United for COMMUNITY. IMPACT. GIVING. CHANGE. EQUITY. ACTION. BELONGING. GOOD.

United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin

United for GOOD.

2025 Year In Review



Congratulations to Rick McCombie, long time United Way supporter and Board Member, for receiving the Mayor's Award of Excellence!

Follow us on social media! @unitedwaygwd
Stay up-to-date on United Way's impact and latest news

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More Than a Funder

United Way is made of up special folx who are rooted in community care. Always ready for a conversation or check in. Always ready to respond to emergent ideas and needs. They know when to step in and when to step back.

To donors, an investment in United Way creates an incredible return on investment. Your help is integral to providing support and a safety net for so many members of our community. Without you, our community would be less caring and empathetic. Becuase of you, hope and kindness can flourish.

To our community,

Because of you, our community is stronger, more connected, and seeing firsthand that Better Is Possible.

As we reflect on the past year, we are inspired by what we have accomplished together. Your generosity, compassion, and belief in the power of community have made a remarkable difference in the lives of tens of thousands of people across Guelph, Wellington, and Dufferin.

This report shares just some of the impact you helped create in 2025. From children and youth building resilience, to seniors remaining connected and independent, to families accessing nutritious food and individuals finding safe, supportive housing, your investment is helping people not only meet immediate challenges but build better futures.

You've told us that housing and homelessness is the top issue you are concerned about and we have continued to stay focused on making tangible progress in this area. Through the Home for Good Campaign, our work continues to create pathways out of chronic homelessness. Because of donors like you, people who once faced uncertainty now have a safe place to call home and the support they need to thrive. As one resident shared,"Housing didn't just give me a place to live. It gave me back my voice, my confidence, and my future."

Additionally, funded partners in the Poverty to Possibility focus area continue to find success in diverting youth and adults from homelessness and provide the supports needed to stabilize during times of uncertainty. As one youth said "Transitional housing gave me hope, and opportunities like job training programs transformed my life."

What makes United Way unique is that your gift does more than fund programs. It brings people and organizations together, strengthens local solutions, supports innovation, and creates lasting change on some of our community's most complex challenges. Your support fuels a network of dedicated community partners working every day to ensure everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

We know there are many worthy causes you could choose to support, and we are deeply grateful that you have chosen to invest in our community through United Way. Every donation, every volunteer hour, and every act of advocacy and encouragement contributes to a stronger and more resilient community for all.

As you read this report, we hope you feel proud of the difference you are making. The stories and results you will see belong to all of us, but most importantly, they belong to you. Thank you for standing with us, believing in our community, and helping us create opportunities for everyone to thrive.

Together, we are United for Good.



Glenna Banda,
Executive Director



Mike Greer
President, Board of Directors

United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin

Vision, Mission & Values

Our Vision

United Way builds community that shares responsibility for social good.

Our Mission

Our mission is to bring people and resources together to meet existing and emerging social needs, in order to improve lives and build strong, healthy communities for all.

Our Values

SOCIAL JUSTICE

We believe that everyone deserves equal rights and opportunities and work to dismantle systems of oppression that marginalize individuals and communities.

COMPASSION

We bring humanity to our work by actively listening and respecting all voices. We respond to others with understanding, patience and kindness.

ADAPTABILITY

We continue to learn, listen and respond quickly to our community's changing needs and shift approaches when needed.

INTEGRITY

We build trust by being transparent, accountable and live our values even when it's uncomfortable or difficult.

COMMUNITY-CENTRED

We put community first. We focus on collaboration and ensure our work is guided by local voices, needs and assets.

COURAGE

We are bold, open-minded and innovative leaders in making lasting positive change.

Our Team

We are incredibly grateful to our team of volunteers and staff for their passion and dedication to our community. Thanks to all for their support during 2025!

Women United

Sonia Varkey, Co-Chair
Jennifer Maddock, Co-Chair
Dana MacDonald
Mandy Keller
Sue Keuhl
Caroline Duiversart-Dery
Carrie Gale
Ifrah Ali
Cathy Okrafka
Sonia Varkey
Lisa Boudreau
Sierra Rogers

GenNext Committee

Kaitlyn Edwards, Co-Chair
Samantha Casey, Co-Chair
Kaitlynn Cleghorn
Lahn Robbins
Kayla Gordon
Emma Biffi
Carlos Lopez Argueta
Georgia Lavarini
Brandon Leonard
Kendra Fitzgerald

Leadership Committee

Rich Moccia, Co-Chair
Catherine Carstairs, Co-Chair
John Duffy
Tom Manes

Golf United Committee

Tanya Hanrahan
Robyn Gladstone
Chris Hynes
Jordan Hinchey

Community Members on Board Committees

Governance:
Irene Thompson
Janet MacInnes
Human Resources:
Bailey Baker
Finance, Audit & Risk:
Dieudonne Harahagazwe

Sponsored Employees & Summer Students

Chris Logal, OMAFA
Mia Morganti, University of Guelph
Quiana Fernandes & Amy Yan, Canada Summer Jobs

Staff

Glenna Banda, Executive Director
Grace Manarang
Jennifer Fraser
Holly Freeman
Colin McCusker
Emily McDonald
Colleen Murdoch
Jillian Tausky
Deborah Lobbezoo





2025 Board of Directors

Making real and lasting change requires the contributions, expertise, and commitment of everyone in our community – including our Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has a governance mandate and is responsible for ensuring United Way's mission and strategic plan are achieved. We are grateful to the following volunteers who are currently serving terms on our Board:



Mike Greer
President



Patricia Tersigni
Vice-President



Kola Ipaye
Treasurer



Randa MacNaughton
Past-President



Maala Kelangath
Director



Robyn Gladstone
Director



Tanya Hanrahan
Director



Kandice Silva
Director



Shannon O'Neill
Director



David Hennick
Director



Lesley Christodoulou
Director



Kayla Gordon
Director



Kasia Rusiniak
Director

2025 Campaign Cabinet

The Campaign Cabinet is a group of passionate volunteer leaders who work to inspire and mobilize support for United Way's annual campaign within their own workplace, other workplaces, and the community. We thank these generous and dedicated volunteers for their support to the 2025 Campaign!



John Kelly
Campaign Chair



Rich Moccia
Leadership Chair



Katerina Lallouet
Linamar
Manufacturing Co-Chair



Beverly-Ann Woods
The Co-operators
Business Sector Co-Chair



Kari Simpson
East Wellington Community Services,
Public Sector Co-Chair



John Walsh
University of Guelph
Education Co-Chair



Erin Mancini
University of Guelph
Education Co-Chair



Darren Sargent
University of Guelph



Mike Glazier
Wellington Catholic District School Board
Education Co-Chair



Steve Gill
Guelph Police Service
Public Service Co-Chair



Gayle Labuz
OMAFRA
Public Service Co-Chair



Julie Hutchins
Retirees Chair

2025 Operational Plan Results

We remain committed to strategic thinking, continuous improvement and a focus on sustainability. In year one of our current strategic plan, we are proud to report some key achievements:

- Successfully launched and completed the 2025 Community Impact funding process, engaging community volunteers and people with lived experience in funding decisions and recommending allocations across multiple funding streams.
- Advanced housing solutions through Home for Good partnerships, coordinating multi-sector collaboration, signing key partnership agreements, supporting new affordable housing projects, and aligning fundraising with community housing priorities.
- Strengthened collective impact leadership through our Poverty to Possibility Collective Impact Project completing a shared evaluation, supporting innovative housing-related pilots, and investing available funds to advance new collaborative opportunities.
- Hosted highly successful community engagement events, including the largest Women United event to date and strong sponsor support, raising awareness around key community issues and inspiring action.
- Developed a new Strategic Communications Plan, informed by community focus groups, donor feedback, agency input, and key informant interviews, creating a roadmap for stronger brand awareness and community engagement.
- Advanced Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) efforts, achieving a 73% EDI assessment score, developing a three-year EDI roadmap, and embedding EDI responsibilities into organizational policies, governance, and staff practices.
- Strengthened organizational sustainability and governance, including completing office space planning resulting in the decision to sell the current building, implementing a compensation strategy, developing a workforce plan, and introducing a balanced scorecard for organizational performance monitoring.



The 1st annual Finding Abundance Symposium was held in June, hosted by the Guelph-Wellington Funders' Network. The symposium brought together over 70 local non-profit organizations for a free day of learning and networking.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

United Way is rooted in building strong and inclusive communities. We strive to create opportunities for everyone to reach their full potential. However, many of the issues United Way works to address have a disproportionate impact on black, Indigenous, racialized, 2SLGBTQ2+, people with disabilities and other marginalized communities. We acknowledge that due to systemic factors, some members of our community experience barriers to accessing programs/ services and funding to support those programs. Along with providing funding through our EDI focus area, organizationally we are taking action. Below is a highlight of some of the ways we did that in 2025.

Organizational Culture & Practices

- Developed an EDI roadmap rooted in the experience of the staff, board and volunteers with an aim to continually work to improve how our organizational culture embodies EDI.
- Updated staff job descriptions and committee terms of reference to clarify responsibilities and ensure commitment to EDI is central to their work.
- Updated performance review process to include more formalized development and mentorship plans.

Community Mobilization and Engagement

- We compensate participants fairly, where appropriate and desired, in our community engagement efforts.
- Regularly use equitable convening practices such as providing food, ensuring accessibility of physical space, providing multiple ways to participate and offering no-low cost event registration.

Local Capacity Building

- Provide networking, professional development and opportunities for growth for women – including cis, trans, non-binary, intersex through Women United events and communications.

Policy & Advocacy

- Participated in joint advocacy letters to the Premier to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic and a pre-budget submission on the Ontario budget with a focus on recommendations on our Bringing Affordable Housing Home

Communication and Awareness Building

- Carefully vet our marketing materials to ensure we are not inadvertently perpetuating stereotypes or negative images of communities, groups or individuals.

Caring Organizations

This group of extraordinary organizations are leading the way when it comes to giving. Through a partnership with United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin, which includes employee donations, company fundraising events, and/or corporate contributions, this dedicated group are demonstrating their commitment to creating a strong and thriving Guelph, Wellington, Dufferin. Thank you to all for their generosity to the 2025 Campaign and/or Home For Good Campaign.

$500,000 +

Linamar Corporation
University of Guelph

$100,000 +

Co-operators

$50,000 – $99,999

Province of Ontario Employees
Wellington County Employees
Sleeman Breweries Ltd.

$20,000 – $49,999

Cargill Limited
City of Guelph
Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign
RBC Royal Bank
TD Canada Trust
Upper Grand District School Board
Wellington Catholic District School Board

$10,000 – $19,999

Bank of Montreal
CIBC
Costco Wholesale Canada Ltd.
Hammond Power Solutions
Oregon Tool Canada Ltd.
Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc.
Triumph Tool Ltd.

