



United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin

Community Impact Report 2015

Based on reported data from April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015

ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE



Children and youth need to live and grow in a supportive, inclusive and nurturing environment. By investing in young people, we help them grow up to be all that they can be, ensuring everyone's future is stronger.

Success Stories

"Allison is in grade 6 and she has been struggling with the girls at school. Sometimes the 'popular' girls are very nice to Allison and sometimes they are passive aggressive and refuse to include her. It's painful to Allison because she never knows what the day will bring. Sometimes the girls in her class make fun of her because she has "baby fat" and she is embarrassed that she is the only girl in the class who has developed breasts. She has started to become anxious

about attending school and she is having a harder time academically now that group projects are more common.

Allison doesn't receive any extra support at school because most of her struggles are hidden: her peers aren't overtly bullying; she is anxious and unhappy with herself; and she is keeping her struggles in, as opposed to acting out behaviourally. Allison is slipping through the cracks.

Allison is chosen to participate in a Play On! group because she doesn't seem to have many friends. Through the group, she learns that other girls are feeling similar pressures to look a certain way and to fit in. She also learns a few strategies to lessen her anxiety. By week 4, Allison is comfortable enough with the group to discuss her exclusion experiences and how that makes her feel. Two other girls express feeling the same way and Allison starts spending more time with these girls. The remaining girls in the group are shocked by the hurt their words and actions are causing. By the end of the group, Allison has made two new friends, she feels less isolated, she knows she isn't the only one going through challenges, and she has learned coping mechanisms."

*-Big Brothers Big Sisters of Guelph: **Go Girls, Go Guys and Pre-teen Programs***

"Kimmy, who is totally blind, has been receiving CNIB services since she was born. From birth to 6 years of age she received services through the Early Intervention Program. When she turned 6 she started receiving services with the Child and Youth program, designed for youth between the ages of 7 and 21, and will continue to receive services through this program for years to come. Each year a School Aged Needs assessment is completed and she is often referred to our Independent Living and Orientation and Mobility Specialists. Kimmy's school teachers and parents are continually updated and provided with community resources and strategies to assist Kimmy with her day-to-day learning.

Kimmy has come a long way since birth and continues to soar in leaps and bounds with daily independence. In the past few years she has learned to read braille, count money, understand personal hygiene like washing hands and hair care, is learning to travel, playing cards for fun, and participating in social interaction.

Through the help and support of the Child and Youth program Kimmy will continue to be engaged in CNIB programming and services, paired with community resources and programming when necessary along the way."

*-Canadian National Institute of the Blind: **Child & Youth Services***

"I am a Police Officer and I investigate sexual offences and physical abuse against children. Kids walk away from the police station feeling confused, sometimes scared, or lost about what happens next. Child Witness supports these kids (and their caregivers) before, during, and after the court process. I think of Child Witness as a translator for kids. They support the kids as best they can, however they need. They try to take away some of the hard part for these little kids. They devote their time to help the victimized children."

*-Child Witness Centre: **Child Witness Program***

"As a teenager, I struggled with many issues including self-esteem, addiction, depression and self-mutilation. I found high-school to be the loneliest place I have ever been. Give Yourself Credit was a place free of judgement where I could work away on getting my credits and get help when I need it – whether it be with school work or life in general. The possibilities seemed endless – which wasn't a feeling often felt for the "at-risk" kids that went there: the pregnant and terrified young girls, the self-loathing addicts, the silently depressed, the anxiously awkward and the ostracized. It was mostly about education, but also about self-acceptance, coping and life skills. It was a quiet comfortable place with caring staff and volunteers who truly just wanted to see you succeed. It was a family. We shared holidays, triumphs and tragedies. I graduated from Give Yourself Credit and am now attending college!"

*-Give Yourself Credit: **Give Yourself Credit Program***

"Jack is 8 years old and lives with his mom and two brothers. Jack has witnessed domestic violence in his mom's previous relationships. Jack has a lot of positive females in his life (mom, aunt, grandma), but any significant males have abruptly left when their relationship with his mom ended. Jack is hesitant to build relationships with men because in his experience, they always end up hurting him. When Jack met his Big Brother, Ethan, he told his mom he was excited to spend time with him. However, it took a few months for Jack to show Ethan how much he looked forward to their time together. He didn't want to suggest activities because he thought Ethan might not like them and then they wouldn't be able to spend time together anymore. Slowly he began to trust Ethan: telling him a bit about himself, things that happen at home and at school, what he likes and doesn't. He was happy and surprised that Ethan kept coming back! Now, Jack and Ethan have been matched for 2 years, and Jack knows that he is important to Ethan. He always looks forward to their time together, and tells Ethan about his mom's new boyfriend (he's nice and treats her well), and about problems with friends at school. Ethan appreciates that Jack is comfortable with him, knowing that it took time for him to open up."

