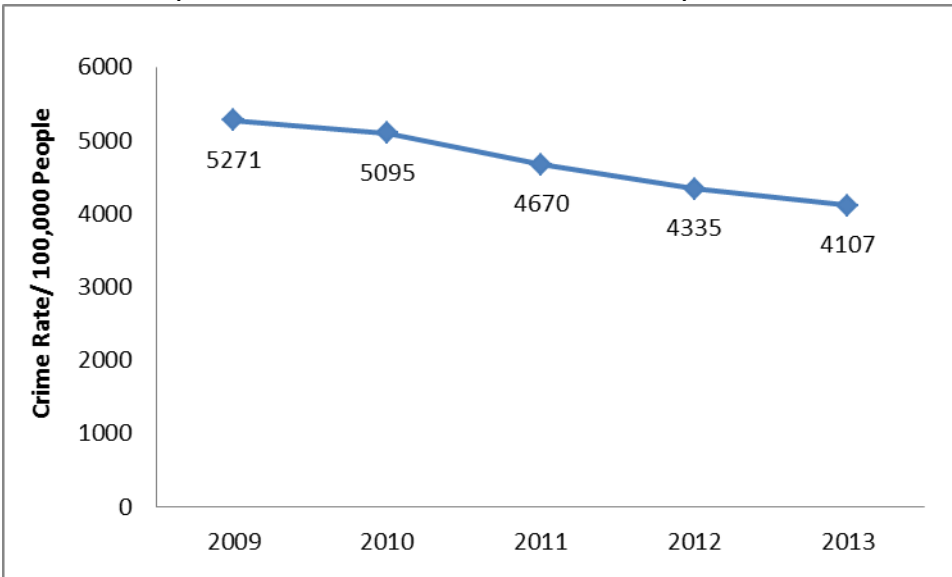
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Serving Waterloo Region

Waterloo Region Police Service (WRPS)

Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS) ascribes to traditional law enforcement practices and incorporates innovative strategies to improve the safety of the community. WRPS emphasizes crime prevention and offers tips on how community members can do their part to be safe while driving, using the internet, and using personal identification information. Public education and street-proofing programs further inform the community of the risks of drugs and firearms. WRPS has also formed relationships with community partners on a variety of topics.

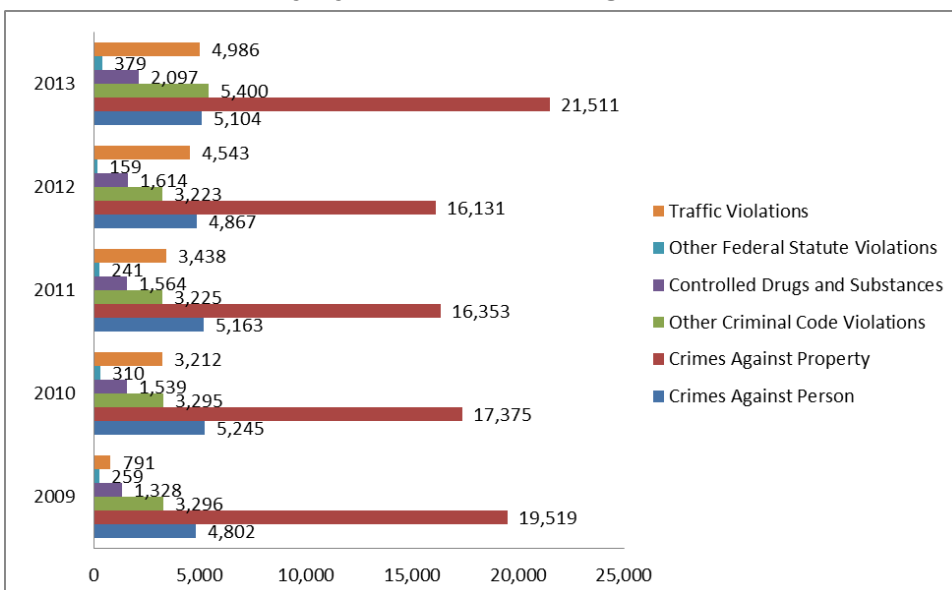
Crime Rate (Non-Traffic Criminal Code Incidents) — Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge CMA



- The crime rate in Waterloo Region has decreased for the past five consecutive years, to 4,107 (non-traffic) criminal code incidents per 100,000 people in 2013.