$5,000 – $ 9,999

Elinesky Schuett Private Wealth
General Electric Canada Inc.
IG Wealth Management
Intact Insurance
Keyence Canada Inc.
Manulife Financial
McKenzie Lake Lawyers LLP
O. Durigon Memorial Bocce Tournament
Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corporation
RLB LLP
Saputo Dairy Products Canada
Scotiabank
Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada
United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin Employees

$1,000 – $4,999

ABB Robotics Canada
Acerta Analytics Solutions Inc
Action Read Community Literacy Centre
Advanced Motion & Controls Ltd.
Alectra Utilities
Apera AI
Automation Elements
Avient Canada ULC
Banner Engineering
Bar Mason
Bell Canada
Canada Life
Centre Wellington Hydro
Ceramic Decor Centre
Conestoga College
CPS-Control Panel Systems Ontario Ltd.
Cultured HR Brandy Douglas
DBL CRS Sim Lounge
Delta Hotel and Conference Centre
Desjardins Insurance - Joe Migliaccio
Doane Grant Thornton Foundation
Dufferin Child & Family Services
Elora Distilling Co.
Employment & Social Services

$1,000 – $4,999 cont'd

Enbridge
Esri Canada Limited
Euchner
Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County
Fanuc Canada Ltd.
Ferro Technique
Festo
Fronius Canada Ltd.
Fusion Hair Studios Ltd.
GEI Consultants LTD
GM BluePlan Engineering Limited
GSW/A.O. Smith Water Heating Company
Guelph Community Health Centre
Guelph General Hospital
Guelph Storm Ltd.
Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis
HARTING Inc. of North America
Homestead Land Holdings Limited
Homewood Health Centre
HTM Sensors
ICR Canada
IFM Efector Canada Inc.
Inductoheat
Interfaced Technologies Inc.
J.D. Barnes Limited
Javelin Oakville (Trimech)
Karcher Canada
Kenneth Winfield Dick Family Foundation
Kistler Instrument Corp.
Kosmek
Kuka Robotics Canada Lid.
LCBO
March of Dimes - Drayton
McCabe's Irish Pub & Grill
Medtronic of Canada Ltd.
Meridian Credit Union - Master
Montana's Cookhouse
Murrelektronik Inc.
National Compressed Air
Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions
Ontario Provincial Police
Pilz Automation Safety Canada
Proax Technologies
Province Electric Supply
Radwell International Canada
Royal City Tennis Club
Royal LePage Realty
Sage Solutions - Rebecca Sutherns
Schunk
Shakespeare Arms
SIC Marquage Industriel Canada Inc.
Skyline Group of Companies
SMC Automation Canada Ltd.
SORT Production Products
Tatsoft
TC Industries of Canada Company
The Ontario Trillium Foundation
Thurber Engineering
Transalta
Triple Automation
UE Enclosures
United Parcel Service
Valcom Limited
Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health
Western Hotel
Xpert3D Metrology
ZCS AKIA Engineers
Zimmer Group Canada Inc.





United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin

211®

Help starts here.

I need

I need **housing support**

I need **mental health support**

I need **a food bank**

I need **financial assistance**

The 211 telephone helpline and website provide a gateway to community, social, non-clinical health, and related government services and helps to navigate the complex network of human services in our community quickly and easily, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For assistance finding housing, language training, employment, and so much more – call 2-1-1. It's free, offered in over 100 languages, and available day or night.

Call 2-1-1 **Email 2-1-1** **Visit 211ontario.ca**

2025 Financial Overview

You can feel confident when you support us that your contributions will be used wisely. Every dollar you give to United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin makes an impact locally and our communities are measurably stronger because of the work we do together.

Below is an overview of 2025 from a financial perspective. Our full audited statements are available online.

Sale of 85 Westmount Rd.

After careful consideration, our Board of Directors made the decision in 2025 to sell our property at 85 Westmount Rd. The office space was no longer a match for our operations and values. The building was not accessible and was being underutilized due to our hybrid work model. Additionally, we would rather our donor dollars go to purposes focused on community impact than maintaining a building. The sale of 85 Westmount presents a significant opportunity to positively impact the Guelph community. The $1.5M in revenue from the sale of the building will be recognized in 2026.

Year-End Financial Position & Financial Health

Using a multi-year lens for financial decision making and considering the sale of the building, the Board of Directors strategically approved maintaining an $1.46M+ allocations budget despite the resulting operational deficit. We remain in a strong financial health position and continue to be in line with our goal to maintain a minimum of 3-6 months of operations & allocations in reserve for emergency purposes.

Community Impact

We were proud to invest $1,465,803 in external allocations, including annual allocations, Home for Good and one-time project investments. In addition to that, $659,693 was invested in our direct community roles including the delivery of the Poverty Elimination Collaborative, the Guelph Wellington Volunteer Portal and our work as a convener delivering critical community support monitoring and taking action on community needs.

At the centre of our spending is our core mission support ($656,787). These operating and fundraising costs make all our other impact possible. We diligently work to keep our costs down through volunteer support, sponsored employees and in-kind donations. In 2025, we have done what we can internally to reduce our operating expenses, including reducing our staff team, and will continue to responsibly manage other budget lines while still investing in areas that are strategically important for sustainability.





WOMEN UNITED™

Women United is a powerful reminder of what is possible when we come together with a shared purpose. Through the stories we hear and the experiences we witness, we see both the challenges women and girls in our community face and the incredible opportunities that exist to create meaningful change. By bringing our time, talents and resources together, we can help break down barriers, amplify voices and create pathways for women and girls to thrive. It's a privilege to be part of a community that is committed to turning connection into action and opportunity into impact.

- Dana MacDonald,
Women United Co-Chair



Ignite!

UNITED IN CONVERSATION

156

event attendees

gave their time and resources to transform the lives of women and girls in Guelph, Wellington and Dufferin



"I loved hearing from women about how women can make their unique impact in the community. Be kind, have grace, listen to others' stories and most importantly, using social connections to form a caring community. I was inspired!"

United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin

United for GOOD.

OUR IMPACT

#BetterIsPossible

Community Investment & Impact Strategy

At United Way, we believe better is possible. Our purpose is creating lasting positive change. We are uniquely able to focus and unite people and resources to improve lives and build community.

Our innovative Community Impact Strategy focuses on solutions and supports to address current community challenges and build trust and collaboration with community partners, with the goal of solving local problems with local solutions and empowering those closest to the issues.