Your Community Needs You

Canadian Mental Health Association: “Youth need to have accurate information about the myths and realities of suicide and mental health issues and tools to be able to get timely help when necessary... The Mental Health Commission of Canada reports that 1/3 of Canadians will experience a mental health difficulty, and that youth are vulnerable because ½ of mental health difficulties begin by age 14 and 75% first manifest by age 24. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people 15-24 in Canada.”

John Howard Society: “Increasing incidents of bullying are well documented at the local level. According to a report of the United Way of Guelph and Wellington Social Planning Council (2011) 33% of the grades 7-10 students surveyed reported being victims of bullying, and 10-14% reported being bullied on a daily/weekly basis, a survey of grade 9-12 students indicated that 35.4% bullied others, 12.7% had been threatened or injured with a weapon at school, and 12.1% carried a weapon on their person.”

Children’s Foundation: “Many students go to school hungry, which inhibits their ability to learn, grow and succeed as they move towards adulthood. Our services (**Food & Friends Program**) impact the physical, emotional, social, behavioral, cognitive and academic needs of children and youth. It is our belief that children and youth should not have to live with the concern of where their next meal will come from, but should instead be able to focus their energies wholly on the process of learning and growing.”

Dufferin Child & Family Services: “LGBTQ youth are more vulnerable than our general population of youth in that they are more likely to be bullied, to be rejected by their parents and to consider and attempt suicide. For example:

- 26% of LGBTQ youth are told to leave home.
- LGBTQ students hear anti-gay slurs an average of 26 times a day.
- 30% of suicides are completed by LGBTQ youth.
- 43% of trans-gendered persons attempt suicide.”

(Sources: Rainbow Health Ontario; F-FLAG CANADA)

Results of Our Support

- ✚ **1039** students participated in **Anti-Bullying** presentations provided by the John Howard Society
- ✚ Big Brothers Big Sisters Guelph matched **101** Littles with a Big Brother or Sister mentor for the entire year as a part of their **Match Program**.
- ✚ **30** teens with special needs attended the **Inclusive Summer Day Camp** run by Rainbow Programmes for Children
- ✚ **298** backpacks and **90** summer swim passes were given to low income students entering JK-12 by Community Resources Centre of North & Central Wellington's **Outreach & Support Program, Information & Referral Services**
- ✚ **2,400** students in primary school have learned about body ownership, safe and unsafe touching, the right to be safe and where to go for help as a result of the C.A.R.E. (sexual abuse prevention) modules in the **RespectED Program** provided by Canadian Red Cross Society, Guelph & Wellington Branch
- ✚ **72** LGBT Youth in Dufferin participated in a weekly 2 hr support group with an annual trip to Toronto's Gay Pride Parade as a part of the **LGBT Youth Group** provided by Dufferin Child & Family Services
- ✚ Children's Foundation **Food & Friends Program** has served **1,180,293** meals to children aged 4-18
- ✚ Canadian Mental Health Association (Waterloo, Wellington Dufferin Branch) has provided information on mental health, suicide awareness, coping strategies and support resources to **5000** youth between the ages of 14 and 19
- ✚ **234** youth participated in a **Go Girls/Go Guys/Pre-teen Program** in Guelph and Wellington focused on healthy living and self-esteem, coordinated by Big Brothers Big Sisters Guelph and Big Brothers Big Sisters Wellington
- ✚ **41** youth who were at-risk of failing a subject or grade received extra help from the **Just for YOUth Literacy Program** run by the Wellington Learning Centre

