

## OUTLINE OF EVIDENCE

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### 1. GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY FACTORS PREDICTING CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY CASELOADS AND COSTS

- The paper, "*Social Indicators for Child Protection Program in Ontario: A geographic analysis of community factors predicting CAS caseloads and costs*" was prepared in 2000. (Tab 3) This paper was a precursor to the Report entitled "*Demographic and Risk Indicators for Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry*." (Tab 4)
- The purpose of the paper was to search the professional literature on ways to identify strategies and principles for conducting community needs assessment that would explain and predict variations in Children's Aid Society ("CAS") caseloads and expenditures.
- Much research has been done, and is reviewed in the paper, on the correlations between characteristics of the community and child well-being.
- It is important to link the literature to direct social work practice in the field and to the risk factors identified in the Province's Risk Screening tools.
- The scientific basis for linking community variables from the Census and other databases to social problems, such as crime, child abuse, substance abuse, psychiatric disorder and family breakdown is the theory of *social disorganization*. The theory holds that social processes within neighbourhoods *cause an increase* in delinquency and crime and that the effect of the social process is greater than the sum total of individual human contributions. Testing the theory scientifically has been hard because *social processes* (e.g. power structures, quality of schools, the friendship patterns and social control of teenagers, and community feelings such as hope, anger, concern for neighbours) are hard to quantify. (Burstik, 1993)
- According to Burstik (1993), social disorganization theory goes beyond the obvious facts that crime rates vary: (a) by location; (b) by socio-economic class; (c) by certain ethnic groups; and (d) by the psychological or personal historical differences of individuals living in an area. Social disorganization theory suggests that a person or family from a high-risk group (e.g. poor, on welfare, unemployed, black, Native American, single parent households, mentally ill, etc.) show *different base rates* for crime depending on key neighbourhood characteristics related to social control.
- Equally important, the theory suggests that individuals from low-risk groups (two parent households, white, middle or upper incomes) will also show varying crime rates depending on which neighbourhood they live in. Thirdly, the theory suggests that the additional risk (or protection) inherent in certain

neighbourhoods continues to operate even as people move in and out of the community and even if the composite social economic class structure or ethnic mix changes. In other words, something about the neighbourhood operates independently of the individual human beings involved, either to suppress or express criminal behaviour.

- A matrix of community variables has been demonstrated through longitudinal research to predict, and in some cases, cause an increase in the prevalence of specific social problems. (See “Table of Risk Factors and Census indicators” in “*Social Indicators for Child Protection Program in Ontario: A geographic analysis of community factors predicting CAS caseloads and costs*”)

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## **2. DEMOGRAPHIC AND RISK INDICATORS FOR STORMONT, DUNDAS & GLENGARRY**

### **a) General Background to the Report(s)**

- The purpose of the report, “*Demographic and Risk Indicators for Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry*,” was to provide the CAS of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry with the latest data on social demographic and economic forces affecting the lives of the children and families with children in the county.
- Aside from a report for the CAS of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry, the project included updating a 1999 profile of Leeds and Grenville, as well as completing separate profiles for the following CAS agencies: (a) Lanark, (b) Prescott & Russell, (c) Renfrew, (d) Frontenac, e) Lennox & Addington, and (f) Northumberland.
- The eight reports were completed during a one-year period between late February of 2003 and February of 2004. The timing of the reports was determined by the availability of data from Statistics Canada and other sources.
- The paper, “*Social Indicators for Child Protection Program in Ontario: A geographic analysis of community factors predicting CAS caseloads and costs*,” was incorporated into the Report.
- In June 2004, I was asked by the 12 CAS directors in the Eastern Region (including the eight above, plus Ottawa, Kawartha, Hastings and Prince Edward) to produce a composite report examining the entire Eastern Region compared against the province as a whole, and highlighting the aspects of community that predicted CAS caseloads as well as provided a framework for community level interventions and inter-agency cooperation by the local CAS.

