



Annual Report 2018-2019

(April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019)



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About Dufferin Coalition for Kids (DuCK)

Purpose

To collaboratively develop and implement an evidence-informed community plan that enables children and youth within the County of Dufferin to achieve their full potential.

Scope

Community-based planning in Dufferin County for children and youth from preconception to age 18 and their families.



Objectives

Evidence-informed and collaborative systems planning

- To coordinate planning, implementation, and research for children and youth services in Dufferin County
- To identify community needs, priorities, and gaps in service or service duplication
- To establish links between research, best-practices, and programs to continually improve services
- To identify opportunities for professional development, training, knowledge exchange, and resource information sharing that will increase the capacity of the service system to meet the needs of children and youth

Awareness and partnerships

- To identify partnerships to leverage the deliverables of current provincial strategies
- To provide families with easy and timely access to the services and information they need at all stages of a child's development
- To support services that are sensitive to the social, linguistic and cultural diversity of families in Dufferin County, including Indigenous, Francophone and ethno-cultural communities; people with disabilities and people who are Deaf; and people living in rural and remote areas

Membership

DuCK membership reflects the unique composition of the Dufferin community and the broad range of community programs and services available from preconception to age 18. All participating members must be able to facilitate decisions on behalf of the organization and/or sector they represent. Membership is open to organizations that fund, plan, or offer programs and services for children and youth aged 0-18 and their families.



DuCK co-chairs

Jennifer Moore
Executive Director
Dufferin Child & Family Services (left)

Lori-Jane Del Medico
Children's Services Manager
County of Dufferin (right)

As of March 31st, 2019, DuCK is comprised of participating members from 19 different local and provincial organizations across various sectors; a Communications Coordinator (coordinates DuCK meeting agendas/minutes); and an Evidence-informed Planning Coordinator (supports project implementation and evaluation of the DuCK action groups).