The Impact Your Donation Makes

Donation	Service/Support Provided
\$25	Bus tickets for youth disconnected from supports and services to get to school and home again. (Give Yourself Credit: Give Yourself Credit Program)
\$100	Feeds 10 teens and their babies 3 healthy meals. (YMCA/YWCA of Guelph: Teenage Parents Programs)
\$100	Recruiting, screening, training and placement of one new volunteer (Big Brothers Big Sisters Guelph: Group Program)
\$365	A healthy breakfast for one secondary student for the entire school year: helping them ease into their school day and be better able to focus on the school work at hand. (Children's Foundation: Food & Friends)
\$365	Provides court accompaniment for a child or youth who has been the victim of or witness to a crime for a full day, so they are not alone. (Child Witness Centre: Child Witness Program)
\$500	Up to 50-75 children and their parents to participate in a high quality, inclusive and free early literacy program over the course of a week. (Action Read Community Literacy Centre: Early Start Family Literacy)
\$500	Bus load of 40 LGBT Youth to attend Toronto's Gay Pride Parade (Dufferin Child & Family Services: LGBT Youth Group)
\$1,000	Matches one Big and Little together for an entire year: recruit, screen, train, match and monitor the match (Big Brothers Big Sisters Guelph: Match Program)
\$1,000	One week of summer camp with a full-time support worker for a child with autism (Autism Society of Ontario: Summer Programming)
\$2,500	Healthy meals and a safe care place amongst friends for 60 youth for 12 weeks (Abbeyfield: Our Place Youth Supper Program)

From Poverty to Possibility



Many of our communities' most vulnerable are families and children who simply can't make ends meet. United Way funds programs to ensure basic needs – food, shelter, clothing and employment are available to those who need them. We also work with community partners to help break the cycle of poverty for future generations.

Success Stories

“A family consisting of a single mother and her 2 children both struggling with autism (ages 4 and 6) found themselves homeless after a relationship breakdown between the mother and her partner. The mother needed to be in a motel with her two children and the Drop-In Centre supported her with food from the Drop In Centre as well as meal cards for her to shop at a local grocery store as both children have unique dietary needs. The Drop-In Centre needed to financially support this family with transportation costs to the Drop-In Centre and other medical appointments.

This family found an apartment to move into and the Drop-In Centre helped with the financial costs for vouchers to St Vincent de Paul for furniture, alongside the County of Wellington who financially supported this mother with the cost of Last Month's Rent and Utilities.

This family is now housed and the children are in school. The mother returns to the Drop-In Centre on occasion for a bit of financial assistance and an affordable meal.”

*-Welcome In Drop-In Centre: **Drop-In Centre***

“This United Way funded program has MANY success stories we could share but this is one that truly stands out. One beneficiary of the program is Sandy, a shy and marginalized client of the Food Bank with a history of an unhealthy and sedentary lifestyle. After some coaxing, Sandy joined our cooking class. The transformation that followed was akin to rebirth. Sandy was reinvigorated and re-energized. Not only did she learn how to select, budget for and prepare healthier foods, she also became a leader in experimenting with new recipes. Over time she would bring her recipes in for our chef to try. Not one recipe was out of place and only a few needed tweaking. One of her great ideas (which he said was an accident) was the use of cranberry sauce to sweeten different dishes such as chili, but one of her greatest successes was

in extending the donated bread that we receive from different vendors. Sandy turns baguettes into croutons and crisps and our clients love her products!

As a result of her enthusiasm, Sandy became a volunteer at the Food Bank and has, on a daily basis, worked with our regular volunteers to prepare a variety of different fresh and wholesome food products funded by this United Way program to pass onto clients. She has truly succeeded at this. But the story doesn't end there. This year Sandy has taken it upon herself to grow and harvest fresh vegetables for our clients by partnering with our local St. James Anglican Church "Grow a Garden" program. She is looking after six garden plots - all for the Food Bank and its clients. Sandy has become so aware of the high cost of healthy eating and the skills needed to prepare healthy meals, especially for people on a fixed income, that she has become an advocate for fellow clients. This is clearly highlighted in the local media where she can be quoted promoting this vision."

*-Centre Wellington Food Bank: **Healthy Fresh Foods***

"Geoff came to Bellevue from a 30 day stay at the Homewood. He had experienced years of family conflict. Due to the conflict he chose to cut ties to all family members. He was enrolled at GYC and connected with CMHA outreach. Geoff had difficulties adjusting to life and the expectations at our Long Term Program and wanted to try living on his own. Through the help of our After Care Program he was able to secure independent living. While living independently he experienced conflict with his landlord. Our Wyndham House After Care Program was able to support Geoff through resolution meetings with the landlord and the legal clinic and an eviction was avoided. He Re-enrolled at GYC and completed a court diversion program with the assistance of Wyndham House staff. Family counselling and support services were set up so he could receive individual counselling. During this time Geoff realized he needed more supports to succeed. Geoff returned to Bellevue for a supportive and more stable living environment and was able to re-connect with his grandparents who are positive supports. They often call to check in and offer guidance.