### **b) The Need for the Report**

- The Report was driven by three issues/problems, and was intended to attempt to solve these issues/problems:

- i. The rates of protection case openings (per 1,000 families in the community) vary across the 58 CAS agencies in the Province of Ontario by ten fold. Moreover, the funding per population varies to the same degree. CAS directors are under great pressure to rationalize this variation. The application of community disorganization theory and community level indicators of risk factors to various problems of families and children is the solution to this problem.
- ii. The true prevalence of physical and sexual abuse in each county is unknown; there is enormous stigma associated with harming children and everyone involved is pressured to keep it hidden from view. The CAS (supported by a duty to report suspicions of abuse that all professionals in the community bear) is charged with discovering children who are being abused and protecting them. The problem is that the CAS does not know the size of the problem as it still undiscovered. The solution to this is to examine other adverse outcomes that are accurately counted (such as the number of children killed by accident, etc.) which are known to be highly correlated with child abuse at the local level.
- iii. The CAS agency is dependent on other community level institutions to protect children, support families and restore the health and well being of victims of maltreatment. The major community level institutions, police, schools, mental health agencies, faith groups/churches, city services and neighbourhood supports are willing and able to help, but it is difficult to build consensus on priorities and strategies. The solution (as proposed in this contract) is to get people across these institutions to talk about their community and its unique characteristics at the level of "hard data" first; get the community colleagues interested and move onto the "soft data areas" such as the quality of local schools, what is happening on the streets, are young people being supervised, are they feeling hopeless, etc. These community profiles are intended to start such a dialogue.

**c) Purpose and Theoretical Foundation of the Report**

- The Report is based on an extensive literature review of research in sociology and in family studies explaining child abuse and neglect. The research revolves around three explanatory models or theories: (1) social disorganization theory; (2) the interaction of stress, social support and coping skills on families that are already at risk because of chronic problems; and (3) low long term negative effects of low socio-economic status on human beings, which may be mediated by social stigma.
- As a general rule, child abuse happens in private. For that reason, external policing organizations, such as the CAS, rely on people who witness these events or on victims themselves coming forward. There is always a certain amount of child abuse and neglect that goes undetected because no one comes forward. One of the underlying reasons for commissioning this paper was to assess the true prevalence of child abuse and neglect. This can be inferred from

other adverse outcomes that cannot be kept hidden; i.e. the state is able to count these outcomes quite accurately: (1) children killed in accidents; (2) youth suicides; (3) substance abuse; (4) crime in general; and (5) teenage childbirth. These other adverse outcomes have been shown in various studies to be highly correlated at the local level with child abuse and neglect.

**d) Summary of the Report**

- Most of the data for the report was from Statistics Canada, and covers a period of time from 1991 to 2001. The conclusions about the risk for child abuse, domestic violence, child behaviour and emotional problems and developmental delay are tied to neighbourhood qualities inferred from the data. The data is looking backward in time.
- The conclusions about current and future risk are based on two assumptions: (a) that neighbourhood qualities established over decades change very slowly; and (b) that risk accumulates in the personal narrative of every human being over their lifespan and maintains momentum for an extended period of time. A “hypothetical” man in his 40’s who spent a lifetime in Cornwall may have considerable risk for child maltreatment that was shaped by the events and realities of life in Cornwall over those 40 years. The neighbourhood qualities of Cornwall could change dramatically and our hypothetical man would still carry the same amount of risk.
- The paper describes a community profile of Cornwall and the surrounding county that has a number of known risk factors that promote child abuse and child behaviour problems. However, there are also positive signs in the community profile and indicators that the community is changing for the better. The province has projected a 7.9% population growth for Stormont between 2001 and 2006.

**Dominant Trends (pages 5 - 10)**

- Many of the neighbourhood qualities that the Census data reveals about Cornwall apply equally well to other small cities and towns in Eastern Ontario. The following are most important:
  - 1) Century old communities, such as Cornwall, Prescott, Smith Falls, etc. built along the rivers and canals, have undergone massive economic and social restructuring over time at great distress to the long term residents;
  - 2) These cities show declining populations – one of the most serious risk factors;
  - 3) There is a large sub group of very poor families with little hope of improved economic status in these communities and the numbers are remaining stable over time;
  - 4) The overall economy has improved significantly and many people have benefited, creating a gulf between the chronically distressed and the rest; (This is most evident at the Provincial level and at the economic centres,

such as Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, London and Windsor. It is less true in rural and small cities in Eastern and Northern Ontario)

- 5) There is a substantial increase in the number of youth dropping out of school with poor job prospects, which is a serious risk factor;
- 6) The number of families living with incomes of less than \$30,000 per year has *increased* by 100,000 across Ontario and this can be seen throughout the Eastern counties. However, the percentage of very poor families has decreased marginally because of the even larger increase of family households between 1996 and 2001; and
- 7) 25% of all unemployed people have no available jobs. Their hopes are pinned entirely on further exponential growth in the job market in Ontario. Conversely, jobs exist for 75% of the unemployed but it is not clear how many of these unemployed are a good fit for the available jobs.

#### **Percentage Shifts and Population Density (pages 14 - 15)**

- The population of Cornwall declined by 3.7% (or 1,763 people) between 1996 and 2001. This decline is a risk factor. Stagnant or declining populations are not associated with good outcomes for families and children. This is because economics drives population growth or decline. A declining population usually means that jobs are disappearing and the more resilient and financially secure individuals tend to move with the economy. Female lone parents and people with mental health difficulties are unable to move and declining communities show an increasing proportion of those sub-groups which drive the need for Child Welfare.
- The other variable that affects the needs of families and children is the population density. Small towns and villages can display a density level comparable to big cities; they are often surrounded by farmland and separated by a highway from the main centres. They have poor public transit to the main centres which contain the medical and support services so essential to life. Negative outcomes, including crime rates, domestic violence and substance abuse, are higher in these isolated, but somewhat compact, little towns and villages.
- Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry has three towns and villages that have compact densities and may fit that social profile: Winchester, Chesterville and Alexandria. The combined population in these centres is about 7,500 people. In another sense, Cornwall itself fits this description. It is still relatively small, not close enough to Ottawa or Montreal to really benefit from the medical and social institutions in these larger centres, and yet inside Cornwall, there are social conditions and human beings that are as urgently in need as any you would find in any major city.

#### **Provincial Estimates for Future Growth (page 17)**

- The province expects that the youngest age cohort (0 – 4) in Stormont will grow by 3.3% by 2006, but a stunning 11.8% gain in 2011. This is partly due to the

increase in older teenagers in Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry observed in the 2001 Census. About ten years from now, this surge in the number of older teens will translate into more babies born. Unfortunately, a surge in the population of young adults also brings a surge in risk taking behaviour, including substance abuse, crime and domestic violence.

#### **Family Structure by Category** (pages 18 – 19)

- Married couples with children have declined by 11.7% in Cornwall. This is partially due to the aging of the family homes as adult children move out and partially due to marital separations and the formation of common law unions with children. Moreover, the number of female lone parent families (hereinafter referred to as FLPs) has declined by 13.2% in Cornwall for the same reasons affecting the decline in married couples with children. Out of 507 towns, townships and cities in Ontario, Cornwall is now ranked as #75 from the top location with the highest proportion of FLPs. Relative to other places in Ontario, Cornwall has a lower percentage of FLPs, which is good news for the Children's Aid Society. FLPs are more likely to be very poor, to be under great stress and to have fewer resources to cope with stress.

#### **Personal Wealth – Income Flowing into the Region** (pages 20 - 22)

- Across Stormont County, family households have seen their incomes rise by \$116 million dollars after adjusting for inflation compared to 1996. This is equivalent to a rise of 5.7% in real spending power per family compared to the provincial average increase in spending power of 20.5%. Unfortunately, this increase is not evenly shared across the county; Cornwall, itself saw an increase of under 1%. The uneven distribution of the benefits of Ontario's booming economy may create resentment in places or in families that are not so fortunate.

#### **Families by Income Brackets** (page 21)

- The five points below illustrate the growing divide between the *poorest-of-the-poor* and the number of families with more than \$80,000 in annual income.
  - 1) Despite the billions of dollars in new wealth flowing into Ontario over the last five years, many more families in Ontario (100,000 ) have an annual income that is below \$30,000 per year
  - 2) Notwithstanding the increase in the *poorest of the poor*, the percentage of these poor families relative to all economic families has actually gone down by 1% - due to the vast influx of families from outside Ontario seeking a share of this wealth.
  - 3) The percentage of the *poorest of the poor* has actually gone down 2.1% in Stormont, even though the absolute number of these families (7,790) has increased significantly (up from 7,245)
  - 4) Within Stormont, the plurality of the *poorest-of-the-poor* live in Cornwall (31.3% or 4,045 households)
  - 5) The median income (the point where 50% of families are above and

below) varies tremendously; the winners and losers are the same as with other risk indicators. Cornwall with a median income of \$43,653 is very poor compared to the Provincial average of \$61,024 or its immediate neighbour, South Glengarry (\$61,928).

- 6) Finally, while the percentage of families =<\$30,000 is barely moving, the percentage with incomes above \$80,000 is increasing dramatically to 33.4% of all families in Ontario.
  - 7) Stormont has also seen a tremendous increase of families that have incomes of over \$80,000 from 14.3% in 1996 to 21.4% in 2001. The percentage of rich families has gone up in every area of Stormont.
  - 8) The increase in both the richest and poorest groups of families across Ontario and within Stormont – especially in Cornwall itself – has intensified the socio-economic divide.
- The last point is a separate and powerful risk indicator – accelerating resentment, depression and anger and its social manifestations, crime, substance abuse and child abuse.

#### ***Average Income by type of family*** (page 22)

- Families that are led by female lone parents have always been the poorest households in society and the environment where the poorest children reside. In Ontario, female lone parents (FLPs) have seen their real inflation adjusted income increase by 15% compared to 1996 across the Province except in Stormont where real family income for FLPs has decreased by 3.5%. The average family income of FLPs in Cornwall has declined by 6.5% to under \$25,000 per annum. The gap in income between married couples and FLPs in Cornwall has increased by 19%. On average married couples in Cornwall have \$34,117 more annual income than FLPs and this difference, which is felt most keenly in the school yards and after school events of children and youth, produces antisocial attitudes, resentment and risk taking behaviour by the young people on the poor end of the continuum. More than one quarter (25.5%) of all families with children in them in Cornwall are led by FLPs, which leaves a lot of young people at risk of the aforementioned outcomes.

#### ***Families Living Below the Low-income Cutoffs*** (page 22 - 23)

- The number of families below *the low-income cutoffs* has dropped to 11.9% of all economic families in Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry. Cornwall had the highest percentage below the low-income cutoffs in 1996 (20.7%). This number has decreased to 19.0% - by far the highest proportion of poor families in Stormont. The other intensely poor cities close by are Prescott (19.2%), Hawkesbury (19.4%) and Addington Highlands (19.1%). The next highest rates are in the vicinity of 15%. On balance, having nearly 20% of your families below the low-income cutoffs is an unusual, highly disadvantaged community.
- In absolute terms, only Ottawa (24,060 households or 11.4%), Kingston (3,835 households or 12.4%) and Peterborough (2,595 or 13.1% of households) have more families below the low income cutoffs compared with Cornwall (2,455

families or 19.0%). In view of the high percentage of poverty combined with the large number of households affected, this gives Cornwall the distinction of having the highest concentration of poverty in Eastern Ontario.