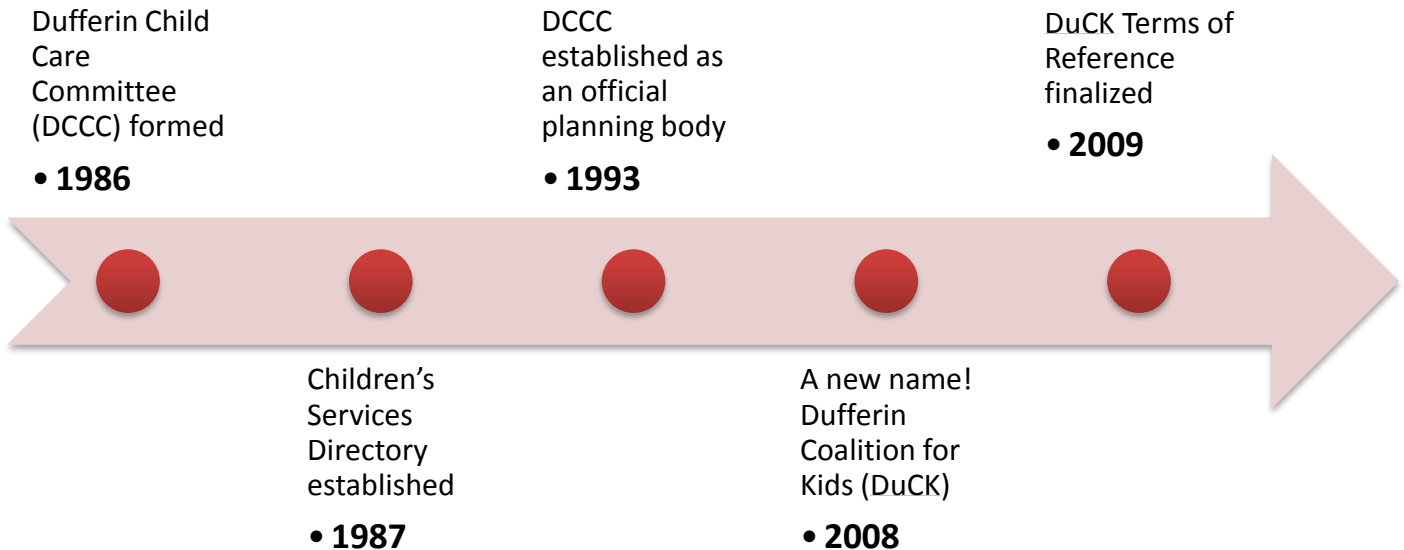
DuCK Member Organizations 2018–2019

Associated Youth Services of Peel (AYSP)
Autism Ontario
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District
Central West Local Health Integration Network
Choices Youth Shelter
Conseil scolaire Viamonde
The Corporation of the County of Dufferin
Dufferin Child & Family Services (DCAFS)
Dufferin Parent Support Network (DPSN)
Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB)
ErinoakKids
Family Transition Place (FTP)
Kerry's Place Autism Services
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Ministry of Education
Orangeville Public Library
Town of Orangeville
Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB)
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH)

How DuCK was “Hatched”

DuCK began in 1986 as a network of family health and social service providers in Dufferin County called the *Dufferin Child Care Committee*. Over the past 25 years, this collaborative has been a valued forum for communication and coordination between individuals and organizations whose mandates include services that support DuCK’s purpose and objectives. Since 2009, DuCK has served as Dufferin’s Children Services Planning Council, mandated by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (formerly the Ministry of Children and Youth Services). In 2009, DuCK formalized its Terms of Reference, and, in 2010, it established a Strategic Plan.

Figure 1 – The “hatching” of DuCK (1986-2009)



Evidence-Informed Planning Process:

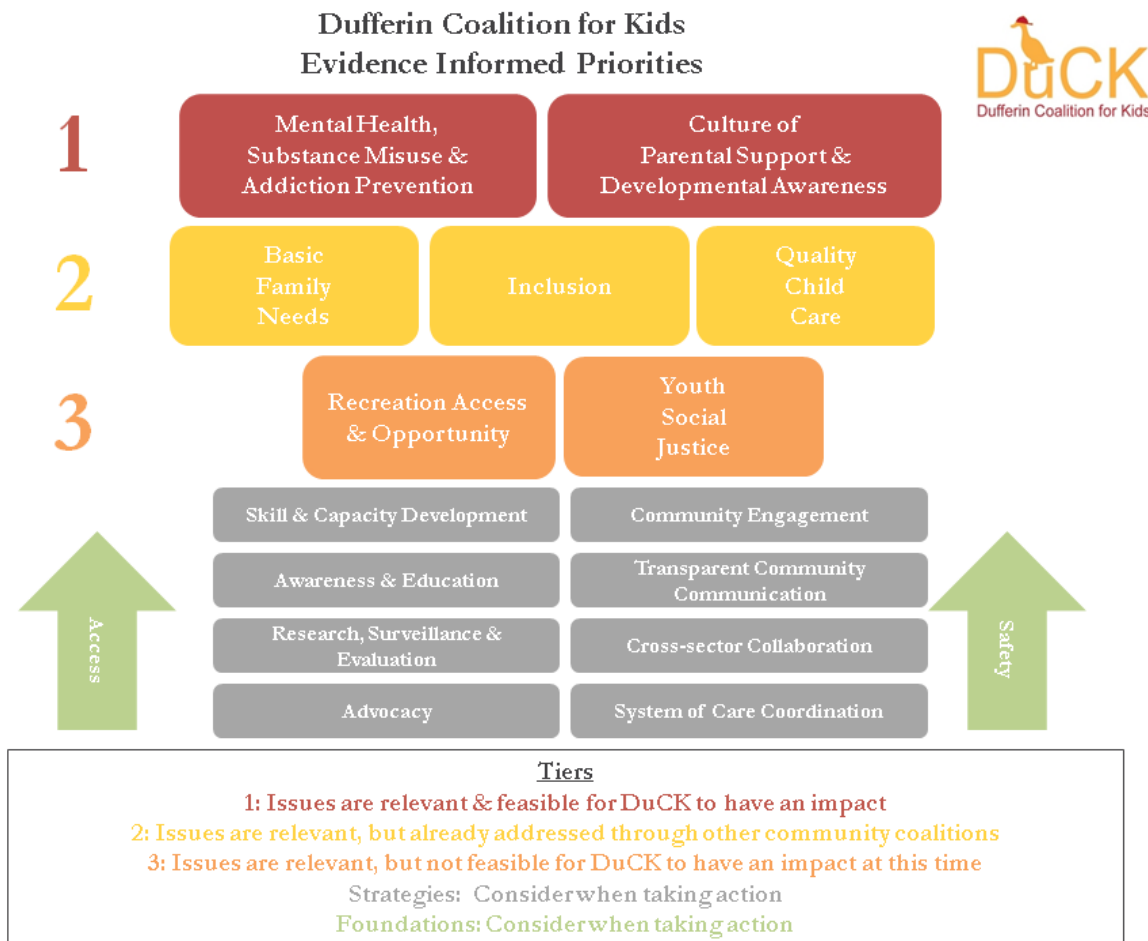
In 2014, DuCK began a process of evidence-informed planning (EIP). The goal of this process was to ensure that the efforts of DuCK were concentrated on distinct priorities, selected through a systematic examination of local evidence and expertise.