Geoff has applied and is going through the screening process for the Ways 2 Work program: allowing him to gain work readiness and experience while earning a wage. Geoff has now completed all the credits and volunteer hours needed to graduate high school and is currently working with our Wyndham House After Care/Housing supports once again to secure independent housing that is appropriate.

When Geoff first arrived at Wyndham House 2 years ago he identified that he did not have any friends and did not know how to make them and he is now an active member of a hobby oriented community group and enjoys the connection."

*-Wyndham House Inc.: **Long Term Residential Program***

*“An anxious and upset retired couple (Tom and Barbara) contacted our **Financial Health & Literacy program** worried about the debt they had accumulated over the past year. The couple are on a fixed income and Barbara has serious health concerns. Treatment for her medical condition required the couple to travel out of town on a regular basis. Tom and Barbara explained that they ran out of money because of all the extra travel costs and consequently started to take out payday loans.*

Payday lenders have been calling regularly and have accessed their bank account despite stop payments being issued. This has left the couple short of funds for basic needs. The couple feels overwhelmed with the medical stress, creditor calls and the high cost of these payday loans.

A full financial assessment was conducted in order to assess the couple’s needs, goals and provide them with options. Strategies were provided to stop the payday lenders from accessing their funds. Community resources were provided to address the couple’s food shortage. The couple was informed of their rights and the rights and limitations of the payday lenders. The couple wanted to pay back the money they had borrowed, but in a manner they could afford. Negotiations were made to waive the interest and provide the couple with an affordable repayment plan. “

*-Family Counselling & Support Services: **Financial Health & Literacy Program***

“Client A is a single mother of three children who struggles daily to decide whether or not she wants to pay for rent, heat and hydro or put food on the table for her family. She has two sons, one is twelve years old and the other is six years old. Her daughter is three years old. As the cost of living expenses keep increasing, she is struggling each day to make ends meet. She is working but is still unable to stay on top of each payment as she is managing these payments alone. Client A has not received any financial support from her ex-husband in years and is supporting these children solely by herself.

Due to her financial struggle, Client A relies heavily on the support from the community food bank to help fill her shelves and provide her children with breakfast, lunch, dinner and school snacks. Between April 1st, 2014 and March 31st, 2015 Client A has used the food bank service more than 8 times and has been able to access over 700 lbs of food to help sustain her other household expenses. Included in this total are healthy meal choices such as fresh fruit and vegetables, milk, eggs, nutritious school snacks, frozen chicken and beef. Overall, Client A is able to reduce the cost of her grocery bill due to the extra food supplement that this service provides.

Not only does Client A receive food support but she was also able to retrieve school supplies for two of her children to make sure they had the essential items when starting school in September. They were each given a new lunch box, back pack, pencil case, pencils, markers, note books, binders etc. Furthermore, as part of the food bank program Client A was also able to partake in the “AdoptAFamily” Program where she was matched up with a sponsor who purchased gifts for her three children so they would receive presents on Christmas morning. She was also provided with a Christmas meal for her and her family. Lastly, during the winter months Client A was also able to retrieve, hats, mitts, snow pants, coats etc. for her children

from the food bank due to the generosity of our community donations. This shows that our program offers a variety of services to individuals in need and makes sure that each member of the family is receiving the appropriate support and care required!”

*-East Wellington Community Services: **Food Bank***

Your Community Needs You

East Wellington Community Services: “There is a need for a reliable and local source of basic food requirements for those in the community who are not able to afford to provide it for themselves, in addition to their other living expenses.”

Chalmers Community Services Centre: “On June 1, 2014 we changed our model to serve families, including children. The response was incredible. We continue to see more adults accessing CCSC who did not before, because they can now receive food for their whole family and not just themselves. CCSC is the only emergency food provider without means testing, serving every 2 weeks, and with a focus on good nutritional health.”

Canadian Red Cross Society: “Seniors and Adults with Physical Disabilities living on or below the poverty line are at high risk of malnutrition and are not able to access healthy, nutritionally dense, unprocessed foods due to lack of resources, inability to cook for oneself and education.”

Family Counselling & Support Services: “There is an irreducible need for financial literacy for ALL Canadians regardless of income or wealth, and a clear need for distinct literacy supports for vulnerable Canadians.”

Consider that...

