

KEY FINDINGS

The summary below introduces our main findings, while the following chapters of our report dive deeper into each of these themes.

1

In many ways, people feel the same about the strength of their connections as they did five years ago.

Across several measures in our survey, the results are similar to 2012. Approximately two-thirds still report a sense of trust among neighbours, feel welcome, and experience a sense of belonging. But around half continue to find it difficult to make friends, and too many – approximately one in four – still find themselves alone more often than they would like.

2

Fewer than one-in-five Metro Vancouver residents experience loneliness often, and the overwhelming majority have someone to depend on.

Overall, loneliness rates are lower than expected – just 14% of residents say they feel lonely often or almost always. In comparison, nine-out-of-10 report having someone they can depend on, and four-out-of-five know at least one neighbour well enough to ask for help. This is heartening news.

3

Those experiencing weaker connections have clear ideas about how to make new friends, and are open to expanding their circle.

While people tend to share the same barriers to making connections, some experience these barriers more acutely, and for one-in-five this means not knowing any neighbours well enough to ask for help. However, our survey also reveals that those who are more likely to experience these issues – particularly young adults and people in low-income households – have clear ideas about how they would like to make new friends, and are open to expanding their circle. A promising finding to act on.

4

Residents are less active in community life today compared to five years ago.

Participation in almost every community-related activity has dropped since 2012. As a community foundation we're concerned, but we still see grounds for optimism. Three-quarters of residents take part in some way to make their community a better place to live, with popular activities including picking up litter, shovelling snow, and lending each other tools or kitchen items. Does this simply mean that the ways we participate in community life are changing?

5

People still prefer connecting in-person to interacting via technology.

Our survey shows that residents of every demographic prefer to connect with each other in-person. Less than one-in-five feel they spend too much time with technology, and more than half use technology to connect with people and friends in the community.

6

Neighbours want to get to know each other better through social gatherings, community festivals, and community projects.

Most people want to get to know their neighbours better – even more so among those that have lived here for the shortest period. Events such as social gatherings, festivals, and participating in a local project are the most popular ways for neighbours to meet and form connections.

7

Most people are satisfied with where they live, but many still expect to move on soon.

Although three-quarters of residents indicate they are happy with where they live, about half either expect to move in the next five years, or are simply unsure of what the future holds. The main reasons people expect to move include affordability, wanting more space, downsizing, road congestion, and to be closer to friends and family.