To begin this process, DuCK undertook a series of priority-setting exercises to determine initial areas of focus. The results of those exercises are pictured in Figure 2. DuCK is currently focusing on *Tier 1: Issues are relevant and feasible for DuCK to have an impact.*

This tier contains two priorities:

1. Mental health, substance misuse and addiction prevention (MHSMAP)
2. Parental support and developmental awareness (PSDA)

Figure 2 – Results of the DuCK 2014 population-level priority-setting exercise



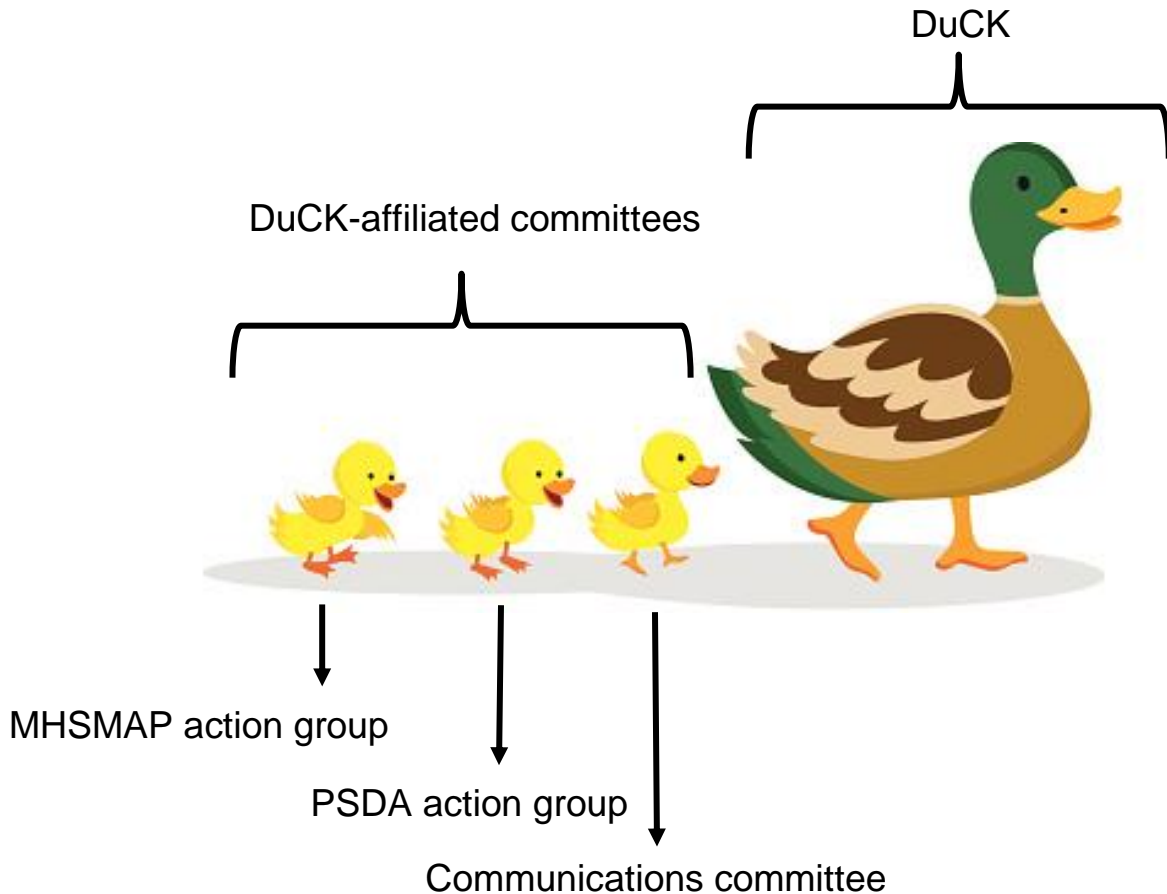
Evidence-Informed Planning Action Groups:

