

IMPACT



17 Leaders decreased dependence on social assistance at some point during their time in Circles*



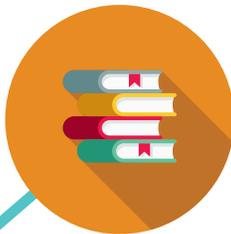
24 Leaders increased earned income at some point during their time in Circles*



24 Leaders increased paid work experience after joining Circles



10 Leaders enrolled in education or training after joining Circles



8 Leaders graduated from education or training after joining Circles

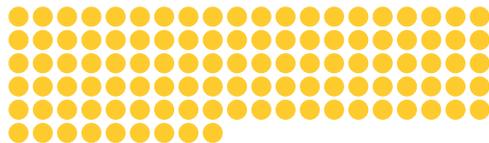
5 Big View Meetings

Coordinated by Leaders to bring together the community to discuss ways to reduce systemic barriers that people in poverty face.



109 Circles Meetings

Weekly meetings where Leaders, Allies and Circles staff share a meal, engage in activities, and host guest speakers.

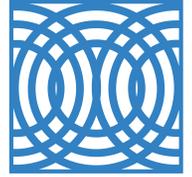


*The pathway out of poverty is rarely linear. Some Leaders who achieved decreases in social assistance with support from their Circle also experienced setbacks. The same was true for earned income. Part of the purpose of Circles is to support Leaders through these processes.

This summary was prepared by the Research and Knowledge Mobilization (R&KMb) Committee, a subcommittee of the Guelph Wellington Poverty Task Force, using evaluation data prepared by Taylor Newberry Consulting. Evaluation timeline: January 1, 2016 to July 31, 2018.

Circles Guelph Wellington

Circles GUELPH WELLINGTON



Evaluation Summary

January 1, 2016 - July 31, 2018

What is Circles?

A community-based initiative that creates relationships across economic boundaries. It matches people of low-income who have attended the Getting Ahead program with people of middle- and upper-income who have attended Bridges Out of Poverty training.

Circles is designed to provide emotional and practical support, assist with complex issues, build the social capital of people living in low-income, show the community the very real barriers holding people in poverty, and walk with people in poverty to support positive change.

Locations

Guelph & Arthur

Leaders

An individual or family of low-income who is interested in becoming financially self-sufficient.

They lead, receive and give support within the Circle, work with their Allies to build their plans, and use their lived knowledge and skills as problem-solving tools for individual goals and poverty issues in the community.

Allies

Volunteers who engage in an intentional, caring relationship with Leaders.

Allies are trained in Bridges Out of Poverty and support Circles Leaders in their journey. Allies work with Leaders to figure out how to accomplish their plans for self-sufficiency.

The Ally's role is not to fix problems, but to walk alongside the Leader and link them to resources and supports.



LEADERS

18 months

Average length that Leaders have participated so far



16 graduates

Leaders that have met their goals and completed the program



5 Leaders

Were enrolled in an education program at time of application



Leaders



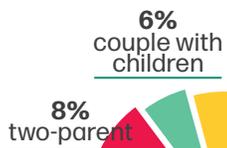
42 years

Average age of Leaders



11 Leaders

Left the program prior to graduating



Leaders household type

n=36 (data unavailable for 7 Leaders)



There's no judgement, which is huge... It's like you might be a CEO of a company, but you're sitting across the table from me, eating the same pasta salad that I'm eating, and you're listening to the same speaker that I am. So you're not better than me, you're not worse than me - we're equal. That's huge. That's what people need.



Having Allies that let you lead your life and make suggestions, but not in a way where they're judging you or telling you what to do, and they're accepting of those stages.

Allies are

- Advocating
- Accepting
- Honest
- Listening
- Learning
- Dependable
- Organized
- Problem solving
- Mindful
- Compassionate

22 months

Average length Allies have participated so far



It inspires me to be better, so I find that has been really great... It makes you think differently about how you spend your money. I think about learning about different companies that don't pay a living wage, for example, and then I'm more careful about where I shop.



Allies

ALLIES