### Unemployment (pages 23 - 27)

- The challenge for community-risk assessment in Child Welfare is that Statistics Canada and other industrialized nations report unemployment figures using a counting method that hides the “population with no hope”.
- Even though Ontario has created a large number of jobs and unemployment is at its lowest rate ever, there is a large and hidden problem – a large number of unemployed people have no hope of ever finding a job regardless of how prosperous Ontario becomes. A hopeless index was created from the Census data that quantifies this problem. In longitudinal studies, it is the *feeling of hopelessness* – relative to unemployment statistics - which drives a host of adverse outcomes including youth suicide, child abuse, neglect, domestic violence and murder.
- The degree of job related hopelessness in the city of Cornwall is worse than most other places in Ontario as indicated by three facts: (1) that Cornwall has a very low participation rate (82%) after removing seniors and young people in school from the official statistic; (2) within Cornwall, there are jobs (all industries combined) for only 81% of the people who in a practical sense could work and this is quite a low percentage compared to its neighbours and in a related statistic, there are no jobs available for 445 people who are currently seeking work in Cornwall; and (3) the unemployment rate itself (which is the percentage of people in the labour market who are still trying to find work) is higher in Cornwall (7.9%) than many other jurisdictions. The *hopeless index* was produced by an arithmetic formula that adjusted the official unemployment rate by the product of:
  - (a) the percentage of people who had no hope of finding a job
  - and
  - (b) the true participation rate (which removes seniors and young people in school from the official participation rate)
- This formula has the effect of *inflating the unemployment rate* if there are a lot of people who have given up hope and are no longer searching for work or if - from the employer side of the equation - the number of jobs that exist – is quite a bit less than the number of employable people. Under such poor labour market conditions, workers feel quite vulnerable and those seeking work do not feel confident.
- The formula will also *deflate the unemployment rate* if most people who could work in a practical sense are in the labour market or if the number of jobs that employers have available exceed the number of people in a local area who could

work. Under this ideal labour condition, workers have the advantage and a lot of confidence whether or not they are unemployed (i.e. seeking work).

- After making these adjustments, the following small cities in Eastern Ontario have significantly poorer labour market conditions: Cornwall, Hawkesbury, Prescott, Brockville, Gananoque, Smith Falls, Belleville and Pembroke. The Native reserves have significantly worse labour market conditions.
- The two numbers (the official unemployment rate and the hopeless index) are only moderately correlated ( $r = .43$ ) meaning that the official unemployment rate shares only 18% of the variance in the hopeless index. This means that the hopeless index presents a very different picture of the different localities in relation to one another in terms of the “hidden problem behind the unemployment statistic”.

### **Housing Issues** (pages 27 - 30)

- Sufficient new housing to attract newcomers is not being built in Stormont County or in Cornwall itself. The housing stock in Cornwall is fairly stagnant compared to other jurisdictions nearby reinforcing the impression that the community as a whole lacks confidence in its own future.

### ***The Nature of Housing*** (page 29)

- Apartment units in buildings over 5 stories have increased by 68% or 340 units between 1996 and 2001 in the city of Cornwall. This type of housing is a risk factor for family distress and child behaviour problems. This growth in large apartment complexes was accompanied by a loss of over 1,000 units in small apartment buildings, which are generally better in terms of the prevalence of social problems.

### ***The Cost of Housing*** (page 29 - 30)

- The news for homeowners in Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry is very positive. The average cost of mortgage and utilities has declined everywhere within the county. The number of homeowners who spend more than 30% of gross family income on housing has also declined by 2%. Although, it is wise to point out that a large number of homeowners, 4,110, still belong in this high-stress category. When we add the renters who pay more than 30% of gross family income on housing (5,595), this leaves a sizable group of families (9,705) under housing related economic stress in Stormont.

### **Low Education Achievement and School Attendance** (page 30 – 31)

#### ***Indicators of Low SES*** (page 30)

- Low socio-economic status (SES) has been found in longitudinal studies to cause the prevalence of maternal depression, substance abuse in men and psychopathy in men to double over several decades. Educational achievement and the type of job (or lack of) are the components of SES. The population with

the lowest SES is defined as people with less than grade 9 education who are unemployed; those who have just completed grade twelve and are unemployed are also classified as low SES by the Hollingshead scale (which is the standard measure of SES). In Cornwall, 36.2% of people over 20 years did not graduate from High School and 43.6% of young people age 15-24 years are not in school; these are both high percentages relative to other small cities in Ontario and combined with the hopelessness in the labour market, it is indicative of a community with lower socio economic status.

### **Indicators of Serious Emotional and Behavioural Problems in Youth** (page 31)

- Errata: the numbers in the original paper for the paragraph below came from 1996: the text should read as follows: During the five years between 1996 and 2001, the percentage of young people who are not attending school *increased from 39% to 44% in the city of Cornwall* – only Prescott and Smith Falls have a higher percentage of drop-outs among the small cities. Across all areas of Eastern Ontario only rural townships and Native reserves have higher percentages of dropouts than Cornwall. The fact that school drop-outs are increasing in Cornwall alongside the low participation rate and poor job prospects, is a multi-factor indicator of hopelessness that is affecting young people more than any other sub group in Cornwall.