In 2015, DuCK formed two EIP action groups in order to focus their work on Tier 1 priority areas (MHSMAP and PSDA). These groups have worked together to form a shared understanding of each priority area, reviewed current evidence, and developed action plans based on this information. From 2016 to 2018, the action groups have carried out the work in their action plans. For a more detailed account of the EIP work done between 2015 and 2018, please refer to previous DuCK annual reports (available on the DuCK website).

Communications committee:

A Communications Committee was formed in April 2014 to support DuCK objectives related to community awareness. The purpose of this committee is to explore and implement ways in which to promote both DuCK initiatives and community services and resources that are helpful to families with children and youth. From 2014 to 2018, the Communications Committee has redesigned and updated an online directory of services and supports for families living in Dufferin County and provided ongoing support to the EIP action groups.

Figure 3 – Structure of DuCK and its affiliated committees





Progress and Results Achieved - April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

DuCK Meetings

DuCK typically meets five times per year (frequency of meetings can be increased if required). The purpose of these meetings is to:

- Promote collaboration and relationship building among community partners
- Foster information sharing and provide members with feedback on proposed initiatives
- Guide, approve, and endorse the work of the EIP action groups and DuCK committees
- Review and approve requests for funding to support the identified DuCK priorities
- Ensure DuCK's work and the work of its member organizations is aligned with important provincial and local strategies (e.g., Moving on Mental Health, Special Needs Strategy, Dufferin County Poverty Reduction Task Force)
- Collaborate on activities mandated by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Education

The April 2018 to March 2019 DuCK meeting dates were:

- Thursday April 5th
- Thursday June 7th
- Thursday September 6th
- Friday December 7th
- Thursday February 7th

Meeting [minutes](#) for 2018-19 (and years previous) can be found on the DuCK website: <http://www.dufferincoalitionforkids.ca/>.

DuCK Committees and Evidence-Informed Planning Action Groups

Mental Health, Substance Misuse, and Addiction Prevention (MHSMAP) Action Group

The MHSMAP action group focused its efforts for the 2018-19 fiscal year on two initiatives:

1. Implementation and Evaluation of a School-based Pilot Program (*Stress Lessons*)

In 2017/18, the MHSMAP action group conducted a youth mental health needs assessment for Dufferin County. The action group identified a need for a school-based mental health literacy and substance-misuse prevention program that is evidence-based and supports the Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum. The action group also recommended grade seven students

as the target population for this program because research has shown that children develop executive functioning and self-regulation skills rapidly during that time.¹

After a comprehensive literature review of best practices in this program area and an environmental scan of existing evidence-based school programs, the action group selected a program called *Stress Lessons: From Stressed Out to Chilled Out*. *Stress Lessons* was developed by the Psychology Foundation of Canada (PFC) and provides teachers with seven curriculum-based lessons to help their students understand and manage stress in their lives.

