

PERTH COUNTY SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL - NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**  
**March 29, 2005**

REPORT ON QUALITY OF LIFE IN PERTH COUNTY

The quality of life in Perth County is the theme of a report just issued by the Perth County Social Planning Council Steering Committee.

The report examines key social, health and economic conditions that affect human and social development, comparing Perth County data to provincial and national standards.

Key findings of the report include:

- Perth County residents are significantly less educated than provincial norms
- Perth County has significantly higher drinking rates than the province, while smoking rates are about the same.
- Drug-related offences in Stratford are higher than both provincial and national rates.
- All municipalities except North Perth have higher rates of impaired driving charges than the provincial average but North Perth has a higher rate of general traffic offences than the rest of the County.
- There is less incidence of low income in Perth County than the province over-all, but nonetheless six to nine percent of the local population uses food banks and other support services for basic needs.
- There are few homes on the market in the affordable range, considering County household incomes. And, available rental dwellings declined from 1996 to 2001.

Ellen Balmain, Executive Director of United Way, which funded the research, describes the report as “a valuable tool in identifying key social issues and guiding social expenditures in Perth County”.

Copies of the report are available immediately from the United Centre at 32 Erie Street in Stratford. They will be also be available at the five libraries and three Archives offices in Perth County by early next week.

The Perth County Social Planning Council Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from local planning bodies, funders, government, service providers and citizens. It evolved from the Perth County Community Planning Council, which has been active in Perth County for 15 years.

- 30 -

For further information, contact:

Ellen Balmain, (519) 271-7730, [ebalmain@perthcounty.unitedway.ca](mailto:ebalmain@perthcounty.unitedway.ca)  
Dale Howatt, (519) 274-9700, [dhowatt@sdhsolutions.ca](mailto:dhowatt@sdhsolutions.ca)