

Working together **differently** to make  
transformational change in wellbeing.



Wellbeing WR Update Report  
**SPRING 2022**

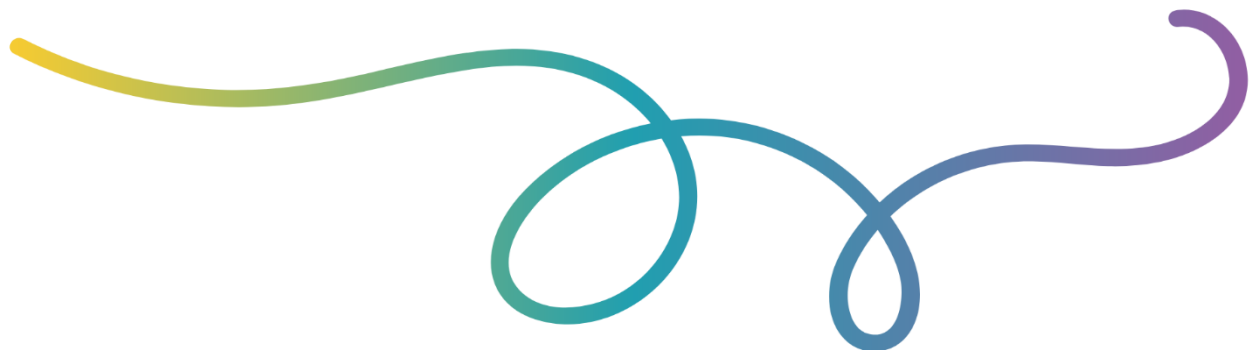


Wellbeing WR Network,

# THANK YOU.

Together we are making transformational change in wellbeing in ways that we could not do alone. This diverse network is collectively working towards the vision of a community where everyone thrives and no one is left behind. The level of care, support, and inspiration within this connected community is what keeps this work moving forward and could not be done without everyone involved in this initiative.

This update report highlights the Wellbeing WR activities and accomplishments from June 2021 to May 2022.



## Table of Contents

<b>The Foundation</b> .....	4
<b>Wellbeing WR Updates</b> .....	5
The Backbone Team.....	5
The Working Groups .....	5
<b>Connecting Community</b> .....	6
Brand Revitalization .....	6
Nature’s Invitation Screening and Panel Discussion.....	6
Network Gathering .....	6
<b>Journey to Reconciliation</b> .....	7
Discussions and Implications for Settler Peoples Course .....	7
Learn, Reflect & Practice.....	7
<b>Measuring Wellbeing</b> .....	8
Smart Waterloo Region Innovation Lab and Wellbeing WR Co-Lab .....	8
Evaluating and Impact Reporting.....	8
Data Spotlights.....	8
<b>Reducing Inequities</b> .....	9
Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan .....	9
Board Governance Boot Camp .....	9
White Supremacy Awareness and Actions for Leaders .....	9
It Matters. PERIOD. Event .....	9
<b>Looking Forward</b> .....	10
2022 Wellbeing Mini-Survey.....	10
Accessible Communications .....	10
Join the Collaborative .....	10
Staying Connected .....	10

## The Foundation



CONNECTING COMMUNITY



JOURNEY TO RECONCILIATION



MEASURING WELLBEING



REDUCING INEQUITIES

Wellbeing Waterloo Region (Wellbeing WR) is a collaborative initiative where members work together across sectors to improve the wellbeing of residents of Waterloo Region. The foundation of our work is grounded in connecting community, reducing inequities, measuring wellbeing, and journey to reconciliation.

# WE CARE

**Connect and collaborate:** across diverse communities in Waterloo Region to leverage local assets, increase alignment, and advocate to collectively overcome barriers to wellbeing.

**Amplify and adapt:** existing efforts to promote and focus attention where transformational change is needed in community wellbeing across Waterloo Region.

**Respond and act:** to develop new solutions and actions to address community issues.

**Educate and enhance knowledge:** to learn from one another and understand system-wide issues and address inequities.



## Wellbeing WR Updates

### The Backbone Team

The Wellbeing WR backbone team has grown as we welcomed 3 new staff members; Jackie Heintzman as the Communications Assistant, Olivia Maine as the Urban Indigenous Communications Assistant, and Sydney Lane as a Practicum Student from Laurier's Master of Social Work Program who finished her term in May 2022.



### Meet the Backbone Team

### The Working Groups

The **Connectors Hub** continues to meet regularly to discuss emerging social issues within the community and provide direction for Wellbeing WR.

The **Communications and Engagement Working Group** reconvened in September 2021 and has contributed greatly to the revitalization of Wellbeing WR's brand, communication strategies, and ensuring accessibility.

The Wellbeing WR **Social Inclusion Catalyst Group** has connected with the Region of Waterloo's **Psychosocial and Spiritual Supports Working Group**, who works to support and improve the mental and spiritual wellbeing of the community during the pandemic and beyond.

