



United Way
Elgin Middlesex

**Together,
more than ever.**

united in
local love



**United Way 2020 Campaign
Communications Playbook**

donate today

Table of Contents

2	2020 Campaign Frame <i>Brand stamp, tagline and call to action</i>
3	2020 Campaign Summary <i>Your elevator pitch</i>
4	2020 Campaign Case for Support <i>Our topline key messages</i>
	Supporting Messages
6	The Basics
7	COVID-19 + Campaign
8	Our Impact <i>Reporting results</i>
	The Issues <i>Statistics, additional messaging and proof points</i>
10	Poverty
13	Mental Health

2020 Campaign Frame

These key brand elements capture the essence of who we are, what we stand for and what we are trying to accomplish during this year's Campaign.

Overarching brand/theme

united in
local love
◆

united in
local love ◆

Social media hashtag

#LOCALLOVE

Tagline/Call to action

**Together,
more than ever.**
Donate today.

**Together,
more than ever.**
Donate today.

Our promise

100% LOCAL. ALWAYS.

2020 Campaign Summary

Think of this as your “elevator pitch.”

Your local love has never been more important. As we face an uncertain recovery, the unignorable issues that were here before COVID-19 hit are getting worse.

London has the third highest child poverty rate in Canada. One in five kids live in a home that struggles to pay rent and put food on the table. Add COVID-19, and we’re all feeling more vulnerable, socially isolated and fearful for the future.

We know that this crisis is going to push some people further into the margins. People already facing barriers—poverty, hunger, mental illness, and social isolation—need even more help now. That’s why United Way is working to sustain the vital social safety net that thousands of our friends and neighbours depend on.

You can help. When you show your local love, you help people, families and entire neighbourhoods. