



Social Development Centre
WATERLOO REGION

50 Years: Looking to our past to set direction for our future!

CONTINUING & EMERGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

**1960's: affordable housing,
youth, disabilities, seniors**

**1970's: social service and non-
profit sector capacity,
neighbourhood development,
community information**

1980's: newcomers, poverty

**1990's: growing poverty gap,
healthy communities**

**2000's : digital inclusion,
austerity**

**2010's: lived experience
voices, decent lives**

The Social Development Centre Waterloo Region (formerly Planning Council of Kitchener-Waterloo\Community Information Centre of Waterloo Region), [incorporated in 1967](#). With a mission to cultivate community knowledge to advance social justice in Waterloo Region, the Centre keeps the community members informed, involved and prepared to act to make positive social change.

With core values grounded in social justice, participatory democracy, community knowledge, diversity and relationship building, we participate in research on social issues, foster community involvement and information sharing. Our current activities kept a consistent focus over the 50 years. Many issues identified in the 1960's are still current in 2010's, e.g. persons with disabilities, youth, affordable housing, community engagement and non-profit capacity building. Neighbourhood development was first addressed in 1978, newcomers and poverty in the early 1980's and digital inclusion in 2002.

In a given year, we engage 3,000 people in community groups and forums and provide direct support to approximately 7,000 contacts by phone or in person and our on-line information resources are searched over 600,000 times. A high percentage of contacts tell us they have more information after contacting us, they plan to use that information and they will contact us again.

Firmly rooted in the history of our community and we stay in touch with community resources and needs through research and with input from the community through citizen action groups and forum. This positions us well to stay apprised of the changing community context and to develop networks and partnerships to improve support systems.

Our work to respond to the social needs of the community currently includes the following projects:

- [Strong Neighbourhoods for Decent Lives](#)
- [Neighbourhood Connection](#) projects improving social conditions in partnership with residents
- [Kitchener's Festival of Neighbourhoods](#) to bring Kitchener neighbours together in inclusive ways
- [Disability & Human Rights Group](#) providing peer self-help and advocacy training
- [Poverty Free Action Group](#) and [Awareness of Low Income Voices](#) for policy change
- [Community HelpLine](#) to provide information and referral to individuals and groups
- Specialized information resources such as [Local Information Support to Ontario Newcomers](#) and [Tenants Rights Enforcement Information Chart](#).
- Information resources e.g. [Blue Book, Directory of Community Services in Waterloo Region](#)