

The Impact of United Way

Directing your donations to where they are needed most provides flexible funding to ensure that we can adapt quickly to meet pressing social issues.



What we do, together.

General donations, to be used where needed most, allow us to be bold and adaptable in championing a shared responsibility for social good.

Here's how:

- You can trust that we have a pulse on what is going on and are working with those closest to the issues to address needs as they arise. At times we may need to increase support for a certain area due to a surging need and unrestricted gifts allow us to do that effectively.
- United Way works at the intersection of community issues. For example, lifting people out of poverty takes more than ensuring food security – it's mental health

supports, housing, financial security and more. A general donation to United Way facilitates that collective approach that will truly strengthen our community and support those who need it on their journey to a better quality of life.

- At times we will take the lead on a community issue. Other times, we get out of the way and put our trust in others. We recognize that in many cases those closest to the issues need to be empowered to do their great work and our role is simply to enable their impact. Other times, we take the lead and convene partners from across the community who have a hand in ensuring a successful wraparound approach to a community issue.

In the same way we trust our partners, you can trust us as your local community expert.

- We need some funding to keep our lights on. We're serious about managing donor contributions wisely, and we believe you should feel confident when you give to charity. Investing wisely in the right areas allows us to reach more people and create more impact, not waste more money.

As always, we strive to make the most impact as possible with your gift. Every dollar you give to United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin stays 100% local and our communities are measurably stronger because of the work you empower us to do.

To invest in your community and see change at the local level, visit www.unitedwaygwd.com



United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin



From Poverty to Possibility

Meeting the basic needs of our community's most vulnerable and giving everyone the opportunity to realize a better future.



The challenge

Almost **24%**
of households in
Guelph Wellington
are food insecure.

7% higher
Canadian households with children
are more likely to be food insecure (19%)
compared to those with no children (12%).

1 in 6
people with disabilities in Canada
live on a low income.

40%
of newcomers to Canada
live on a low income.

10%
of Canadian households live below
the Low Income Cut-off (LICO).

~270
Roughly 270 people
in Guelph Wellington
are homeless each night.

23%
of current homeless individuals
in Guelph Wellington
identify as Indigenous.

42%
of those currently homeless were
under the age of 18 when they first
experienced homelessness.

Why we care



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. People who lack necessities like food and shelter can't get ahead in life. Those who struggle to find work or manage their finances aren't able to reach their full potential. These issues aren't experienced in isolation,

so our solutions shouldn't be either.

We believe that every person in every community 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. We are focused on addressing the root causes of poverty and

shifting our solutions to create systemic change.

When people are financially stable, they aren't worried about their next meal, how they're going to pay their rent, or whether they'll be able to afford a coat for their kids. They can focus on enjoying life, being a great parent or partner and giving back to the community.

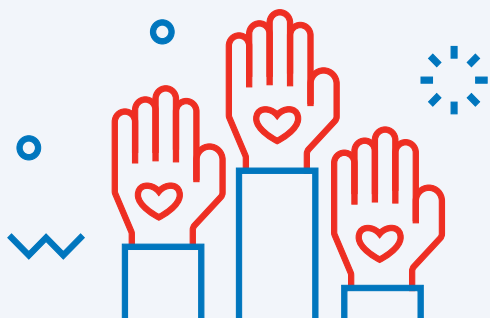
What we do, together

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.

With our commitment to impact, our role as community convener, and our involvement with other funders and planners in this area, United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin leverages our

network of partners and donors to help our communities come together to create real solutions that will work for our communities.

In 2022, we convened community partners to develop a collective plan to support community members move from Poverty to Possibility. Together with the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination, an innovative and exciting strategy was formed to assist with the direct assistance of food and household goods, 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 five-year plan, we will radically change our systems and ensure that people living on low incomes both meet their basic needs and access opportunities to achieve income security.



Together, with your investments, we're moving people from poverty to possibility.

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United Way
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Dufferin



All That Kids Can Be



Every child deserves the chance to grow up feeling safe and cared for, so they have the opportunity to thrive in adulthood.



The challenge

48%

of students report a decline in their mental health.

1 in 5

young adults can recall a time between the ages of 6 to 18 when they wanted a mentor but did not have one.

2X

Almost twice a week, a child or youth becomes a victim or witness of crime in Guelph and Wellington County.

26%

of children in Grade 3 do not meet the provincial literacy targets.

1 in 2

As many as ½ of youth self reported as having low self-esteem.

1 in 3

At least 1/3 of youth are not actively engaged in their community.

#2

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between 10 and 24 years.

1 in 7

students in Ontario report symptoms of a drug use problem.



Why we care

For some local children, growing up isn't easy. Experiences in childhood shape who we are and set the stage for who we become. Challenges can begin before a child even steps into school for the first time.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic or stressful experiences that may happen in a person's life before the age of 18, things like abuse, neglect, discrimination, living in poverty, exposure to community violence and systemic racism. ACEs are common and can affect anyone, regardless of their gender, level of education, occupation, income, neighbourhood, and culture. Experiencing ACEs in childhood can increase the risks of negative health outcomes later in life.