Source: OMBI 2013 Performance Measurement Report

Criminal Offences By Type — Waterloo Region



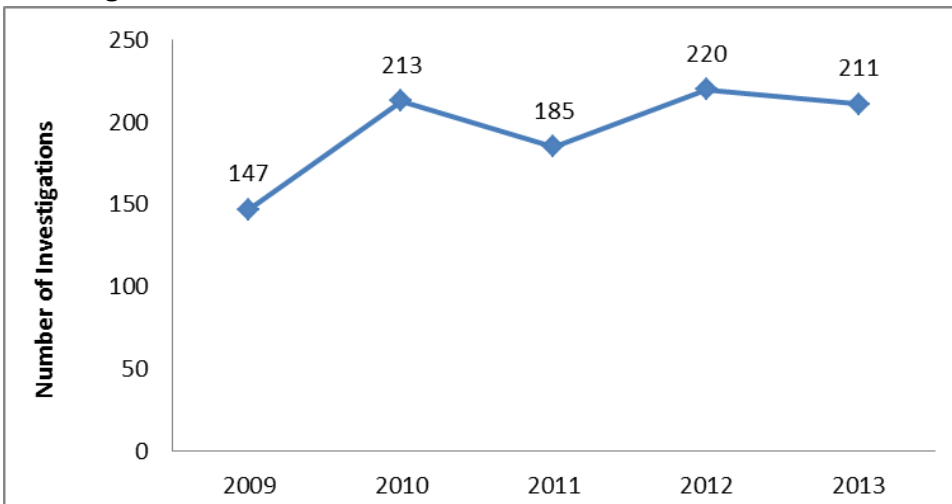
- In 2013, there were a total of 39,477 criminal offenses in Waterloo Region.
- The majority of all crimes committed in Waterloo Region are crimes against property.
- Crime against property increased 33% between 2012 and 2013.

Source: Waterloo Region Police Service Criminal Offence Summary 2013

Elder Abuse Response Team

The Elder Abuse Response Team (EART) is a collaborative partnership between Waterloo Regional Police Service and the Community Care Access Centre of Waterloo Region. Core funding is provided by each agency. EART's mission is to prevent and respond to elder abuse by working in partnership with the community and by providing an opportunity for change and healing to people affected by elder abuse, thereby enhancing the safety and well-being of older adults. EART's mandate includes providing information and consultations, direct intervention, education and training and community development.

Investigations and Consultations



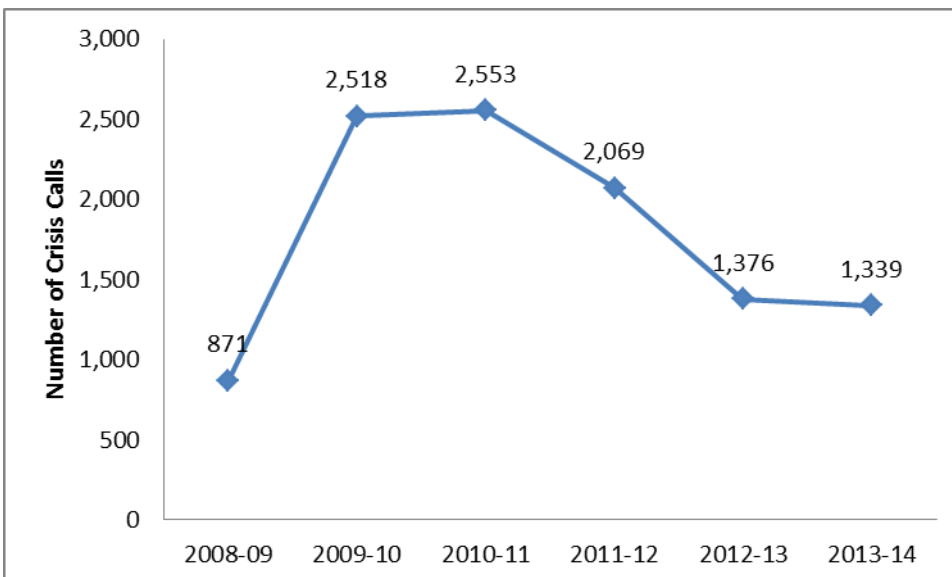
Source: Elder Abuse Response Team, Personal Communication, 2014

- There were 142 investigations and 69 consultations in 2013, for a total of 211.
- Since 2009, investigations and consults have increased by 45%.
- Investigations and consultations continue to remain high due to increased awareness in the community and increased reporting from long-term care homes after receiving education regarding reporting requirements.

Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region

Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region offers a number of supports for women leaving abusive situations and their children, including a crisis line.

Crisis Calls

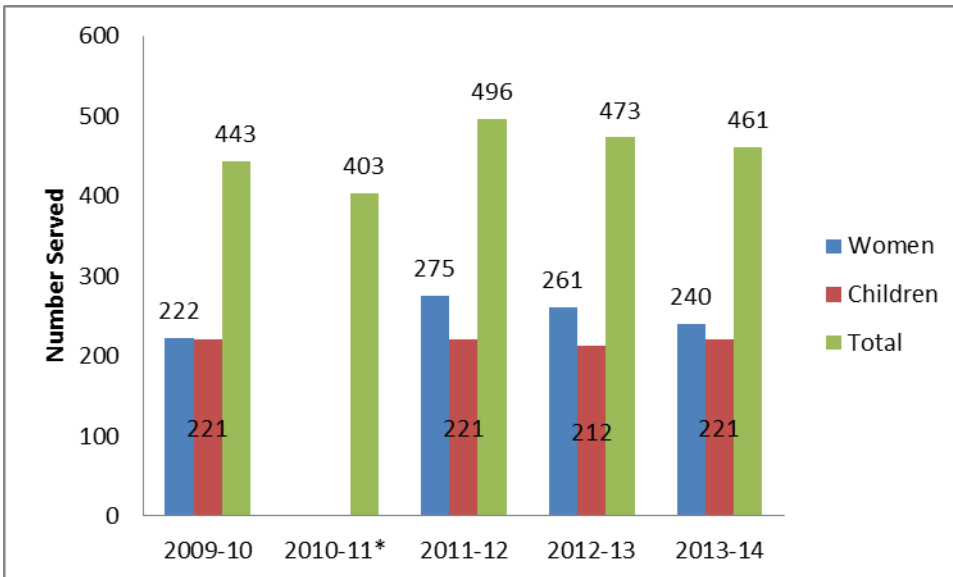


Source: Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region, Personal Communication, 2014

- There was a slight decrease in crisis call from 1,339 in 2013-14 to 1,376 in 2012-13.
- The decrease in crisis calls from 2010-11 can be attributed to the fact that women are not making repeat calls, but more often call when they are ready to access shelter. More women are able to access information online.
- From 2008-09 to 2013-14 there has been an average of 1,787 crisis calls per year.

Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region (cont.)

Women and Children Served

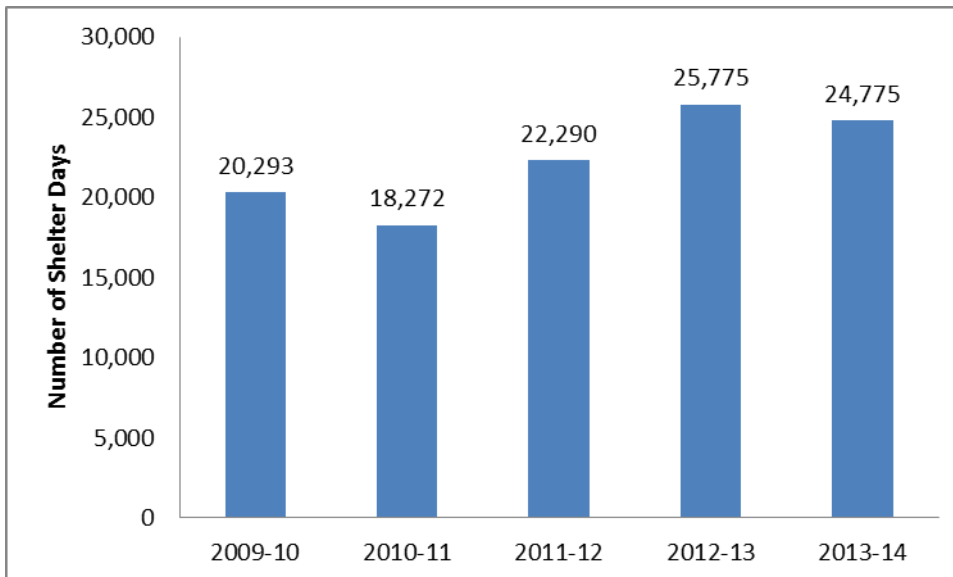


- There was a 3% decrease in women and children served from 2012-13 to 2013-14.
- Since 2009-10, there has been an average of 455 women and children served at the shelter per year.

