

## St. John's Citizens Find Their Voice

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[Vibrant Communities St. John's](#) brings together people living with low income/poverty together in a forum called [Citizen's Voice](#) to learn, share and start to change policies.

The group has grown to almost 90 people, mainly through word of mouth. It's a chance for people living with low income to learn about community resources and collectively raise awareness about living in poverty. A recent monthly meeting talked about food safety and launched a collective kitchen network.

Results range from the individual to the systemic. One single father in the group learned how to read his children's medicine labels correctly and found supports for his two special needs children. Many members are attending [CapaCITIES](#), a community leadership program organized by Vibrant Communities St. John's.

At a group level, residents are connecting with each other and planning joint neighbourhood events through a 'Network for Vibrant Neighbourhoods'. Frustrated and marginalized by the process of phoning the general income support line, which often resulted in individuals repeating the same information to various agents, the Citizens Voice group now has a direct line and an assigned client services officer. A provincial government programs and services booklet has been revamped and a staff person dedicated to promoting and supporting it, after feedback received from the group.