In our role as a funder, we provide funds to community organizations using a trust-based philanthropic model and work to foster trust-based relationships throughout the granting period with our partners. However, our role is much bigger than a transactional funder. We support all community partners through network building, convening, knowledge sharing, amplification and capacity building.

We put people at the centre of our work – building awareness and engagement, prioritizing learning and listening in order to reduce stigma and mobilize change. Through our role as a community convenor, we are committed to working alongside our community partners in new and different ways to ensure more collaborative processes, increase efficiencies, and ensure large-scale systems change.

We are committed to supporting marginalized groups and building communities where everyone feels like they belong and are valued for their unique differences.

Community Impact is about achieving meaningful, long-term improvements to quality of life in Guelph Wellington and Dufferin communities by addressing not just the symptoms of problems but also getting at the root causes.

Our strategy is centered around 5 Focus Areas:

- From Poverty to Possibility: Addressing the root causes of poverty and shifting our solutions to create systemic change, while ensuring families and individuals have the financial, social and personal assets they need to improve their quality of life
- Healthy People, Thriving Communities: Building strong, supportive, and inclusive communities that are vital for all of us to thrive.
- All That Kids Can Be: Ensuring children and youth have an opportunity to recognize their limitless potential, by giving them more tools to build emotional wellbeing and resiliency.
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion: Addressing the inequities that marginalized groups experience and using our voice to support communities where everyone feels like they belong and are valued for their unique differences.
- Rural Communities: Applying a local lens to the needs and issues of our rural communities, and recognizing there are certain challenges to finding solutions in rural areas.



Community Impact - By The Numbers

131,000
people supported

51
programs supported



3,100
volunteers

$1.87
Million
Invested in 2025

$671,000
invested in collective or networked approaches



111,000
people feel less isolated



121,000
people are more connected to our community



17,000
people had increased access to nutritious food

$205,000
investment in equity programs

FROM POVERTY TO POSSIBILITY
COLLECTIVE IMPACT



We believe that every person deserves the opportunities, access and connections they need to build a good life - regardless of their income, the neighbourhood they live in, or their social identity.

United Way's poverty reduction efforts are designed to achieve measurable results which ensure families and individuals have the financial, social, and personal assets they need to improve their quality of life.

In our role as a community convener, we have brought together community partners to develop a collective plan to support community members move from Poverty to Possibility. Our innovative strategy was formed to assist with food, supportive housing and housing supports, as well as collaborative strategies for shared systems and infrastructure, with the ultimate goals of reducing barriers, increasing access and building stability for those experiencing poverty. Through this strategy, we will change our systems and ensure that people living in low incomes have both their basic needs met and access opportunities to achieve income security.

Community members accessed fresh & low-no cost food

60,984

times in 2025.

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

$421,266

Sam moved into United Way funded permanent supportive housing after experiencing homelessness for over six years. Before moving, much of his energy went toward surviving day-to-day, leaving little time to focus on his health or wellbeing.

Having a safe and consistent place to call home created a sense of stability that Sam had not experienced in years. For the first time in a long time, he was able to sleep safely, store his belongings securely, and begin building daily routines. Sam shared that having his own home gave him a sense of dignity, pride, and hope for the future.

Once housed, Sam was fully engaged in the support available onsite. He participated in life skills development, accessed nutritious meals and health supports, and worked closely with staff to strengthen his confidence and independence. After 18 months in the program, he successfully transitioned into independent housing. His journey highlights the impact that safe, affordable housing combined with person-centered supports can have in helping individuals move from chronic homelessness to housing stability and independence.

Experiencing homelessness is only a chapter in a person's life; it does not define who they are or what their future can become. The 32 units of supportive housing that United Way helps make possible at 10 Shelldale are creating spaces for people to rebuild stability, connection, confidence, and hope for the future.





357 seniors, each month, accessed fresh food at local, accessible food markets.

98 people were supported across three Permanent Supportive Housing sites.



$1.94 million

worth of food moved through three United Way funded food programs.


SHOWING
YOUR
LOCAL
LOVE
thank you for


Partnership Award


Instagram
unitedwaygwd
WE CAN
BETTER
#betterispossible
2017 likes
unitedwaygwd I am your United Way.
#changestartshere




BECOME A U OF G
AMBASSADOR TODAY!
WE CAN
BETTER
#betterispossible


LESSONS
WITH
LOCAL
LEADERS
EXIT

Highlight: From Poverty to Possibility

At the end of 2025, United Way was able to provide each of the agencies under Poverty to Possibility with an additional $4,250, to help tackle an emerging issue or help with a project that would help make operations work better. All projects had to align with the Poverty to Possibility Theory of Change.

Through this process, we were able to make six additional projects happen, from providing an additional day/week at a food pantry, to helping to make permanent supportive housing units more accessible. A summary of all six projects is below:

- Chalmers Community Services hosted an extra temporary Saturday café during the winter months (January 1st – March 31st from 9 am-12:00pm). With other organizations reducing services, this provided an additional space to access bathrooms, snacks, breakfast, lunch and a warm space.

- Hope House used the additional funds to support the onsite neighbourhood food market, which supports registered community members living on low incomes by reducing food insecurity and freeing up limited household resources for other essential expenses.

- Kindle Communities installed two accessible door openers in tenant units at the Permanent Supportive Housing building, to support current tenants with accessibility needs, as well as future tenants.

- Wyndham House used the funds to deliver the "Foundations" program pilot, supporting 10 youth with employment through the property management services at Wyndham House. These youth developed essential job skills and employment experience while earning an income as well as contribute to the maintenance of Wyndham House's social housing programs.

- The SEED extended a contract to a youth in the Good Food Work Experience program, which is designed to create youth employment opportunities for young people facing barriers to employment. The position assisted with receiving, sorting and delivering food to 40+ service delivery partners.