Source: Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region, Program Statistics, Personal Communication, 2014

*There was a total of 403 women and children served in 2010-11 however, data is not available on how many women and children were served separately.

Shelter Days



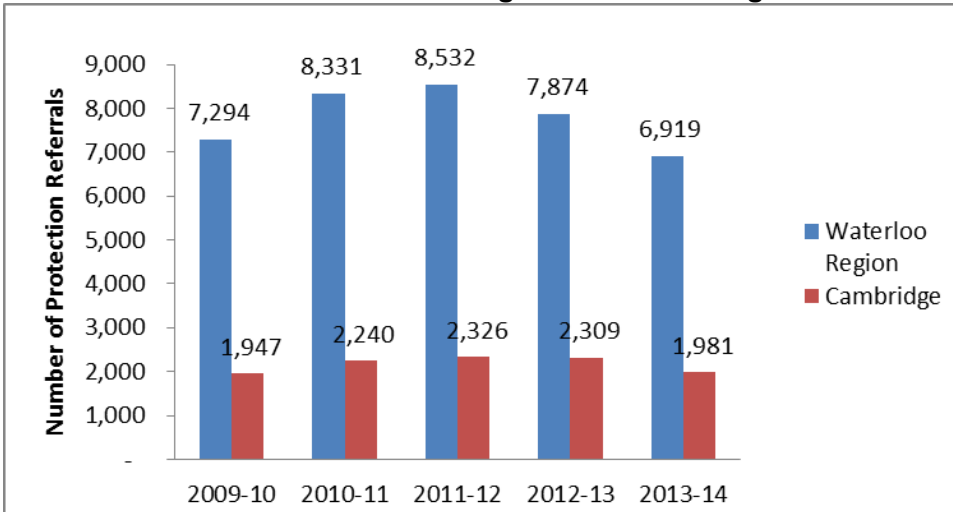
- The total number of shelter days decreased by 4% in 2013-14 from the previous year.
- The average number of shelter days since 2009-10 is 22,281 per year.

Source: Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region, Personal Communication, 2014

Family and Children’s Services of Waterloo Region

Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region (FACS) is Waterloo Region's child welfare organization. It operates from numerous locations throughout the region, providing services to help children and improve family life.

Protection Referrals – Waterloo Region and Cambridge

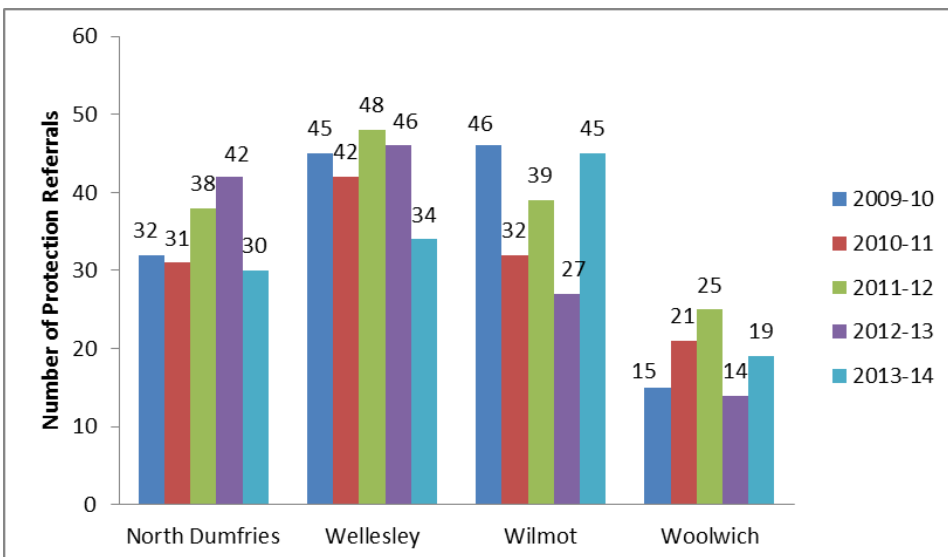


- Protection referrals in Waterloo Region have decreased by 12% in 2013-14 from the previous year and have reduced 14% in Cambridge.
- This decline is consistent with an economy which has stabilized in this community.