### **Migration** (pages 31 - 34)

- When the number of people moving out of a community is greater than the number moving in (as in the case of Cornwall where the net outflow is 400 people per year), this is not a good sign and is part of the feeling of hopelessness in Cornwall. Over time, the poorest people and the families who are less adaptive remain behind and become a bigger percentage of the community. With falling population school and city services lose their base of funding and the quality of life suffers. The downward cycle reinforces itself.

### **Ethnic Profile of the County and Immigration** (pages 34 - 38)

- There is a group of people settling in Cornwall from Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Egypt whose communities would be too small to be “institutionally complete”, whose lives in their country of origin were quite likely under considerable duress given the civil wars, poverty and social disintegration in their country of origin and who are likely to present needs for child welfare services.
- The question that agencies ask is “why” does the ethnic makeup of the community matter for assessing child welfare needs. One of the theories that can be applied to this problem is the theory of “institutional completeness”. Canadian sociologist Raymond Breton developed the concept of “institutional completeness”. In a nutshell, Breton theorized that when an ethnic minority settles into a community, the group sometimes will live in geographic proximity, provide services and institutions [shopping, health care, religious institutions, programs for residents etc], in the language of that ethnic group [think Chinatown, Little Italy, Little India]. This can make the transition of new immigrants easier.

- Essentially, institutionally complete communities are protective of people--they readily identify who belongs and who does not, people can get what they need in their own language, and it is easier for residents to become connected to others. Community qualities such as ethnic diversity, the degree of *institutional completeness* within each ethnic community and the life experiences of immigrants prior to coming to Canada directly affect the life in our communities – including the amount of child abuse and neglect.

### **Religion** (page 38)

- Stormont has a much higher percentage of adults (57%) who identify with the Roman Catholic faith compared with the Province as a whole (34%).

### **Teenage and General Childbirth – Rates Across Ontario** (pages 39-40)

- I have updated the tables for the teenage birth rate and the general fertility rate for the years 2000 to 2002 (Tab 5).
- The average general fertility rate in Stormont between 1990 and 1996 was 60.7 per 1,000 women age 15-44 years. During the years 2000 to 2002, the average general fertility rate in Stormont has fallen by more than 50% to 28.2 per 1,000 women age 15 to 44. The rate for teenage child birth has fallen from 37.0 to 14.3 per 1,000 teenage girls ages 15 to 19 years. The news has not been so positive for the city of Cornwall, where the average teenage birthrate between 2000 and 2002 (29.5 per 1,000 teenage girls) is more than double the provincial average (13.4).
- The rate of teenage births per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 19 years is a robust risk indicator for crime and child abuse but not because teenage girls cause all of the problems in society. It is a risk indicator because many teenagers get pregnant in the context of a culture of risk taking behaviour by young people. The number of children born in any city by the age of the mother is easily observed and counted, but other aspects of youth risk taking behaviour (drug abuse, dating violence, unsafe sex, binge drinking, petty crime, joy riding, etc.) is not so easily counted.
- In addition, a longitudinal study by Patricia Crittenden in which 5,000 women who became pregnant during their teen years were followed for more than a decade showed a high prevalence of child abuse and neglect affecting 30% of these *teen moms* after a period of eight years.

### **Infant Mortality** (pages 40)

- Stormont has seen its average rate of infant mortality *decrease by 50%*, which is a very good sign for infant health. Stormont went from 35<sup>th</sup> place in the 1980's at 763 deaths per 1,000 babies born to 45<sup>th</sup> place at 380. This places Stormont well below the Provincial average (585). This result is quite unexpected because of Stormont's high teenage birthrate, which is very highly correlated with infant mortality. This fact should moderate concerns that arise when looking at other

indicators of risk in the county. There may be a well spring of resilience within Stormont that cannot be observed directly through Statistics Canada data.

### **Crime Rates** (pages 41)

- Rates of violent crime and crime in general are important risk factors for child abuse and neglect for three reasons:
  - (1) Many of the perpetrators of crime are also parents and they often end up in jail. Having a parent in jail is a serious risk factor promoting antisocial behaviour in the children of these parents. I studied the family background of children placed in foster homes and groups in the Province of Ontario. In a report, dated May 2005, "Partners in Care II", I reported that 27% of the parents of children in foster care and group care were incarcerated.
  - (2) Studies of children who have died by child abuse found that fathers who have a record of community violence and little experience parenting (and often have the experience of being a step parent for periods of time) are more likely to kill infants. (Chaffing, 1996; Kasim, 1995)
  - (3) A high rate of criminal behaviour is a symptom of community disintegration which suggests that other aspects of community life may not be functioning well compromising the supervision of children and youth, family support and opportunities for people to work productively and experience well being.
- In Cornwall, during the period from 1990 to 1997, crime rates were much higher than average. Moreover, Statistics Canada's reports that the highest rates of crime are found in small cities (population 15,000 to 50,000). The lowest rates are found in the big cities (over 100,000). This may reflect the fact that within Ontario, small cities are experiencing a significant decline in their social institutions, especially education, workplace, health care and recreation. Big cities, with bigger budgets and more political clout, are maintaining the quality of life more effectively for their residents.

### **Suicide** (page 42)

- Between the two decades, 1980s and the 1990s, Stormont saw its relatively high youth suicide rate increase from 17.3 to 18.9 per 100,000 young people. When a serious indicator such as suicide continues a high rate across two decades, plus is getting worse at a time when it was falling everywhere else, then we must conclude that there is credible evidence of social disintegration in the county of Stormont.

### **Accidental Death** (pages 42 - 44)

- Cornwall has a very high rate of accidental death among children ages 0 to 4 years (25.6 per 100,000 children age 0-4). Moreover, almost every age cohort from childhood to age 34 is two to three time higher than the Provincial average. This includes 10 children under the age of 15 years who died by accidents between 1991 and 1996 in the city of Cornwall.

## Conclusion (pages 44 - 45)

- The most important findings of this profile of Cornwall are as follows:
  - (1) Data on three out of four of the most critical adverse outcomes correlated with Child Abuse: (Accidental Death among children, Youth Suicide and crime rates) are all significantly higher in Cornwall than the provincial average. In the case of accidental death, the rate per 100,000 people in each age group is between two and three times higher than the provincial average for all age groups from infancy to the age of 34 years.

In the case of youth suicide, Statistics Canada suppresses the detail below the county level, so it is not possible to assess Cornwall directly. However, the county of Stormont has the seventh highest suicide rate for people under age 34 years in the province of Ontario. Its rates are exceeded only by Northern Ontario counties with large Native populations and Simcoe County. Moreover, the suicide rate in Stormont has increased over the previous decade, which is itself unusual; Stormont has gone from 12<sup>th</sup> place in the 1980s to 7<sup>th</sup> place in the 1990-96 period.

Suicide and accidental death are the most visible – and countable – signs of harm; the number of cases of people harmed due to accidents or suicide attempts is at least 10 times higher. The fact that accidental death and completed suicides are so high in this county, implies a great deal of suffering.

For some reason, the crime rates are all higher in Eastern Ontario than in other parts of Ontario – except for Kenora and Thunder Bay; Cornwall shares this pattern, although other places in Eastern Ontario have higher crime rates.

High rates of accidental death, suicide and crime are the hard facts of serious social problems.
  - (2) The data on one other serious adverse outcome, infant mortality, is surprisingly positive and this has remained so for two decades. The data on infant mortality, which places Stormont in the top ten counties of Ontario with the lowest rates, occurs even though Stormont has one of the highest rates of teenage childbirth.
  - (3) The proportion of immigrants settling in Stormont who come from high-risk countries, such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Egypt, is almost 10 times higher than any other county in Eastern Ontario – except for Ottawa. The percentage impact on Stormont, however, is much higher than in Ottawa. Ethnic diversity is correlated with social problems in communities and these correlations are explained by social disorganization theory.
  - (4) The largest group of landed immigrants settling in Stormont in the last five years came from Pakistan (49.3% of 370 people). This is not large enough to make a complete community that can insulate and protect vulnerable members, but still large enough to ensure that some of the families moving in will carry risk factors produced by the harsh, undemocratic and desperately poor communities which some settlers experienced prior to arriving in Canada.

