



Community Voices

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC SURVEY



It is better to build lives than mend them. – Survey Participant



JOURNEY FORWARD – A COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT INITIATIVE

The power of community inherent in Winnipeg is what United Way is tapping into through Journey Forward – a community involvement initiative.



Winnipegger's pride, determination, energy and passion bind us together. This spirit makes it possible for people and organizations of all ages, areas and circumstances to work side by side to accomplish what many would consider impossible – including holding back the flood of the century and hosting the world class Pan Am Games. Journey Forward is tapping into that spirit to inspire and motivate us all to work together to find long lasting solutions to our city's most pressing social issues.



The Journey Forward process is asking Winnipeggers three important questions: What are our city's most pressing social issues today? What actions could address these issues and have long lasting impact? What opportunities are there to work together to plan and implement these actions?



Answering these questions requires good information. In support of Journey Forward, an environmental scan was completed, highlighting facts about the current and projected economic, social and political trends impacting most significantly on the need, demand and resources for social services in Winnipeg. Information is also being gathered from people who provide social services, people who use them and the general public.

This report looks at the views and perspectives of the general public. It is one in a series of reports that will help the community move the journey forward and develop a community-wide agenda of social issues and how the community may address them.

THE PUBLIC VIEWS OF SOCIAL ISSUES

Asking the Question

In June 1999 the *Winnipeg Free Press* began the public survey process by publishing the survey in the paper. In order to engage as many Winnipeggers and make it as convenient as possible for them to respond, the survey was also distributed to thousands of employees through social service organizations, more than 30 of the city's largest workplaces, on United Way's website and to more than 120,000 Winnipeg households by mail. Public service announcements in all media carried information about Journey Forward and encouraged people to complete the survey.

Respondents were asked to rate their top 5 social issues and then their next 5 issues from a list of 26. It also asked them to indicate their age range and postal code to determine if different age groups and areas of Winnipeg have different priority issues.

The issues were wide ranging:

- Enable the elderly to live as independently as possible
- Reduce the incidence of youth crime and gang activity
- Make social services more accessible (transportation, hours of operation, etc.)
- Educate/train Winnipeg's youth and adults for employment
- Prevent health problems/diseases through promotion of wellness/fitness
- Assist Winnipeggers in breaking the cycle of poverty
- Reduce teenage pregnancies
- Provide emergency assistance (food, shelter, rent, utilities, etc.) for those in crisis
- Reduce the incidence and spread of AIDS
- Reduce family violence/abuse and help victims of family violence/abuse
- Address the challenges facing Winnipeg's Aboriginal community
- Ensure an adequate supply of affordable, flexible child care for pre-school and school age children
- Increase school attendance and completion of grade 12
- Ensure immigrants and refugees successfully settle in our community
- Help families and individuals overcome crisis (divorce, death in family, etc.)
- Ensure the human and legal rights of Winnipeggers are recognized
- Rejuvenate Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods (home ownership programs, neighbourhood safety patrols, etc.)
- Enable people with disabilities (mental, physical, learning) to live as independently as possible
- Strengthen the family (parenting, communication skills, etc.)
- Reduce the incidence of neighbourhood crime and violence
- Ensure pre-school age children are "ready to learn" when they start school
- Improve the physical, social and emotional development of school-age children
- Reduce the incidence of addictive behaviour (alcohol, drugs, gambling)
- Reduce the incidence of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effect
- Increase literacy levels of Winnipeggers
- Increase employment opportunities for Winnipeggers

Getting the Answers

A total of 2802 people – from all age groups and all areas of the city – responded to the survey, by fax, mail, phone and e-mail. This is not a traditional poll with scientifically identified sample sizes. The survey reflects the views of a wide range of people throughout the city who took the time to respond. Although not a scientific poll, the respondents are reflective of the general population both in terms of age distribution and geographic representation across the city.