Source: Family and Children Services of Waterloo Region, Personal Communication, 2014

- The fluctuation in referral calls from 2009-10 through 2013-14 can be linked to the changing economy. Often risk factors which contribute to family stress leading to involvement with Family and Children’s Services increases during times of economic downturn.
- From 2009 to 2012 there were a number of high profile child abuse and neglect cases including child deaths in this community which Family and Children’s Services believe contributed to the increase in referrals.

Protection Referrals - Four Townships



- Protection referrals decreased in North Dumfries and Wellesley from 2012-13 to 2013-14.
- In 2013-14 Woolwich Township saw a 36% increase in protection referrals after a four year low in 2012-13.
- In 2013-14 Wilmot Township saw a 67% increase in protection referrals after a four year low in 2012-13.

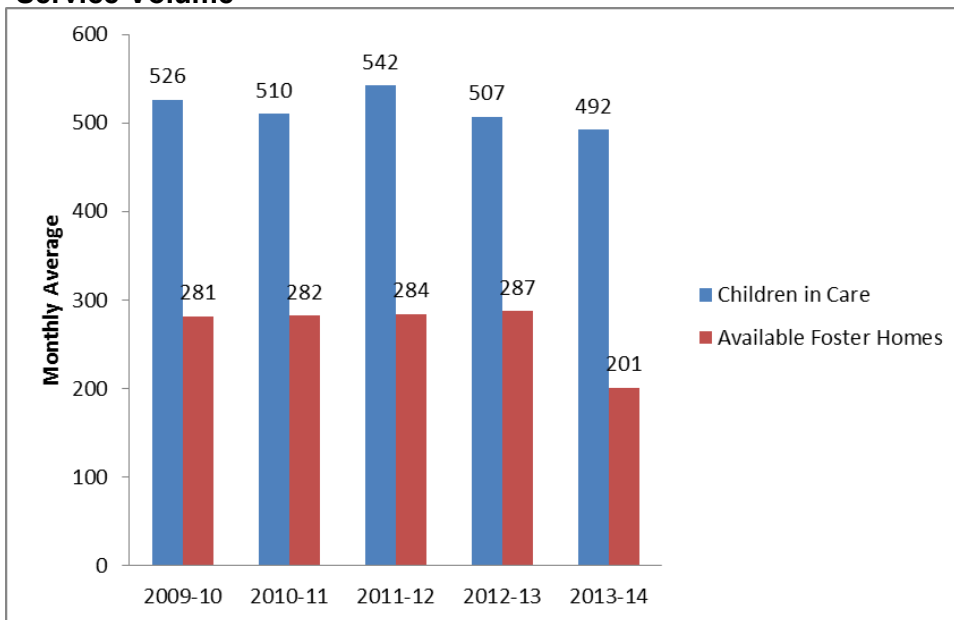
Source: Family and Children Services of Waterloo Region, Personal Communication, 2014

Family and Children’s Services of Waterloo Region (cont.)

Children in Care and Foster Homes — Waterloo Region

Foster homes are located throughout Waterloo Region within the urban centers and the surrounding areas. These families are all unique from one another; some are two parent families, others are not; some have children already in the home and others do not. However, they are all consistent in their desire to have a positive impact in the life of a child. Children placed in these foster homes can range in age from newborn to sixteen years. There can be as many as four foster children in a home and efforts are made to place siblings together in the same foster home. Families who apply to foster are required to attend a training program and are assessed using a program that is standardized throughout the province. Ongoing training and support is provided to these families and community resources are also accessed to assist these families.

Service Volume



Source: Family and Children Services of Waterloo Region, Personal Communication, 2014

- In 2013-14, the monthly average of children in foster care was 492 while the monthly average of foster homes available was 201.
- The number of foster homes has significantly dropped, however the number of children in care has remained fairly consistent.
- The drop in foster homes is having a significant impact on Family and Children’s Services’ ability to provide family based care for all children, which is an agency goal.
- Family and Children’s Services is looking at the recruitment, training and support processes to see what they can do to increase the number of foster care homes and increase their retention rates.