- Stepping Stone purchase coffee/food cards to provide clients in return for their assistance in completing small property management type tasks around the site and neighbourhood, including yard clean up, neighbourhood clean up, snow shovelling, window washing. These opportunities help provide a sense of purpose and build a sense of community.

ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE SERVICE NETWORK



Children are born with limitless potential. Our goal is to build resilience in children and youth through emotional wellbeing because we know that helping to prevent and mitigate Adverse Childhood Experiences is both urgent and foundational to lifelong potential.

United Way provides funding to a service network of community partners who collaborate to support those who have experienced adversities. Our network aims to promote positive childhood experiences that support healthy development, positive mental health, and resilience and reduce the effects of early adversity. Members are using the network to gain information, collaborate, learn and understand, which leads to increased capacity for members to empower children and youth to thrive today, and in the future.



TOTAL INVESTMENT:

$245,462

4,129

children & youth were supported through wrap-around programs promoting protective factors.

Stephen's story is one of resilience, determination, and life-changing impact. Born with a rare health condition, Stephen's family was told he would likely not survive beyond his first month of life.

Because of his compromised immune system, Stephen was unable to attend public school and had to be homeschooled. While this has allowed him to stay heathly, it has also created social and academic challenges.

At 12, Stephen began receiving tutoring with support from United Way through the Wellington County Learning Centre. Since then, the transformation in both his education and personal growth has been remarkable. With individualized attention and consistent support, Stephen has progressed academically and has developed stronger interpersonal skills, greater independence, and increased confidence in his own abilities.

For children like Stephen, programs supported by United Way are about far more than academics. They provide meaningful opportunities for connection, belonging, and growth. These supports help children facing significant barriers discover their potential and build confidence.



27 **youth in Wellington County were supported by 17 volunteers through literacy and numeracy programs.**



164 **young victims and their caregivers were supported in navigating the complex justice process.**



330 **children and youth received brand new backpack and school supplies.**

Why a Network?

Fosters collaboration
Members have opportunity to connect, share emerging challenges, and exchange knowledge

Identifies gaps
Members can explore potential solutions when gaps in services or support are identified

Mobilizes support
Members can be quick to respond to issues, together

HEALTHY PEOPLE, THRIVING COMMUNITIES

A community is only as strong as the sum of its parts. Strong, supportive, and inclusive communities are vital for all of us to thrive. However, in many neighbourhoods across Guelph, Wellington and Dufferin, local residents are dealing with complex issues that prevent them from building a good life. When someone's mental health is compromised, it can negatively affect all aspects of their life, from education and career, to relationships and overall well-being.

United Way partners with local, front-line agencies to deliver vital programs and services that focus on belonging, inclusion, and connection to support in our communities. Together, we are ensuring our communities are great for everyone by building a sense of belonging, improving connections and overall well-being.



85,000

community members reported improved social support and reduced feelings of isolation.

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

$435,627

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

If it weren't for United Way,
we wouldn't be able to provide the essential support and resources that foster the strong sense of community that our clients experience. United Way's funding and partnership enable us to offer programs that reduce isolation, improve social connections, and empower individuals to feel welcomed and supported in our community.

39,000

daily telephone calls were made to individuals to support with independent living, strengthen social connections and improve well-being.



321

children and youth received free winter boots, jackets and snow pants, ensuring that they can play outside safely.

700

individuals accessed nursing care from a community health van, providing a source of connection for health care, peer support and belonging.



300

neighbourhood programs and events were hosted,

helping to build belongong and connection among neighbours.



Lydia, a new community member, came to Hope House looking to access our free Food Market. During her intake session with a United Way-funded outreach worker, Lydia shared that she was at risk of eviction because she was unable to pay her rent and had been experiencing health problems, but did not have a family doctor.

The outreach worker immediately connected Lydia with a local shelter, and helped her apply for a housing subsidy, preventing her eviction. Lydia's outreach worker then worked to connect her to a family doctor, where she began receiving medical treatment.

When Lydia first came to Hope House, she was experiencing food insecurity, facing the loss of her housing, and did not know where to turn. Through the support of United Way, Lydia found a safe space where she felt heard, valued and seen. She received guidance, support, and made meaningful connections that reminded her she was not alone. Your donation helps turn isolation into connection, and uncertainty into stability and resilience.

RURAL COMMUNITIES

In Wellington and Dufferin County, local residents are dealing with complex issues that prevent them from building a good life, including: a lack of transportation, access to stable internet, cost of goods, severe isolation, and a low sense of belonging.

At United Way we recognize that the needs and issues that impact the communities we support are different in rural and urban areas, and across distinct communities. Applying a local lens to funding in Wellington County and Dufferin County gives those who are closest to the issues the opportunity to tackle them in ways that they know will work for their community.



TOTAL INVESTMENT:

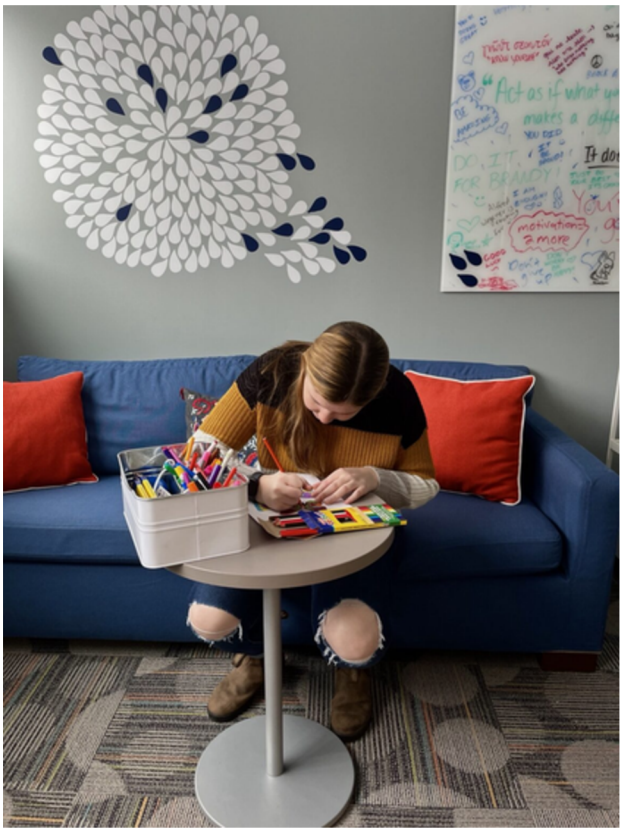
$166,750

152

children and youth in Dufferin County were matched with caring and kind mentors, helping to build confidence, connections and resilience.

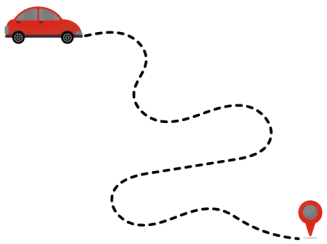
‘My family would go without meals, and my kids would feel the hunger no parent ever wants their child to experience. It’s a constant stress - stretching every dollar, making tough choices, and hoping it’s enough. Thankfully, the food bank has been there for us in those moments of uncertainty. Because of them, I can pack snacks in my children’s lunches and put a warm, nourishing meal on the table at the end of the day.’

If it weren’t for United Way, we wouldn’t be able to provide the level of support our clients truly need. Many of the individuals we work with face complex challenges, and without the support of United Way, those challenges would be even harder to overcome. Because of the support of United Way donations, families can put meals on the table, and individuals receive the support and services they need to build more stable, hopeful futures. The support of United Way plays a vital role in connecting people to the resources that empower them to move forward and to thrive.



1,800

youth accessed low-barrier mental health supports through rural Youth Wellness Hubs.



23,000

affordable and accessible rides helped rural seniors attend medical appointments and access grocery stores and pharmacies.

1,697

individuals accessed nutritious, culturally appropriate and affordable food across Wellington & Dufferin County.



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



United Way is rooted in building strong and inclusive communities. We strive to create opportunities for everyone to reach their full potential. However, many of the issues United Way works to address have a disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous, racialized, 2SLGBTQ2+, people with disabilities, and other marginalized communities. We acknowledge that, due to systemic factors, some members of our community experience barriers to accessing programs, services, and funding.

We are committed to providing opportunities and support for smaller, grassroot organizations and organizations led by marginalized communities to carry out the great work they provide to marginalized groups, while improving equity, diversity and inclusion across our community. Our impact is shaped by local partners and volunteers with lived experience.

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

$205,000

8,830

community members reported feeling an increased sense of belonging and connectedness to their community.

When Aisha first started attending our English language classes, she felt isolated, lacked confidence and had very limited English and computer skills. Simple daily tasks, like communicating with her children's teacher, were overwhelming for her.

Over time, Aisha developed basic language skills and started to build her confidence. She started to become more involved in her children's education, started helping them with their homework and began navigating community services independently.

Now, she has begun supporting other participants, encouraging them and sharing her experience. Seeing Aisha's transformation from isolation and uncertainty to confidence, independence and leadership is a powerful reminder of the impact of our work.

If it weren't for United Way, many newcomers in our community would not have access to supportive programs, resources and opportunities that help them to build confidence, gain essential skills and move from isolation to belonging.

500

newcomer women attended English language classes, strengthening their sense of belonging and community connections.



2,872

community members were supported through equity informed and arts-based mental health programs.



1,421

hours of counselling were provided to survivors of sexual assualt, supporting healing and helping to build safe futures.



170 Indigenous community members

were connected to traditional knowledge and teachings, strengthening their connection to community, cultural identity and overall wellness.

WE CAN BETTER.