ANALYZING THE RESULTS

How can one rate these? They are all important and most are inter-related and inter-dependent. – Survey Participant

The data received was analyzed to answer a number of questions:

- What were the top five and the next five social issues identified as most important by the 2802 respondents?
- Did respondents of different ages identify the same or different issues?
- Did respondents who live in the inner city identify the same issues as the respondents who do not live in the inner city?
- Were the respondents reflective of the population by age and geography?
- If not, would weighting the results for age and demography make any difference to the results?

The data was analyzed in two ways: based on the actual responses and then weighted (adjusted to represent the general population). The difference in results using the two methods was not significant. For the purposes of this report the weighted results have been used.

THE RESULTS

DIAGRAM 1: TOP 10 SOCIAL ISSUES – % ALL RESPONDENTS

Issue	% Top 5	% Next 5	% Combined*
Reduce the incidence of youth crime and gang activity	56.3	19.4	75.7
Reduce family violence/abuse and help victims of violence/abuse	36.6	26.2	62.8
Reduce the incidence of neighbourhood crime and violence	38.5	23.1	61.6
Educate/train Winnipeg's youth and adults for employment	31.6	25.2	56.8
Assist Winnipeggers in breaking the cycle of poverty	31.9	24.5	56.4
Enable the elderly to live as independently as possible	30.3	24.4	54.7
Rejuvenate Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods	29.2	24.4	53.6
Increase employment opportunities for Winnipeggers	30.2	19.5	49.7
Provide emergency assistance for those in crisis	26.1	21.5	47.6
Enable people with disabilities to live as independently as possible	21.9	22.3	44.2

*Respondents were asked to identify their top five issues and then their next five.

*Combined number represents the number of respondents who identified the issue in either the top 5 or next 5.

DIAGRAM 2: RANKING OF TOP 10 ISSUES BY AGE

Issue	under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	over 85	all
Reduce the incidence of youth crime and gang activity	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1
Reduce family violence/abuse and help victims of violence/abuse	2	2	2	2	4	8	-	8	2
Reduce the incidence of neighbourhood crime and violence	3	3	3	4	6	5	6	3	3
Educate/train Winnipeg's youth and adults for employment	4	5	5	5	7	4	5	4	4
Assist Winnipeggers in breaking the cycle of poverty	5	4	4	6	5	6	7	-	5
Enable the elderly to live as independently as possible	-	-	9	3	2	1	1	1	6
Rejuvenate Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods	6	10	6	7	3	3	3	10	7
Increase employment opportunities for Winnipeggers	8	6	8	8	-	7	10	5	8
Provide emergency assistance for those in crisis	-	8	7	9	10	9	9	-	9
Enable people with disabilities to live as independently as possible	-	-	-	10	8	10	4	-	10
Reduce the incidence of addictive behaviour	7	-	10	-	-	-	-	7	-
Reduce teenage pregnancy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-
Prevent health problems/diseases through promotion of wellness	10	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-
Strengthen the family (parenting, communication skills, etc.)	9	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ensure an adequate supply of affordable, flexible day care	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Address the challenges facing Winnipeg's Aboriginal community	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	9	-

CONTINUING THE JOURNEY FORWARD

All are very important, but I would like to see a safer city. But we will only achieve that when other issues are addressed. - Survey Participant

The survey identifies widely held concerns on the issues of youth crime, gang activity, violence and abuse among families and within neighbourhoods. That finding along with the other information gathered in this survey will be part of the Journey Forward and the community wide effort to identify priority social issues.

This information will be added to the environmental scan, a report on the views of people who provide services, and another report on the views of those who use social services. This will be summarized into a community issues report. That report will assist discussions involving people representing a broad cross section of community leadership from business, labour, government, education, health, Aboriginal and ethnocultural groups, and others.

These discussions will confirm the priority social issues identified by the community and begin to outline a range of actions to address them. This draft community agenda will be announced and discussed at a community forum in the spring of 2000.