

FACT SHEET

WHAT IS APCOL?



The Anti-Poverty Community Organizing and Learning project (APCOL) project is a research project about anti-poverty activism. We want to know more about how people *learn* to get involved, why they stay involved, why they stop being involved, or why they never get involved in community organizing in the first place.

APCOL is an action research project that involves community groups and universities working together. Our research includes eight case studies in Toronto; we are supporting and following grassroots initiatives aimed at reducing poverty, doing in-depth interviews with participants. The APCOL project also includes a major survey; we are interviewing hundreds of people in eight neighbourhoods across the city, asking about their views and their experiences of community organizing.

Our Community Partners

FoodShare, Labour Community Services, Social Planning Toronto, ACORN, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Black Action Defense Committee, Chinese Canadian National Council (Toronto), Toronto and York Region Labour Council, Make Poverty History, United Way Canada, and the Downtown East Community Development Collective

Our Academic Partners

George Brown College, Ryerson University, York University and the University of Toronto.

Our Goals

The goals of the APCOL project are to:

- contribute to local neighbourhood capacity to engage in anti-poverty work as they define it;
- contribute to effective cross-linkage of community anti-poverty initiatives across the Greater Toronto Area;
- build understanding of the role of community-led organizing in the broader processes of positive social, political and economic change;
- expand the base of research knowledge on the role of informal learning and popular education in anti-poverty work and social movement development.

APCOL is the short form of the Anti-Poverty Community Organizing and Learning project.

APCOL is a community-based, participatory action research project co-led by university and community researchers.

The project's co-leaders are Sharon Simpson (Labour Community Services, Toronto) and Peter Sawchuk (University of Toronto).

APCOL is funded by the Canadian government's Social Science and Humanities Research Council's Community University Research Alliance program.

APCOL is working with neighborhood groups in the Toronto area including Black Creek, Flemingdon Park, Kingston Galloway - Orton Park, Lawrence Heights, Mt. Dennis, Thorncliffe Park, St. James Town, Steeles-L'Amoreaux, South Etobicoke, and Weston.

IN BRIEF

5 years, 2009-2014

8 case studies, 1 year in length, partnered with community organizations

2 city-wide surveys, the first in 2010-2011; repeated in 2013-2014

Twice yearly newsletter

2 conferences - 2011 and 2014

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