- In Guelph, 16.4% of households are food insecure (limited or no access to sufficient healthy and affordable food)
- In any given month in 2014, food banks served more than 10,000 people in Guelph, Wellington and Dufferin.
- Emergency shelter use has doubled in the past four years, to 139 users/night in 2014. Families represent a growing proportion of admission, with an average of 28 families admitted to a shelter in any given month during 2014. Young adults (ages 18-34) represent 42% of shelter users.

Results of Our Support

- ✚ Centre Wellington Food Bank has served **3,660** *nutritious* meals in their Healthy **Fresh Foods Program**
- ✚ **163** adults with multiple learning disadvantages have received help with reading, writing, numeracy, and other essential skills to make fundamental improvements to their lives through the **Educational Supports for Disadvantaged Adults Program** offered by Action read Community Literacy Centre
- ✚ **Last Month's Rent Trust Fund** provided by the Welcome In Drop-In Centre helped **252** individuals to access housing by providing financial support for the last month's rent
- ✚ **7204** people have access Chalmer's Community Services Centre's **Food Pantry**
- ✚ **252** *new* clients accessed the **Financial Health & Literacy Program** offered by Family Counselling & Support Services
- ✚ The Canadian Red Cross **Meals on Wheels Program*** delivered **24,000** affordable meals to immobile seniors and other vulnerable members of the community
- ✚ **1,020** people accessed emergency shelter at **Stepping Stones Emergency Shelter** run by Welcome In Drop-In Centre
- ✚ **51,909** pounds of food were distributed at the East Wellington Community Services **Food Bank**
- ✚ The **Financial Health and Literacy Program** by Family Counselling & Support Services held **29** public education workshops
- ✚ **36,500** people received a meal, **1,020** people received support in accessing affordable housing and **1,820** people received hair care, foot care and a hot shower at the **Welcome In Drop-In Centre**

*The **Meals on Wheels** program is now operated by the Victorian Order of Nurses

The Impact Your Donation Makes

Donation	Support/Service Provided
\$25	3 lbs of ground beef, 3 litres of milk, 1½ dozen eggs and 1 lb of margarine for a family of 4 (Centre Wellington Food Bank: Healthy Fresh Foods)
\$25	One grocery card for individuals/families who have unique dietary needs (Welcome In: Drop-In Centre)
\$100	Provide a family of 4 nutritious food for 2-3 days (Chalmer's Community Services Centre: Food Pantry)
\$365	\$365 pays for 8 clients to attend a 16 hour cash register training course where they gain immediately applicable employment skills, and customer service skills required to work in a business environment (Action Read Community Literacy Centre: Education Supports for Disadvantaged Adults)
\$365	Provide a family of four a Christmas dinner with all the fixings and gifts for two children under 16 on Christmas morning (East Wellington Community Services: Food Bank)
\$500	8 clients to attend a 12 week computer basics course gaining knowledge of how to use a computer in order to be able to seek out and apply for jobs online (Action Read Community Literacy Centre: Education Supports for Disadvantaged Adults)
\$500	200 pounds of food that will support 3 seniors for one month allowing them to use their limited funds to pay for required medical prescriptions (East Wellington Community Services: Food Bank)
\$500	A full-year of bus tickets and child care for community members living in poverty to participate in PTF action committee meetings and be part of poverty elimination efforts (Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination: Poverty Task Force Programs)
\$1,000	147 clients served a hot meal (Canadian Red Cross Society: Meals on Wheels*)
\$1,000	Financial contribution to utilities, food cards, bus pass, employment start-up costs (ie steel toe boots) (Welcome In: Drop-In Centre)

*The **Meals on Wheels** program is now operated by the Victorian Order of Nurses

Strong Communities



United Way invests in programs that make our community vibrant and safe and create opportunities for individuals, families and neighbourhoods. We focus on improving access to social and health-related support services, as well as supporting community integration and engagement.

Success Stories

"I am one of the many people with the "hidden handicap" – having severe hearing loss. Since moving to Guelph & discovering the many available "tools" for people such as myself, via the prior unknown to me – [Canadian] Hearing Society in Guelph, the Society, via a Counsellor, has made a tremendous difference and improvement to my life style. Examples -- I now can tell when someone is at my door, or in the foyer coming to visit me, the phone calls, the flashing light to make one aware & enjoy viewing television once again via the devices available & more importantly installed by the area Counsellor, also devices that can be used away from one's residence. Not only that, the Counsellor has been extremely helpful in assisting with the numerous medical appointments that I have required in recent weeks that would otherwise have been extremely difficult to arrange.