A **Sustainability and Funding Working Group** formed in 2021 to focus on the overall sustainability of the Wellbeing WR Collaborative. Wellbeing WR is working with a team of MBA students from Wilfrid Laurier University to do a strategic review and develop a unique sustainability plan.

The **First Nations, Métis, Inuit Advocacy & Advisory Circle** has been a hub of connection and relationship building for Indigenous individuals and organizations in Waterloo Region, with efforts this year being put towards organizing and running Indigenous COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, as well as information sharing and building relationships.

### Meet the Collaborative



## Connecting Community

Wellbeing WR is working to build a more connected Waterloo Region so that we can effectively respond to break down barriers to wellbeing inequity and make system-wide changes.



### Brand Revitalization

To match up with the evolution and growth we have undergone as a collaboration over the last few years, we launched a new look in February 2022 that helps to solidify our brand identity and revitalize our overall messaging. With the same core values and vision, we revealed a new logo, website, and brand standards that will help us to communicate who we are, create excitement about where we are going, and increase our awareness and impact in the community.

This branding revitalization was kick-started through our participation in **Creative Day for Social Good by Capacity Canada**, where a team of creative professionals from HIM&HER Incorporated and students from Conestoga College developed custom marketing materials at no cost.



- [See the new logo here.](#)
- [Read the brand guideline here.](#)
- [Visit our new website here.](#)

Learn more here.



### Nature's Invitation Screening and Panel Discussion

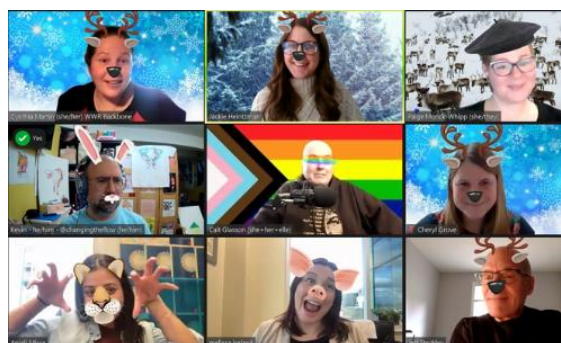
As part of the Immigration Partnership's 2021 Waterloo Region Migration Film Festival, Wellbeing WR hosted a virtual screening and panel discussion of the film *Nature's Invitation*, a documentary about Canada's quest to get new immigrants in touch with nature. Moderated by Heather Majaury with panelists: Mariana Gebeil, Jane Hurly and Wanda Kampijan.

Learn more here.



### Network Gathering

After pivoting to a virtual space from a planned in-person drop-in event in December, Wellbeing WR was reminded how uplifting and beneficial it is to create an informal space for easy-flowing conversation, personal stories, and silly filters.



## Journey to Reconciliation

Wellbeing WR has made a commitment to develop meaningful relationships and work toward reconciliation with local First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities. Part of this commitment includes developing resources and tools to support education with the network and community.



### Discussions and Implications for Settler Peoples Course

In the fall of 2021, Wellbeing WR provided an opportunity for 14 network and community members to participate in St. Paul's 8-week non-credit course: *Reconciliation: Discussions and Implications for Settler Peoples*, facilitated by Kelly Laurila. Using Indigenous Pedagogy and themes of holism, this course discussed how Indigenous and Settler peoples know each other through the stories that have been told in the past, and which continue in the present.

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*"This course was life changing for me, to be able to learn the full history of my country and be able to discuss feelings and emotions with others going through the same learning journey was priceless." – Course Participant*

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To ensure continued learnings and accountability after the course, each participant is invited to bi-annual gatherings to discuss how the course has made an impact and how these learnings are being applied.

[Learn more here.](#)



### Learn, Reflect & Practice

In each newsletter, we have continued to feature a *Journey to Reconciliation* section that provides a quick and meaningful opportunity to learn, reflect, and practice on topics related to reconciliation. These pieces are written and edited by the Wellbeing WR backbone team staff, which in recent months have been led by Olivia Maine, the Urban Indigenous Communications Assistant for Wellbeing WR. Recent topics include:

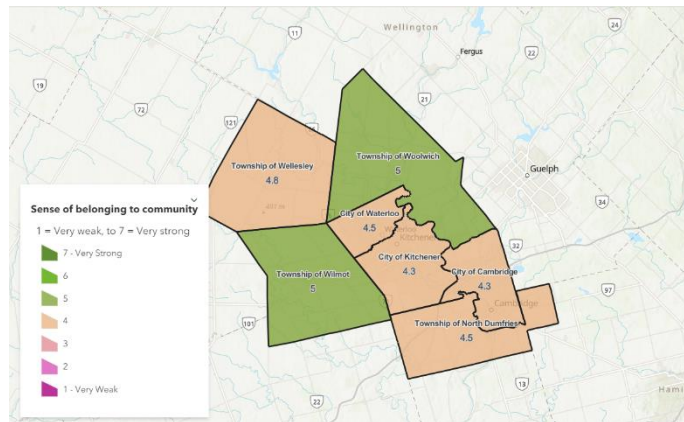
- [Tropes and Stereotypes](#)
- [Understanding Smudging](#)
- [Data Sovereignty and Information Governance](#)

## Measuring Wellbeing

Wellbeing WR uses measurement and data to understand community wellbeing, emerging issues and prevalent inequities. We also mobilize the network to assist with data sense making and taking action to improve community wellbeing.