In March 2018, the MHSMAP action group was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Gambling Research Exchange of Ontario to implement and evaluate a pilot of the *Stress Lessons* program. In collaboration with the Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB), the action group recruited six grade seven teachers from three elementary schools in Dufferin County to implement the program. An evaluation was also developed to assess the how well the program was implemented and the impact of the program on students. The evaluation study received ethics approval from both UGDSB and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health.

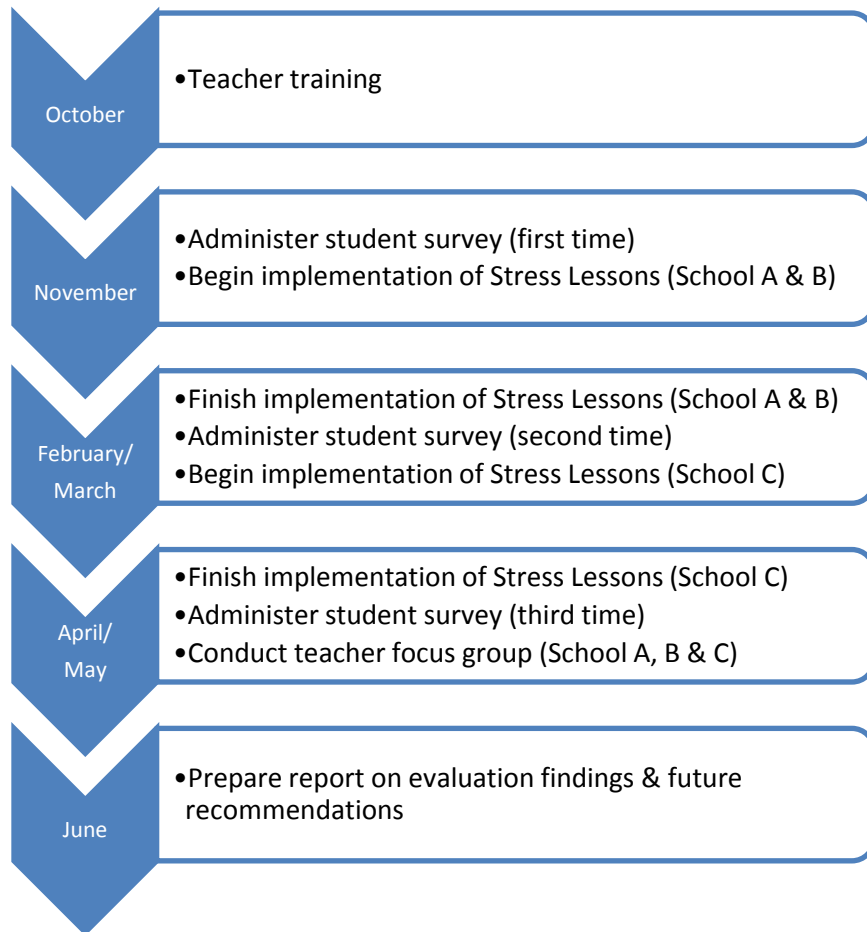
In October 2018, the teachers received training from PFC on how to deliver the *Stress Lessons* curriculum in their classes. Following the training, two out of three schools (School A & B) began implementing *Stress Lessons* into their Grade 7 classes (the third school, School C, served as a comparison school and began delivering the program in February 2019). The program evaluation has three components:

- student surveys,
- teacher evaluations of each lesson,
- and a teacher focus group (to be completed after all teachers have delivered the program).

The student survey measured perceived stress; self-efficacy (or self-confidence) for dealing with stress; and their coping strategies. The survey was administered at three points of time: before the program began, at the completion of the program and three months following completion of the program to assess the impact of the program on students. Teachers were asked to fill out a brief evaluation form following each lesson to record their experience with delivering the lesson. Finally, after all teachers involved in the pilot have completed all lessons with their class (April/May 2019), teacher focus groups will be conducted to assess the program's impact, as well as what worked/didn't work upon implementation. A final report on the evaluation findings will be prepared in June 2019. The findings will be used to develop recommendations for the future of the *Stress Lessons* program including how to scale up and improve its implementation. Figure 4 provides a timeline for the implementation and evaluation of the *Stress Lessons* pilot project.

¹ Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. Building the Brain's "Air Traffic Control" System: How Early Experiences Shape the Development of Executive Function: Working Paper No. 11. 2011 [Accessed 29 Mar 2018]. Available from: <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/How-Early-Experiences-Shape-the-Development-of-Executive-Function.pdf>

Figure 4 – 2018/19 timeline for implementation and evaluation of *Stress Lessons* pilot program



2. Inventory of MHSMAP Services

In April 2016, the MHSMAP Action Group published an inventory of all mental health information, service and supports in Dufferin County called *Points of Access for Child & Youth Mental Health Information, Services, and Supports in Dufferin*. This resource contains information related to:

- First point of contact
- Service hours
- Age ranges served
- Processes for connecting with each service
- Contact information for each service

The Group is in the process of updating the *Points of Access* resource and plans to distribute and evaluate the updated resource during the 2019-20 fiscal year.

Parental Support and Developmental Awareness (PSDA) Action Group

The PSDA Action Group focused its efforts for the 2018-19 fiscal year on one initiative:

Promoting evidence-based, consistent parenting messaging (*The Dufferin Basics*)

The PSDA Action Group is working on an initiative that will provide organizations across Dufferin County with consistent, evidence-based parenting messages to share with parents/caregivers in the community. To do this, the action group chose to adapt an existing initiative from *The Basics Multi-City Network* that was developed by *The Achievement Gap Initiative (AGI)* at Harvard University. Originally this campaign was called *The Boston Basics*, but it has now been adapted by communities across North America.

The campaign promotes five simple messages² for parents/caregivers of children from birth to age three:

1. Maximize love, manage stress
2. Talk, sing, and point
3. Count, group, and compare
4. Explore through movement and play
5. Read and discuss stories



In 2017, the PSDA Action Group established a partnership with *The Basics Multi-City Network* that allowed them to brand and promote these parenting messages as *The Dufferin Basics (DB)*. Through this partnership, the PSDA Action Group has a webpage for parents that includes instructional videos and print materials: <https://dufferin.thebasics.org/>.

Before the launch of the DB campaign, the PSDA planned and implemented two evaluation activities in the Summer/Fall of 2018:

1. A parent survey that assessed parent/caregivers' knowledge of the DB messages. Overall, the findings suggest that parents/caregivers in Dufferin County had a good baseline knowledge of the parenting concepts that are covered in *The Basics*. The most common places for parents to go for parenting information were the internet, friends/family, and their doctors. A more detailed report can be found here: https://dufferin.thebasics.org/media/18980/db-baseline-survey-report_final.pdf
2. Three parent focus groups that assessed parent/caregivers impressions of one of the DB videos. All parents/caregivers who participated had a positive reaction to the video and many commented that the videos were simple and easy to understand.

² The Boston Basics. The Basics. Accessed on: 2017 May 02. Available from: <http://boston.thebasics.org/en/the-basics/>

Following these evaluation activities, implementation of the DB campaign more widely began in January 2019. Staff presentations on the Basics were completed for many local service providers in the community including EarlyON Centers, WDGPH (including Healthy Babies, Healthy Children; breastfeeding clinics; prenatal classes), DCAFS, FTP, Grand Valley Public Library, and licensed child care providers. As of March 31, 2019, the Dufferin Basics campaign is being supported by many service providers in Dufferin. Some of the highlights include:

- EarlyON, DCAFS, and FTP are actively promoting and distributing DB materials during their interactions with parents/caregivers
- EarlyON/WDGPH will be incorporating DB workshops into the Come Understand Parenting program in May 2019
- Orangeville Public Health is showing the DB videos on their lobby screen
- Healthy Babies, Healthy Children is promoting and distributing DB materials during home visits
- Orangeville and Grand Valley Public Libraries are promoting and distributing DB materials
- Two Dufferin Area Family Health Teams are distributing DB materials
- DB postcards are in the Welcome Wagon packages for new babies
- DB postcards are in the 18-month Well-Baby packages distributed by health care providers
- DB advertisements in two local newspaper publications: Orangeville Banner and snapd Dufferin.

Communications Committee

To date, the work of this committee has focused on redesigning and updating/maintaining an online directory of services and supports for families living in Dufferin County, to ensure it remains a relevant and modern local resource. This resource was re-branded as the *My Dufferin Service Directory* (www.mydufferin.ca). The main objective of the committee in the 2018-19 fiscal year was the promotion of *My Dufferin*. The group created a multi-pronged communication plan that included:

- Organizing coordinated social media posts from DuCK organizations
- Designing stand-up banners to share across DuCK organizations
- Creating TV screen ads for agency reception areas e.g., County of Dufferin)
- Developing additional print materials (e.g., postcards, bilingual poster)
- Cross advertising on DuCK organization websites

The Communications Committee worked closely with the *My Dufferin* website developer to ensure that the directory tool remained up-to-date, easy to search and mobile-friendly. The committee also carefully tracked website metrics to help determine the success of their communications efforts. Using Google Analytics, they were able to determine that from April 1st 2018 – March 31st 2019, the *My Dufferin* website had:

- 8,661 individual users - 125% increase from 2017/18

- 9,848 sessions (number of times the website was opened) – 113% increase from 2017/18
- 24,937 individual page views – 62% increase from 2017/18

The Communications Committee also redesigned the DuCK website (www.dufferincoalitionforkids.ca) in late 2018. This website is primarily intended as a tool for service providers to learn about DuCK’s goals and priorities and to provide resources for their own use and to share with families. The new website has a more modern look and feel than the previous version and contains additional resources in a more streamlined format.

Funding and Expenses

DuCK receives annual funding from both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. DuCK also receives in-kind contributions from all member organizations in the form of staff time commitments, as well as committee and action group involvement (see Figure 5).

Figure 5 - DuCK funding structure



Some projects that received funding from DuCK during the 2018-19 fiscal year included:

- DuCK Communications Coordinator and EIP Coordinator roles
- Dufferin Basics evaluation incentives, closed captioning video files, and printed resources
- MyDufferin stand-up banners



Future Priorities- April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020

DuCK and its associated action groups have identified the following key deliverables for the coming fiscal year (April 1st, 2019 - March 31th, 2020):

DuCK

- Share information among DuCK members and engage in collaborative service planning
- Liaise with and support related community organizations (e.g., DC MOVES, Moving on Mental Health, etc.)
- Align planning with provincial strategies such as the Moving on Mental Health Strategy and the Special Needs Strategy
- Strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities

DuCK - MHSMAP Action Group

- Complete the implementation and evaluation of the school-based Stress Lessons pilot program and develop recommendations for the future.
- Update, distribute, and evaluate the MHSMAP-related services inventory for Dufferin- *Points of Access for Child & Youth Mental Health Information, Services, and Supports in Dufferin*

DuCK - PSDA Action Group

- Continue to develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan to saturate the community with the DB
- Develop and implement an evaluation plan to measure the uptake and impact of the DB

DuCK - Communications Committee

- Continue to promote and update/upgrade the *My Dufferin* website
- Develop a standing report to track *My Dufferin* usage statistics
- Continue to support the action groups with specific communication needs

Contact Us

For more information about DuCK please visit our website www.dufferincoalitionforkids.ca or contact our Communications Coordinator, Laura La Rocca at duck.communications@gmail.com.