I cannot forget Hellen Keller's reputed comment on being queried, as to being given a choice would she prefer blindness or deafness. Her response was to be blind. Deafness as I and many others would willingly state, excludes one greatly from all of society - without some form of assistance. Now, I am included!"

*-Canadian Hearing Society: **Hearing Care Counselling Program***

"One emergency response event occurred just outside Guelph, in Wellington County. A father, and young son and his son's girlfriend were woken up by their two dogs a little after 3 am. The flames had already consumed much of the house, and had it not been for their dogs, it may have consumed the house and its inhabitants in its entirety. By the time fire crews arrived there was nothing much beyond the charred remains, the shell of their former home. Our volunteers arrived on scene a few hours after the initial blaze, about 35 minutes after receiving our callout request from Victim's Services.

We sat with the family and their dogs in a neighbour's house about a kilometer from what was their home just hours ago, and assessed their needs, which at this point was immediate, crucial and dire. We assessed the young man and woman, and then when they left and we moved to talk to the father, we provided hotel accommodation, clothing and food to aide them for the first 72 hours. The family was given blankets to keep warm while they waited for the fire department to finish with their questions, and comfort/hygiene kits. Arrangements were made with a local hotel to provide lodging for the family over the weekend. Once the needs assessment forms were completed we were able to give the family gift cards and vouchers to allow them to buy new clothes and meals over the weekend. We handed him the large envelope containing everything, and assured him that, from this moment and for the next 3 days he and his family were taken care of and additional agencies would be in contact with him shortly to help beyond our mandated 72 hour time period. At this point the father let out an audible sigh and began to cry. It was the first relief he had received since he and his family escaped from the house earlier that day. The immensity of what had happened hadn't yet hit him, as he had been worrying about his family and their needs. Now with their immediate needs taken care of he was able to relax for a time and consider his next steps.

The immediate relief we are able to render to clients is immeasurable to their psychosocial well-being, and gives them a buffer before they need to face the realities of what has happened."

*-Canadian Red Cross Society, Guelph & Wellington Branch: **Disaster Relief***

"A young first year university student attended a party on campus where alcohol was present. Being away from home for the first time and feeling adventurous and anxious to be independent, she drank more than she was able to handle. Two male students brought her back to her dorm room and sexually assaulted her. The next morning, she woke up disoriented, in physical pain and terrified, finally piecing together what had taken place. After being taken to the hospital, the woman received some support from the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Care and Treatment unit, who referred her to the Sexual Assault Centre for ongoing counselling. It took her a full year to find the courage to make the phone call for an appointment. She was able to see an individual counsellor and began processing her experience, her feelings and the impact of the assaults. Her goal was to find a way to move forward from what she described as "a living hell". During the year between her assaults and making her first appointment with the Sexual Assault Centre, she went from being a top mark student, to dropping her course load to one course. She had made several attempts to take her life and had become estranged from her family due to her shame. After working with her SAC counsellor and attending several SAC and community groups and workshops, she was able to reconnect with her family, had started dating and had graduated from her course. On her final evaluation she expressed "had I not made the phone call to SAC, I would be dead. Thank you for believing me when I couldn't believe in myself. You made life worth living again."

*-Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis: **Sexual Assault Centre***

*“Ayana is a nurse from Ethiopia who came to Canada to ask for protection and was deemed to be a convention refugee by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC). She initially lived in Toronto and during the time she lived there, she graduated from a college program as a Personal Support Worker in order to get some equivalent of Canadian education that would allow her to obtain a job. Following a separation, she moved to Guelph with her three children and a whole new process began for her to get to know the resources in Guelph and get the connections she needed. Through settlement counselling, she received help for connecting to services available in the city and a plan was designed to help her settle which included referral to our **Mobilized, Engaged, Involved Program**. The client was assessed and referred to a volunteer position at a health care facility where she would be involved in duties related to personal support for the residents.*

Volunteering in a health-care setting presented more barriers than Ayana had thought and her English was not still strong enough to navigate the system by herself. She needed medical documents with proof of vaccinations and a TB test. The problem was she still didn't have a family doctor who could sign the required documents for her, nor the means to pay these fees privately. She needed explanations of the volunteer position, how the process works, and how to undergo the required steps to become a volunteer. With the assistance of the MEI program who worked collaboratively with the organization placing Ayana, she successfully navigated the systems required to complete the volunteer application and provide the necessary documentation. The process took a couple of months to complete, and Ayana finally began volunteering at a local health centre, interacting with elderly patients.