United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin

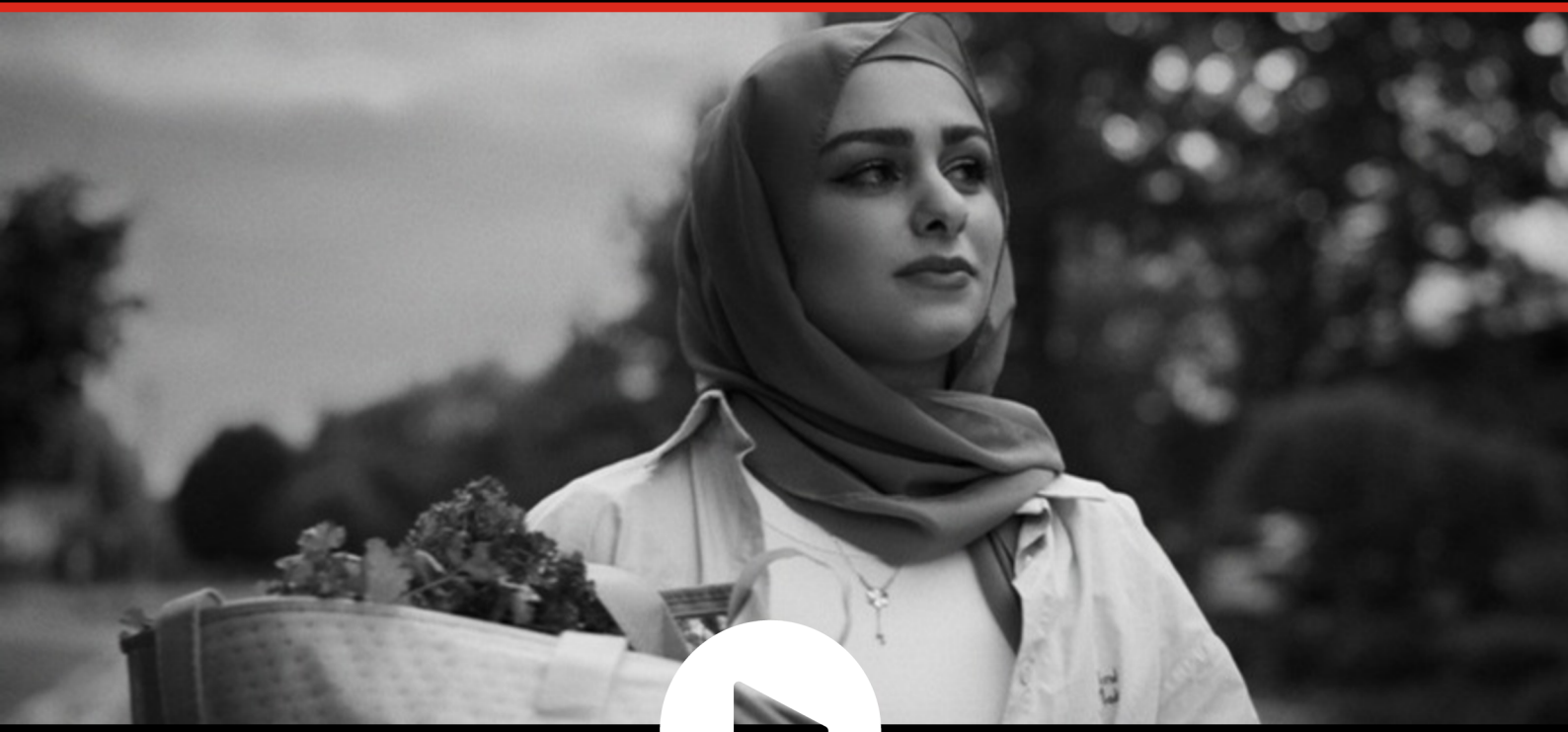
We can build a community that is rich in compassion and empathy, understanding and hope.

We can help each other live better lives – because what's better for you, is better for everyone.

Better is possible and there's no better time than now.

Donate now.
unitedwaygwd.com

#BetterIsPossible



Watch how your donations make a difference!

Together, we can solve chronic homelessness.

Together with The Guelph Community Foundation, United Way is proud to co-lead The Home for Good Campaign. Home for Good is a bold call to action to solve chronic homelessness in our community.

Currently, Home for Good is focused on raising funds for Wyndham House's Welcome 2 Waterloo project along with other essential capital costs for existing and future permanent supportive housing projects.

Located on Waterloo Avenue in Guelph, Welcome 2 Waterloo is creating 13 homes for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including 10 deeply affordable supportive housing units with 24-hour wraparound supports and three transitional independent living units. More than a housing project, Welcome 2 Waterloo represents a pathway from instability, trauma, and uncertainty to safety, dignity, and opportunity. Thoughtfully designed to meet diverse needs—including those of young parents and youth who have experienced domestic violence or human trafficking—the building will provide not only a safe place to live, but the support, community, and foundation needed for long-term success.

The results of the already opened 72 permanent supportive housing units in Guelph have been transformative. Residents who once cycled between shelters, hospitals, encampments, and emergency services now have stable homes. People who spent years focused solely on survival are reconnecting with healthcare, pursuing education, volunteering, building relationships, and contributing to their communities.

One resident of supportive housing shared, "For the first time in years, I feel safe."
Another said, "Housing didn't just give me a place to live. It gave me back my voice, my confidence, and my future."

At 10 Shelldale, 32 residents have been housed, 40% of those were previously living rough and all 32 residents have been housed stably for one year and connected to healthcare.

Thank you to our Home for Good donors who have invested in dignity, in health, and in a stronger community.



Hammond Power Solutions presented a generous donation to Home for Good outside the new Welcome 2 Waterloo permanent supportive housing location.



Meridian Credit Union has demonstrated a multi-year commitment through the Home for Good Guelph Storm game which raises awareness and funds for permanent housing solutions.

GUELPH & WELLINGTON POVERTY ELIMINATION COLLABORATIVE

The Guelph & Wellington Poverty Elimination Collaborative (PEC) brings together people with lived experience, community partners, organizations, and decision-makers to advance system and policy change to address the root causes of poverty. The PEC is committed to collaborative, upstream action that centers intersectional lived experience and advances solutions related to affordable housing, homelessness, decent work, and livable incomes.

United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin is the host agency of the PEC.

2025 Highlights

In 2025, the PEC brought people together, strengthened collective action, and advanced meaningful change. The PEC strengthened public understanding and built support for solutions, engaging more than 860 people through presentations and learning opportunities, and training more than 200 community members to build support for affordable housing through the Yes in My Backyard (YIMBY) campaign. Collective advocacy contributed to increased funding to support housing stability, advances on renoviction and rental replacement bylaws to protect existing affordable housing, and stronger support for income-based solutions. People with lived experience helped shape priorities and advocacy through the PEC's Community Voices group, training, and direct engagement with decision-makers. The PEC also launched its new name and Collaborative Change Model, reflecting its continued commitment to lasting, systemic change.



Why Poverty Elimination Work Is Important to United Way

Poverty is a complex issue that touches almost every aspect of people's lives—from food, shelter and employment, to mental and physical well-being. These issues aren't experienced in isolation, so our solutions shouldn't be either. United Way and the PEC both advocate for lasting change, which includes addressing the systemic issues that lead to poverty. The PEC is committed to collaborative upstream action that centres intersectional lived experience. Ensuring our work is aligned and in partnership amplifies our collective voice.

WE ARE A LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER
ONTARIOLIVINGWAGE.CA

United Way Guelph Wellinton Dufferin is proud to be a Living Wage Employer.

WE ARE LOCAL EXPERTS.

