



# Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments

## What did we learn about the community of Drayton Valley?

### Over the past 30 years...

- Drayton Valley quadrupled in size, with more than 20% of the population working in the oil and gas sector.
- Median income in Drayton Valley rose to 42% above the national average despite the population lagging behind national benchmarks for educational attainment.
- Area of water bodies, wetlands, and forests in Drayton Valley decreased, while built capital and agricultural land increased.

### Some challenges experienced by the youth, adults, & families of Drayton Valley involve:

- Sexism and gender stereotypes, poor mental and physical health, including addictions, severe domestic conflicts, job insecurity, lack of community-based services, and difficulty in accessing these services.



## Youth's Strengths in Drayton Valley

- Strong **identities, personal agency, self-efficacy**, and **perseverance** despite life challenges.
- **Healthy coping strategies**, including nurturing hobbies and passions, living a healthy lifestyle, helping others, maintaining a sense of humour in difficult times, and cultivating meaningful relationships.
- **Strong connections** to family, friends, and the community, as well as to cultural values and practices.
- Women's strong **work ethics**, as well as **dedication to and passion for their job**, despite the challenges they face in working in the oil and gas industry.

## Factors Affecting Youth's Resilience



## Resilience-Promoting Strategies

- Offering accessible **health and social services** to youth and families.
- Offering **community-based programs** that support the resilience of youth and families by, for example, strengthening healthy coping strategies and family ties.
- Offering **accessible training programs** to workers who intend to exit the oil and gas sector.
- Implementing **strategies** that promote gender equality in the workplace.
- Implementing **initiatives** that promote social cohesion in the community.
- Promoting **economic diversification**.

## 2 Key Resilience-Enabling Factors for the Youth of Drayton Valley

**Meaningful and supportive relationships:** *"I have a good support system, like my family is very supportive, my friends are very supportive . . . My mom always taught us to be very independent as well, so I've got a good skill set that way . . . it's good when you're independent . . . You're able to tackle things, but when you also have a team, I think that really helps."* (Trish, Female, age 23)

**Community resources:** *"I'd like to see somewhere where the kids can go and enjoy . . . Like the pool, you got certain days you can go. . . Even with the skating rinks here, there are certain days that you can't be there at all, like when it's blocked off. So, I'd rather see something that was like, like a youth centre or something, so more kids could utilize that than going to drugs."* (Alex, Female, age 18)