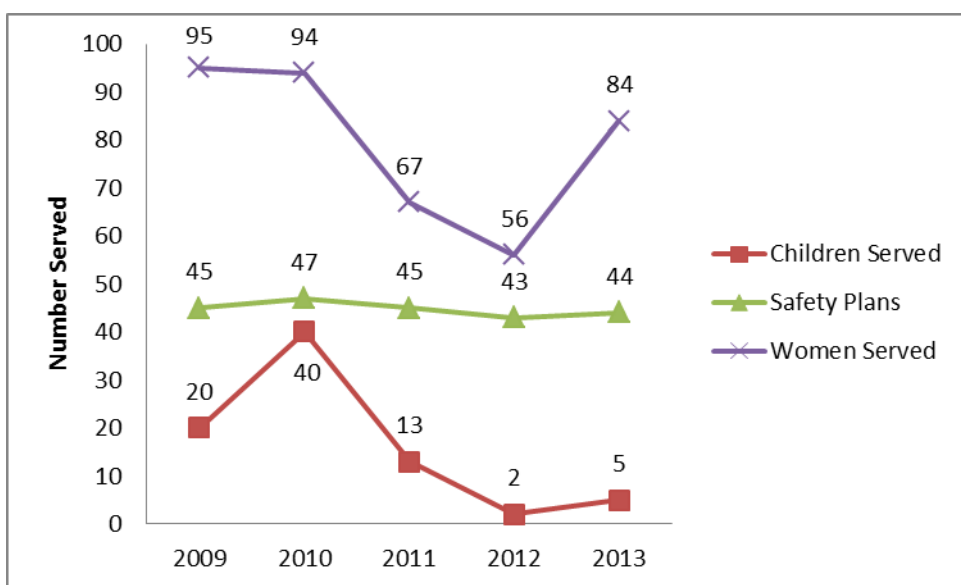
Serving Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich

Wilmot Family Resource Centre – Family Violence Prevention Program

Wilmot Family Resource Centre Inc. is a non profit charitable organization founded in 1980. The mission is to provide programs of excellence to improve the quality of life of the people of Wilmot and the town of Wellesley.

The Wilmot-Wellesley Family Violence Prevention Program offers local individual and group support for victims of family violence. This program assists with support groups, safety planning; crisis counselling and ongoing support; access to counselling; information, resources, and advocacy; referrals around financial concerns, employment, housing, shelter, food bank, counselling, legal and judicial process, and programs to support women and children. They also provide transportation assistance and accompaniment to court, lawyers appointments, police contact and legal proceedings. Services are free and confidential.

Clients Served



- In 2013 there was a change in Ministry reporting. The number now reflects unique and repeat clients.

Source: Wilmot Family Resource Centre, Personal Communication, 2014

Woolwich Community Services - Family Violence Prevention Program

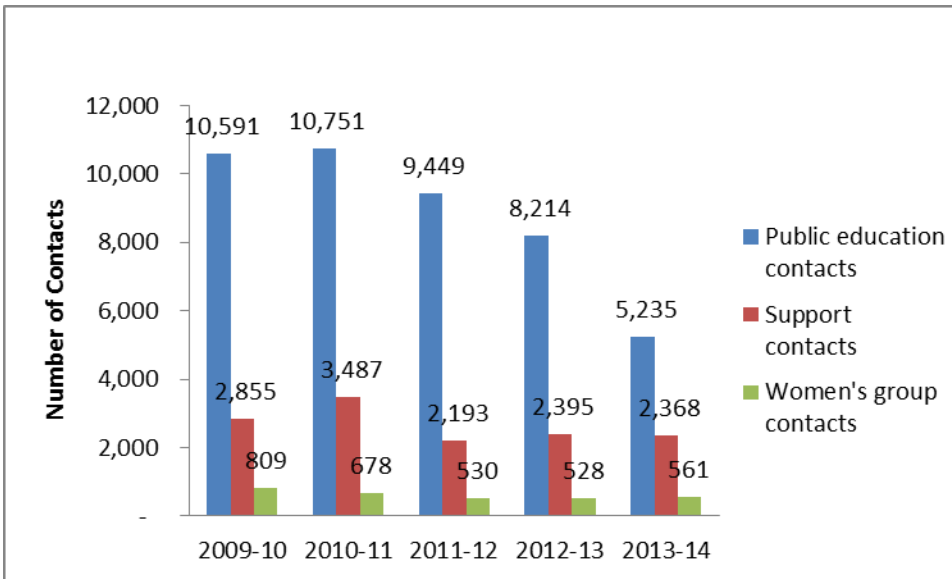
The Family Violence Prevention Program offers individual and group support to those experiencing a controlling and/or abusive relationship. Those seeking assistance can receive on-going individual support. The support may include education, safety planning and options available to make informed decisions. Referrals to other community services including housing, financial and therapeutic counselling and legal support are made available.