This represented not only using her skills, but also gaining confidence in a Canadian workplace and much needed references for possible future employment opportunities. As a result of Ayana beginning her volunteer role, she started applying for jobs as PSW. MEI staff and volunteer coordinator from the health centre were able to serve as references for Ayana when needed. A job offer came up and the new challenge came to be arranging childcare needed while she was at work on a rotating schedule that included some evenings. Again with the access to settlement, childcare subsidy came as an option and appropriate referral was made to facilitate the process. A few months later, Ayana was offered a job as a PSW and she could start on the path to practice her profession and be able to independently provide for her family.”

*-Immigrant Services of Guelph Wellington: **Mobilized, Engaged, Involved***

““When I first step into the doors of Hospice I did not know what was all involved, I simply thought I was coming because my doctor suggested getting some support as a caregiver. I thought: “What kind of support can they offer me?” After I sat in one of the offices and talked to the staff we had arranged for me to meet with a volunteer once a week and to start some wellness programs. I had never thought about massages or meditation before but it was worth a try.

The following week I had attended my first massage ever. It was simply wonderful. I slept so peacefully that night and then I realized how physically I was burnt out as well as mentally. I continued with the massage program and started to attend meditation regularly as well. I

wanted to be to take care of myself so that I could take care of my husband. It was not until my daughter said this to me that I realized that this wellness program was working "Mom, you look so much better, your energy and laughter has returned and you look rested. What are you doing?" At that point I knew that I made the right choice and reaching out for help at Hospice Wellington. I am not alone with my caregiving and this has enabled me to be more present for my husband's cancer treatments."

*-Hospice Wellington: **Wellness Program***

Your Community Needs You

Canadian National Institute of the Blind: "In comparison to their sighted peers, research shows that people who are blind or partially sighted experience: twice the risk of falls, four times the risk of serious hip fractures, three times the risk of clinical depression, earlier admission to long-term care facilities, up to five times as much difficulty with daily living, lower incomes, lower employment rates, and twice as much social dependence."

Community Torchlight Distress Centre, Wellington/Dufferin: "Individuals who are isolated, distressed, suicidal or needing support for emotional or mental health conditions need compassionate listening and response that is non-judgmental, confidential, accessible and no-cost."

East Wellington Community Services: "Outreach services are critical for reducing problems with those not connected to mainstream services or supports. The need increases as East Wellington is a rural area. Creating positive community links and developing an outreach support system provides a source of social support and interaction for individuals and families so that they can effectively manage their crisis situation while being able to remain within their local community."

March of Dimes: "Essential assistive devices contribute towards an individual and their family's health, safety, quality of life and community participation. Through the purchase of an assistive device people with disabilities have access to their communities to reduce isolation, improve their quality of life and reduce barriers to community participation."

Victorian Order of Nurses: "In Ontario, 23% of seniors report they do not have a family member or friend who they can count on for regular support ("Living Longer, Living Well" Dr. Sinha Ontario Health Strategy Report 2013). Social isolation leads to increased risk of depression and other complex health conditions. Seniors who are socially isolated do not access social and health system supports as often as people who are not isolated, putting them at extreme risk."

Results of Our Support

- ✚ **319** people access vitamins and nutrition programs in the **Support Program for People Living with HIV/AIDs**
- ✚ Volunteers of the **Distress Line Listening Service Program** answered **8,855** direct calls from community members from people of all ages and life circumstances who are experiencing challenges including distress, mental health issues, emotional health issues, addictions, relationship difficulties, self-harm, suicidal thoughts or feelings
- ✚ **817** people received **Professional Counselling** from Family Counselling & Support Services
- ✚ **235+** adults with physical disabilities and frail seniors (55+) received supplemented transportation and personal support to participate in social activities thanks to the **Community Integration Program** at Guelph Independent Living
- ✚ Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis helped **346** women who have been victims of sexual violence and assault through their **Sexual Assault Centre** and **Rural Women's Support Program**
- ✚ **44** adults who were grieving the loss of a family member received support from the **Grief & Bereavement Program** group sessions at Hospice Wellington
- ✚ **67** Individuals who have been released from custodial facilities at some point in the past received help from The John Howard Society's **Community Awareness Program** to address basic needs necessary for community re-settlement
- ✚ Patient care and **First Aid** service was provided at **240** Guelph events by St. John Ambulance- Guelph Branch
- ✚ Seniors in Long-Term Care Facilities had approx. **10,000** visits from **Therapy Dogs**
- ✚ **44** meetings were held by the **Mood Disorders Support Group** for those in the community suffering a mood disorder to receive peer support