- (5) Cornwall contains many of the classic indicators of stress, low SES and social disorganization, including a net loss of people through migration. Specifically, Cornwall has a very low inflow of 4.6% of the population every year (or 2,000 people) and a net outflow of 5.4% or 2,400 people.

Migrants bring assets (not the least of which is their optimism) into a community. If more of them leave than come in, there is a net outflow of assets including hard assets (i.e. money and possessions) and soft assets (commitment to improve schools, hospitals, and other social institutions). This is why a shrinking population is a risk factor at the community level. This is a problem in Cornwall and many other old small cities along the waterways of Eastern Ontario.

- (6) One of the highest percentages of adults who never graduated from high school is found in Cornwall (36.2% of the adult population). Cornwall also has one of the lowest percentages of young people (15-24 years) in school (56.4%), which is well below the Provincial average and is a very bad sign for the long-term.

There is a significant correlation between the number of years of education and the amount of money that a young person will make. This is clear at the top of the income and education bracket. What is not so obvious, is that dropping out school before graduating high school locks the young person into a hopeless situation, where even the least skilled jobs are hard to get.

- (7) Cornwall is also seeing a large increase in apartment units in buildings over 5 stories, which is a risk indicator found in many longitudinal studies. Counterbalancing this news, however, are indicators that stress on renters and homeowners is considerably better in 2001 than in 1996.

The problem with larger apartment units is that the amount of semi public space (long hallways and staircases) grows as well. Crime is much higher in semipublic space than in public space or well-supervised private space.

- (8) Two areas, Cornwall (15.8%) and South Stormont (16.8%) have very high youth unemployment – combined with a large population of youth.

High youth unemployment in Cornwall is partially explained by the low rate of young people in school – they are out looking for jobs.

- (9) Cornwall has one of the highest concentrations of poverty in Eastern Ontario, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the population (2,455 families or 19.0%).

It takes a great deal of planning, discipline and hope for the future to adapt to poverty successfully and even the most capable of people can cope with poverty relatively successfully for only a limited period of time; poverty that extends over a generation undermines the character and the competencies of everyone in the family.

Cornwall has one of the largest base populations of families in poverty in Eastern Canada outside of Ottawa. It will become harder and harder for these families to carry out the functions of family life – especially raising children – as this situation continues.

- (10) While personal wealth soared in Ontario by over 20%, Cornwall barely managed a 0.9% growth in personal income. Moreover, the gap between the

poorest of the poor and families living on more than \$80,000 per year has widened significantly in Cornwall. Poverty is a lot worse for those affected when the burden isn't shared across the community.

The quality of social institutions - especially schools - suffers when the resident population becomes polarized and a class of individuals (poor people, visible minorities, different faith groups, etc.) separates from the mainstream. Social integration by everyone in society – in which everyone is treated equally – is essential to the healthy functioning of civic structures.

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### **3. FOLLOW UP TO THE REPORT**

- Upon the completion of the Report, presentations were provided to the Cornwall community and to a number of officials of the CAS of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. At these meetings, appreciation was expressed for the Report.
- Persons from various community groups, such as the police, school boards, the church, and the Children's Aid Society, attended the public meeting. During the public meeting, I discussed, among other things, the importance of the Report, the ways to assess risk, the research, theories and methodologies behind the Report, and the results and conclusions of the Report. At the community meeting, I also spoke about safe schools and the importance of religion in a community.
- A number of people at the community meeting noted that the Report validated the concerns that they had been expressing for some time, and that more resources were needed to address these concerns.
- At the meeting with the local CAS, officials also noted that the Report validated the concerns that they had been expressing for some time. In addition to the topics discussed at the public meeting, I also spoke about the importance of making decisions that will improve the outcome for children, i.e. reduce risk, and the need to ensure that resources are used effectively.