Through their vast experience of supporting women, the program has developed four stages of women's groups which empower women to put their safety first, work towards healing and learn to choose healthy relationships.

They also provide information to schools and community groups in Woolwich Township and the north part of Wellesley Township. Three lessons are taught to each class in each school in an age-appropriate way on a yearly basis. Topics include conflict resolution, preventing harassment, emotions, healthy relationships, peer pressure, etc.

Woolwich Community Services - Family Violence Prevention Program (cont.)

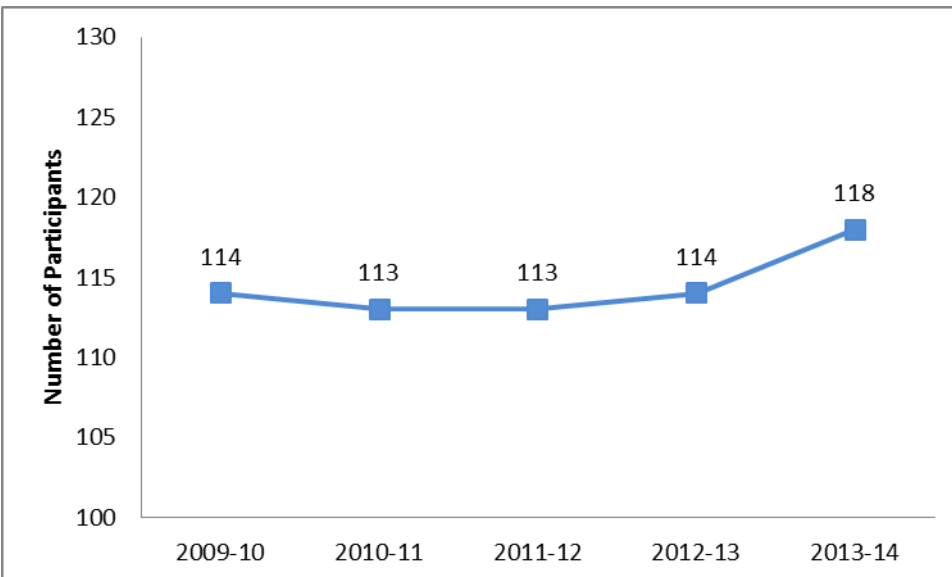
Program Contacts



- The number of contacts for public education reduced between 2012-13 and 2013-14.
- The number of contacts for support remained fairly constant between 2012-13 and 2013-14.
- The number of women's group contacts increased between 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Source: Woolwich Community Services, Personal Communication 2014

Number of Participants



- On average there have been 114 participants in the Family Violence Prevention Program between 2009-10 and 2013-14.

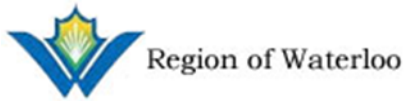
Source: Woolwich Community Services, Personal Communication 2014

Thank you to all of the organizations who have contributed data to this publication. Without your support this publication would not be possible.

- Waterloo Region Police Services
- Elder Abuse Response Team
- Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region
- Family and Children Services of Waterloo Region
- Wilmot Family Resource Centre
- Woolwich Community Services

For more information on the data provided by these organizations, please contact them directly.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the ongoing support of our funders, without which this publication would not be possible.



Complete List of Community Trends Documents from SPCND

Community Social Profile – Cambridge and North Dumfries Com-
 munity Social Profile – Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich

- Arts, Culture and Recreation
- Community Assets and Participation
- Community Safety**
- Community Supports
- Employment and Income
- Food Security
- Housing Stability
- Transportation

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