What we do, together

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 with intentionality, to wrap around children, youth and their families who have experienced adversities, to build protective factors, mitigate the effects of adversity, and empower children and youth to reach their full potential.

Through this unique network and by working together, partners can ensure children, youth and their families are aware of services, referred directly to programs and have increased access to a network of appropriate and impactful supports. These include:

- **Mentoring programs** to improve relationships with others and social skills
- **Literacy programs** to increase skills, self-esteem and build a sense of belonging
- **Education programs** to assist youth achieve their high school diploma
- **Leadership development programs** to build social skills, employability and create positive friendships and relationships
- **Anti-bullying programs** to build social inclusion and parental supports
- **Court support services** for victims of abuse or crime to build resiliency and reduce trauma

Together with your investments, we're investing in kids — from early childhood to young adulthood—to ensure they have everything they need to thrive today, and in the future.

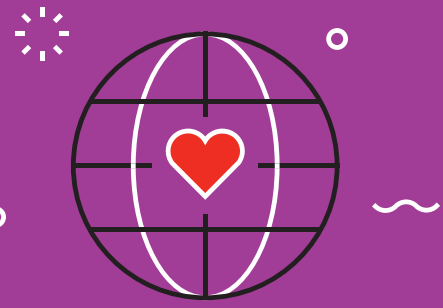
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Equity, Diversity & Inclusion



United Way is committed to supporting an inclusive & equitable community that respects and values the diversity of everyone.



The challenge

23%

of current homeless individuals in Guelph Wellington identify as Indigenous.

2/3

visible minorities and immigrants in Guelph Wellington reported experiencing discrimination in 2021.

1 in 10

Canadians have experienced thoughts or feelings of suicide in 2020, and the stats are even higher for those who identify as 2SLGBTQ+, have a disability or who are Indigenous.

At least 1/3

of newcomers feel out of place in their new surroundings.

3.9% higher

The overall poverty rate for people with disabilities in Canada is 14.4%, compared to 10.5% for able-bodied Canadians.

12%

The unemployment rate for Black people in Canada is around 12 percent, while the average for non-Black people in Canada is around seven percent.

Hate crimes

are way up across the country and locally, Guelph is in the top four metropolitan areas for hate crimes per 100,000 residents.

Why we care



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, 2SLGBTQ+, 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.

To build a thriving community we must ensure that everyone has access to the supports they need. As community builders, we must ensure

that our communities of Guelph, Wellington and Dufferin are equitable, safe and inclusive places, where everyone has access to the supports they need to live a great life, regardless of their race, sexual identity, ability or gender. We are committed to supporting communities where everyone feels like they belong and are valued for their unique differences.

What we do, together

Supporting those farthest from opportunity is an integral part of creating a strong & thriving community that prioritizes equity.

We are committed to providing opportunities and support for smaller, grassroots 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 support recognizes the need for empowering those closest to the issues and prioritizes work led by members of the community they look to serve.

Our key focus areas of All That Kids Can Be, Healthy People, Strong Communities and From Poverty to Possibility still apply, but we support the work from the lens of a marginalized community, including Black & racialized communities, Indigenous, newcomers and immigrants, women (including cis, trans, non-binary intersex), people with disabilities and 2SLGBTQ+.

United Way partners with local organizations and supports them to lead and deliver vital programs and services that include:

- **Programs to support the 2SLGBTQ+ community**, improving their mental health and creating a greater sense of belonging
- **Women in crisis** who have experienced sexual violence
- **Financial assistance with mobility devices** to ensure people with disabilities can maintain their independence, regardless of their income
- **Peer-led learning programs** for newcomers and immigrants
- **Indigenous-led programs** to support connection and healing from the ongoing impacts of colonialization.

Our impact is shaped by local partners and volunteers with lived experience.



Together, with your investments, we're creating equitable communities, where everyone feels valued and supported.

To invest in your community and see change at the local level, visit www.unitedwaygwd.com



United Way
Guelph Wellington
Dufferin





Healthy people, Thriving communities

Ensuring our communities are great for everyone by building a sense of belonging, improving connections and overall well-being.