By investing in individual programs and by participating with local community committees - those that receive United Way funds and those that do not - we aim to address the social needs of individuals and families in our community that are vulnerable to social and systemic barriers, in order to create meaningful change. We are happy to work with our community partners on the following committees and task forces:

GUELPH WELLINGTON POVERTY ELIMINATION COLLABORATIVE - STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee is part of a collaborative change model that provides clear objectives and actionable upstream approaches to address the root causes of poverty. Our work centers intersectional lived and aligns collective efforts, to build a more just community where everyone can experience equitable outcomes, care, belonging, wellbeing and value in a vibrant community.

TOWARD COMMON GROUND - STEERING COMMITTEE (CO-CHAIR)

TCG produces, centralizes, and makes sense of data to identify shared needs—and we take collective action in response to those needs. By working together across organizations and sectors, we can amplify our individual impact and make our community a better place for everyone.

GUELPH WELLINGTON LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

This council is a large coalition of individuals representing a wide range of groups in the community. Their focus is in creating a more welcoming and inclusive community for immigrants by developing effective solutions that address economic and social issues.

GUELPH-WELLINGTON FUNDERS NETWORK

The purpose of this network is to take a birds-eye view on local issues and needs, and align them to different funding processes. This requires members to take collective action and respond to funding requests and needs in the community.

GUELPH-WELLINGTON DIGITAL EQUITY COALITION

Digital Equity Coalition members work together to guide the development and implementation of a comprehensive community plan to advance digital equity in Guelph Wellington, champion digital equity practices and inform decision-making.

CENTRE WELLINGTON COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE - FOOD ACCESS

This community of practice is dedicated to increasing food access in Centre Wellington and neighbouring municipalities through knowledge sharing, strengthened partnerships and collective action.

OAKTREE PROJECT EXPERT PANEL

Contribute advice and expertise on community needs, granting process, and granting decisions to allocate $60,000 in annual funding to community agencies.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD FUNDING ALLOCATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE (HOUSING)

Working in partnership with community organizations, we provide advice to the County of Wellington's Housing Department to support decisions on which community agencies and housing/support programs receive allocated funding.

YOUTH SERVICE PROVIDERS NETWORK (CO-CHAIR)

The Youth Service Providers Network is a committee for youth service providers in the City of Guelph and Wellington County to provide opportunities for networking, collaboration, knowledge exchange, and skill and capacity building among youth service providers working in GW.

HOME FOR GOOD PROJECT PARTNERS (CHAIR)

The Home for Good Project Partners come together to discuss the Home For Good Campaign as well as collaborative conversations about the development and implementation of permanent supportive housing in our communities. Participants include Kindle, Wyndham House, Stepping Stone, the PEC, City of Guelph & County of Wellington.

2025-2026 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

All That Kids Can Be

Action Read Community Literacy Centre
- Early Start Family Literacy Program

Art Not Shame
- Youth Programming

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Guelph
- 1:1 Community Based Match Program
- In-School Mentoring Program
- School-Based Group Programs

Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Wellington
- Go Girls/Game On Mentoring Groups
- In-School Mentoring
- Match Program

Child Witness Centre
- Child Witness Program

Community Resource Centre of North & Centre Wellington
- Outreach & Support Services

Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition
- ACEs Network Coordination

John Howard Society of Waterloo-Wellington
- Bullying Prevention & Social Competency Skills Development Programs

Shelldale Family Gateway
- Social Inclusion, Mentorship & Leadership

Wellington County Learning Centre
- Just for YOUth Program

Wyndham House
- New Way Classroom

Rural Communities

Alzheimer Society Waterloo Wellington
- Outreach Program

Big Brothers Big Sisters Dufferin & District
- Match Program
- In-School Mentoring Program

Dufferin Parent Support Network
- Group Parent Education Program

East Wellington Community Services
- Food Bank

Guelph Wellington Women In Crisis
- Rural Women's Support Program

Orangeville Food Bank
- Neighbours Market

The Grove Youth Wellness Hubs
- Rural Communities Connection Project

Victorian Order of Nurses
- Meals on Wheels (Wellington County)
- Transportation Program

From Poverty to Possibility

Chalmers Community Services
- Food Pantry

Guelph Community Health Centre
- The Seed

Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination
- Poverty Task Force

Hope House
- Senior Community Produce Markets

Kindle Communities
- Housing Support Worker

Stepping Stone
- Housing Stability Workers

Wyndham House
- Youth-Focused Supportive Housing Program

2025-2026 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Arab Women's Society of Guelph
- Empower HER

Art Not Shame
- Operating Funds

Dufferin Child & Family Services
- GLOW
- Racialized Trauma-Based Mental Health Support Program

E3 Global Community Connections
- Culture, Cuisine and Connections Workshop Series

Guelph Wellington Women In Crisis
- Sexual Assault Centre

Guelph Black Heritage Society
- BHS Community Connection

Immigrant Services Guelph Wellington
- Learning to Learn

Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC)
- Building Our Bundle, Strengthening our Community

Healthy People, Thriving Communities

Ball 4 All
- Ball 4 All Youth Development

Community Resource Centre of North & Centre Wellington
- Outreach & Support Services

Compass Community Services
- Mental Health Support Services

East Wellington Community Services
- Community Support Services/Outreach Program

Family & Children's Services of Guelph & Wellington
- Building Opportunities for Youth Success

Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition
- Community Wellbeing

Guelph Wellington Seniors Association
- Information, Support & Referral

Hope House
- Systems Navigation Support

Michael House Pregnancy Care Centre
- Counseling Program

Sanguen Health Centre Foundation
- Mobile Health & Social Care

211 Ontario
- 211 Help Line

Strategic Partnerships

Guelph Community Health Centre
- Toward Common Ground

United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin

United for GOOD.

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