The Impact Your Donation Makes

Donation	Service/Support Provided
\$25	One Distress Line call response and assessment to provide empathetic listening & crisis intervention (Community Torchlight Distress Centre: Distress Line Listening Service)
\$25	Supports 6 older adults to attend a gentle exercise program (Guelph Wellington Seniors Association: GWSA Services)
\$100	Art supplies for 12-24 people with mental health and/or addictions issues to participate in activities that promote healing and recovery through the arts (Canadian Mental Health Association: Spark of Brilliance)
\$100	One walk in session with a professional counsellor (Family Counselling & Support Services: Professional Counselling)
\$365	3 nights emergency lodging for a family of 4 displaced from their home (Canadian Red Cross Society: Disaster Relief)
\$365	Funding for wall-mounted grab bars, raised toilet seat, bath chair and transfer bench. This funding enables a person to live/return safely in their home after a hospital stay or when recovering from an accident (March of Dimes: Assistive Devices Program)
\$500	Enables a Social Worker to travel to rural areas to meet with clients who are often isolated to provide one-on-one counselling and support over a year. (Alzheimer Society Waterloo Wellington: Rural Outreach Services)
\$500	A month's supply of essential vitamins for seven people living with HIV (ARCH: HIV/AIDs Resources and Community Health: Support Program for People Living with HIV/AIDs)
\$1,000	Professional therapy support to those most at risk of self-harm due to surviving suicide (Hospice Wellington: Bereaved by Suicide)
\$1,000	50 hours support to new immigrants to be able to understand the lay of the land and integrate faster into our communities (Guelph Wellington Immigration Services: Mobilized, Engaged, Involved)

Results of our Support by Region

Guelph

- + **20,075** meals were served to youth in need at Abbeyfield's **Our Place Youth Supper Program**
- + **235+** frail seniors and adults with disabilities were able to participate in community activities through the **Community Integration Program**
- + **3,000** children & youth were involved in their community's recreational and support programs through the **Neighbourhood Wellbeing & Resiliency Program**
- + **166** children participated in the **Early Start Family Literacy Program**

Wellington

- + **175** individuals received supportive counselling in East Wellington Community Services **Client Services Program**
- + **550** people were trained in CPR in St. John's Ambulance **First Aid and Community Services Program**
- + **243** people accessed East Wellington Community Services **Food Bank**
- + Community Resource Centre of North Wellington provided financial guidance to **450** struggling individuals in the community and filed **499** income taxes

Dufferin

- + Volunteer Dufferin assisted **32** local agencies in finding suitable volunteers
- + **Citizens of the Headwaters Region** have benefit from multiple efforts made by Headwaters Communities in Action to strengthen community wellbeing; focusing on food systems, trails, transportation and the not-for-profit sector
- + **173** parents received support and guidance in the **Group Parent Education Program**
- + **59** children were matched to a Big Brother or Big Sister as a result of the **Match Program**

Results of Long Term Success

- ✚ **4** high school graduations (**Give Yourself Credit Program**)
- ✚ **718** people took preparedness workshops- 70% will incorporate what they learned into their lives in the upcoming year, 40% feel more empowered and prepared for an emergency (Canadian Red Cross: **Disaster Management**)
- ✚ **550** people trained in CPR (St. John's Ambulance Fergus/Elora Branch)
- ✚ **99** high school credits, **4** high school graduations and **1** college graduation (Wyndham House Inc.)
- ✚ **923** online applications resulted in a successful match for a volunteer positions (Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington)
- ✚ Over **500** people trained in **First Aid** in 2013-14 (St. John Ambulance- Fergus/Elora)
- ✚ **24** students reported becoming involved in ongoing volunteer projects as a result of their participation in the **Project Serve Program**
- ✚ **40** seniors received ongoing follow-up and support with system navigation, connecting to supports and advocacy issues until their issues were completely resolved. (GWSA)
- ✚ HCIA's efforts in transportation sector has amalgamated all transportation services in the Headwaters Region into one information source

The data reported on the previous pages was collected by our United Way agency partners from April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015. This data does not reflect unique individuals served, as clients often access a program several times as well as more than one program within an agency or between agencies.