### Smart Waterloo Region Innovation Lab and Wellbeing WR Co-Lab



In early 2022, fourth year University of Waterloo students created *Wellbeing and the Built Environment: an interactive, GIS mapping tool* to display existing wellbeing survey data at the municipal level. The interactive mapping tool was created using Waterloo Region Community Wellbeing Survey (2018) data and Waterloo Region Youth Impact Survey (2021) data.

As a next step, SWRIL and Wellbeing WR will hold an innovation lab to develop a neighbourhood wellbeing mapping tool to work with neighbourhoods and people with lived experience of inequities to co-create resident-led solutions to improve wellbeing.



### Evaluating and Impact Reporting

To measure the impact that Wellbeing WR as a Collaborative has on improving community wellbeing, 5 members of the Wellbeing WR Network are taking part in Tamarack Institute's capacity-building program *Getting to Impact*. This program will help us to develop a community impact report and improve our ability to track results of our CARE model and demonstrate our impact. From this program, Wellbeing WR is in the process of developing a community impact report that focuses on evaluating our CARE model and demonstrating our impact.

### Data Spotlights

To keep the Wellbeing WR Network informed about current reports and data related to wellbeing and equity, each issue of the Wellbeing WR newsletter features a data spotlight on wellbeing data. Recent data spotlights include:

- [CYPT 2021 Youth Impact Survey Data Briefs](#)
- [Changing the Flow Menstruation in Waterloo Region](#)



## Reducing Inequities

We have a vision of a community where everyone thrives and no one is left behind, and addressing the prevalent and systemic inequities that exist is crucial in achieving this vision. To create meaningful and impactful change we are:



- Responding and advocating to develop new solutions
- Educating and enhancing knowledge
- Working towards reconciliation with local First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities

### Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan

Wellbeing WR along with many other community partners and agencies have participated in the advisory of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Framework that is led by the Region of Waterloo. The Framework identifies conditions for wellbeing and safety such as committing to anti-hate and anti-racism, truth and reconciliation, and addressing systems that limit safety and wellbeing. It also provides foundational actions to achieve these conditions.

[Learn more here.](#)



### Board Governance Boot Camp

Wellbeing WR supported 3 participants to attend a 3-day *Board Governance BootCamp* hosted by Capacity Canada to support equitable participation and broaden the impact of the workshop. Led by Indigenous, Black and Muslim experts, participants gained a greater awareness of systemic racism and created a plan to transform their board or organization.

### White Supremacy Awareness and Actions for Leaders

In collaboration with the Children and Youth Planning Table and the Immigration Partnership, we hosted a virtual training session for systems leaders within our collaboratives around *White Supremacy Awareness & Actions* with Selam Debs. Across two sessions, over 100 people working in systems attended to learn from Selam with others across Waterloo Region.

[See the Course Feedback](#)



### It Matters. PERIOD. Event

In collaboration with Changing the Flow we hosted an in-person event to bring awareness to and create discussion around menstrual equity. This event featured a screening of the short film *Free Period*, local vendors and a panel discussion with Amy Smoke, Maddie Resmer, Selam Debs, TK Pritchard and moderated by Deepa Ahluwalia. Donations from the event went to [Moon Time Sisters](#).



## Looking Forward

As we head into the summer and fall months, Wellbeing WR is planning to release quarterly updates such as this to keep the Collaborative informed and up-to-date. You can expect the next update in late summer 2022.



### 2022 Wellbeing Mini-Survey

In 2018, a group of 16 organizations collaborated on a community-wide *Canadian Index of Wellbeing* survey. We now have an opportunity to collaborate on a wellbeing mini-survey to shed light on how residents are feeling about their wellbeing and quality of life during the pandemic. From this survey, we hope to disaggregate data to illustrate which groups are doing most and least well in the community to support data informed decisions.

### Accessible Communications

As we work to continuously improve the accessibility of Wellbeing WR's communications, we have recently received an audit of our new website from local company [AccessiBrand](#), which included a user experience report from a team of digital testers with disabilities. We are working on implementing these suggestions to ensure that no one is left behind in accessing Wellbeing WR's communications.



### Join the Collaborative

You can join the network by participating in a working group, or take it one-step further by becoming a co-convenor! Co-convenors collaboratively work with backbone staff to develop agendas and facilitate conversation of the meetings. To support equitable access to participation in the Wellbeing WR network, we offer stipends to working group participants with lived and living experience, as well as co-convenors who are attending outside an organization or behalf of a smaller organization.

- [Learn about Wellbeing WR working groups](#)
- [Fill out a quick form to join the Collaborative](#)

### Staying Connected

Through our social media channels and bi-weekly newsletters, we amplify events and resources from other organizations, provide quick and meaningful educational opportunities and advocate for relevant social change.

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