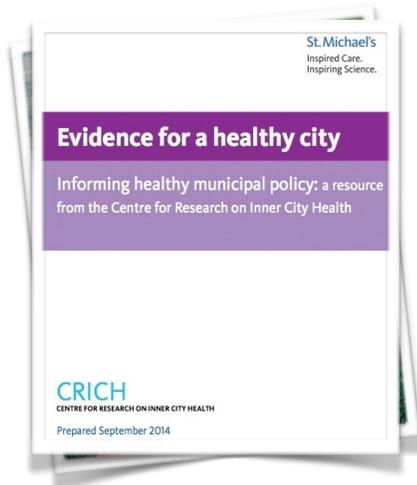


# THE YONGE STREET MISSION RESEARCH BULLETIN

Mobilizing Information | Sharing Best-Practices | Stewarding Knowledge



## Summary of Research Report

This report was developed by the Centre for Research on Inner City Health (CRICH) the lead-up to the 2014 municipal election in Toronto. In the report, the CRICH shares evidence with relevance to policy and programs intended to improve health and wellbeing of Toronto residents. The report is not a comprehensive municipal platform, and is not meant to address all issues related to community health, rather it is a survey of recent research from the CRICH with direct application to municipal policy and related ideas and resources. The CRICH's intent for this report was for community members to ask candidates running for Mayor and City Council about where they stand based on the evidence presented, and to explore applying these findings to policy and practice. (p. 2)

## Key Findings & Figures

- ◆ Inter-related factors like racism, discrimination and the historical and contemporary effects of colonization deeply impact the health and wellbeing of Toronto residents. (p. 3)
- ◆ Access to quality, stable housing for every resident would dramatically improve population health in Toronto. There is a need for a city-administered housing stabilization fund to ensure recipients have access housing and to ensure social housing and private market rentals are maintained to a certain standard. (p. 5)
- ◆ Toronto residents are looking for services that are stably-resourced, welcoming, responsive and barrier-free. People want services that meet the needs of the community and that are welcoming, and treat people with dignity and respect. (p. 7)
- ◆ Healthy cities don't work in silos. There is a the need for funding structures that incentivize collaboration and integration between and within organizations, government Ministries, City Departments and across orders of government. (p. 9)
- ◆ Healthy cities require flourishing, independent grassroots groups and movements. (p. 11)

### Title

**Evidence for a Healthy City: Informing Healthy Municipal Policy**

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### Research Tags

Toronto, Health Inequities, Policy & Program, Decision Makers, Service Providers, Discrimination, Housing, Barriers, Collaboration





## Why Research?

The Yonge Street Mission believes in the incredible value that evidenced-based research and information sharing plays in developing—as well as delivering—the most enhanced and effective programs and services to our community members. We are called to be stewards of knowledge; educated, informed and diligently tapping into innovation and insight. Best practices are continually refined, and studies, research and analysis are regularly being published. Keeping up to date and well-versed with this literature is essential. It is for this reason we've designed this Research Bulletin to promptly scan and disseminate the key findings and recommendations from recently published research materials relevant to the Social Service sector, and to our work at The Yonge Street Mission.

**This summary has been prepared by The Yonge Street Mission. The information given does not purport to be an exhaustive or exact replica of the original research. Omissions or errors resulting from the summation process are the responsibility of The Yonge Street Mission.**

## Proposed Recommendations & Areas For Action

- ◆ Partner with Indigenous organizations to provide ongoing cultural safety training for decision makers and service providers. (p. 3)
- ◆ Provide housing with stable, ongoing multi-disciplinary supports. (p. 5-6)
- ◆ Provide services that are:
  - ▶ Flexible and individualized, with a balance of supports. (p. 7)
  - ▶ Respond to people's realities and remove barriers to service. (p. 7)
  - ▶ Be delivered by providers who are given the time and supported to be compassionate, genuine and accepting. (p. 7)
  - ▶ Ensure access to ongoing supports. (p. 7)
- ◆ Implement a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach which allows all sectors to work together to improve population health. This includes joint budgets and dedicated structural support to assist the implementation of healthy public policies. (p. 9)
- ◆ Grassroots groups should be able to monitor City processes, engage in long-term work to see the development, implementation and evaluation of policies and suggest and advocate for alternative policies and planning practices. (p. 11)

## Notable Quotes

- ◆ “These issues are of key concern in the city of Toronto as one of the most diverse cities in the world and a city in which grave health and economic inequities persist along racialized lines.” (p. 3)
- ◆ “Over the past 15 years, no matter what we're researching, participants consistently bring up clean, stable, safe, quality housing as fundamental to health.” (p. 5)
- ◆ “Toronto residents have expressed clearly that they are looking for community services that have stable and sustainable resources, and that meet the needs of communities.” (p. 7)
- ◆ “Case studies and input from civil society groups around the world demonstrate that the implementation of genuinely equitable decision-making practices with the capacity to redistribute resources and improve health equity generally emerge as the result of pressure from grassroots groups working in collaboration and/or social movements.” (p. 11)