The challenge

1 in 5

seniors report feelings of loneliness

1 in 4

people in Guelph-Wellington feel like they don't belong

1 in 5

people in Canada will experience a mental health problem or illness

59%

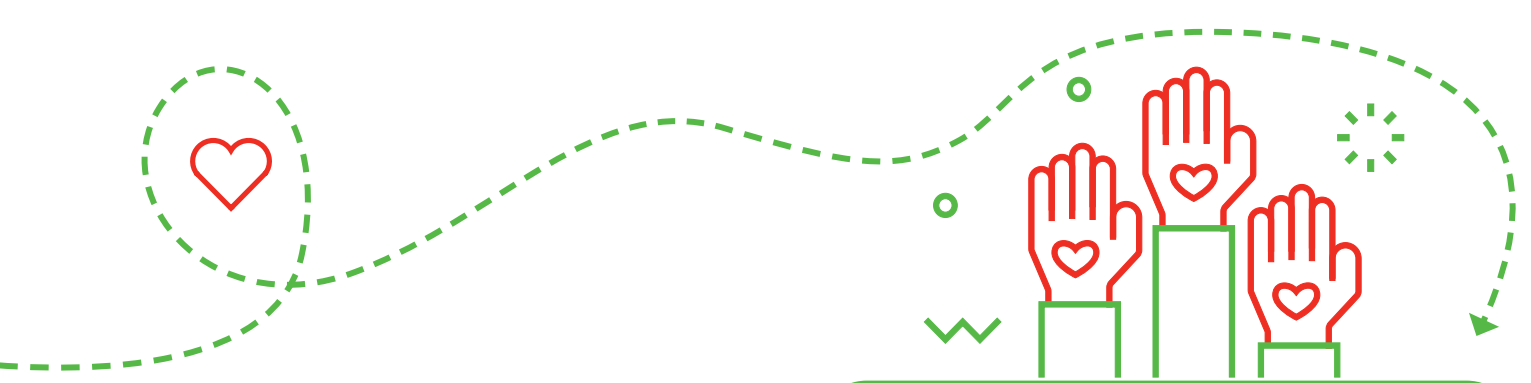
found it somewhat difficult or very difficult navigating a support system during the pandemic

75%

of seniors reported that COVID-19 had a negative impact on their health

7/10

immigrants and visible minorities reported experiencing discrimination in Guelph



Why we care

A community is only as strong as the sum of its parts, and strong, supportive, and inclusive communities are vital for all of us to thrive. But in many neighbourhoods across Guelph, Wellington & 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.
- People who are connected to others and their community tend to be happier and healthier.
- Belonging and participating are ways to get emotional support, feel valued, decrease social isolation and give back to the community.



What we do, together

United Way partners with local, front-line agencies to deliver vital programs and services that focus on belonging, inclusion and connection to supports in community.

These include:

- **walk-in counselling programs & mental health distress lines** that offer immediate emotional support and coping strategies, no matter your income level
- **day programs for seniors** to help reduce feelings of isolation and provide support to caregivers
- **system navigation support** to help those struggling find the help they need
- **resident-led, community & neighbourhood-building initiatives** to build a sense of belonging and increase connections.

Together, with your investments, we're creating healthy communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

To invest in your community and see change at the local level, visit www.unitedwaygwd.com



United Way
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Rural Communities



We're being radically local in our approach, solving local problems with local solutions and empowering those closest to the issues.



The challenge

Inferior internet access

Only half of rural households in Canada have access to the "basic" internet speed target. Limited and spotty internet connections impact access to virtual services and leads to loneliness and social isolation.

2.5x higher suicide rates

Rural youth are experiencing significant hardship and isolation. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among youth ages 12-24 in Ontario, and the suicide rates in Wellington County are 2.5 times higher than the provincial average.

8% more women and girls killed in domestic violence

A greater proportion of women and girls are killed in domestic violence incidents in non-urban regions of the country (54%) compared to urban centres (46%). Women in rural areas have increased barriers including lack of transportation, increased isolation and the increased stigma of living in a small community.

Heavier drinking

Canadians living in rural areas were more likely to report heavy drinking (22.4%) compared to those living in urban areas (18.4%).

Lack of transportation

in rural communities creates a barrier to accessing services and increases social isolation and feelings of disconnection.

More costly groceries

Groceries in rural areas can be more expensive, with less choice for those living on low income.



Why we care

In Wellington & Dufferin County, local residents are dealing with complex issues that prevent them from building a good life, and are exacerbated by things like 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 can look 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 only they know how.

What we do, together

Our key focus areas of All That Kids Can Be, Healthy People, Strong Communities and From Poverty to Possibility still apply, but we are committed to supporting how programs are delivered to overcome the additional challenges a rural area or neighbourhood can present.

Our impact looks different in each community and is shaped by local partners and local United Way volunteers.

United Way partners with local, front-line agencies to deliver vital programs and services that include:

- **Local food banks**, which provide additional services like grocery delivery to overcome transportation barriers
- **Mentoring programs for youth** to reduce isolation and improve relationships with others
- **Support programs for women** who have experienced any form of domestic and/or sexual violence or human trafficking, recognizing increased barriers of a lack of transportation, increased isolation and stigma
- **Wellness hubs for youth** that provide centralized services to support mental health and wellbeing, with accommodations for transportation
- **Transportation programs** to support seniors and adults with physical disabilities maintain their independence at home

Together, with your investments, we're responding with a hyper-local approach to ensure everyone has the supports they need to thrive.

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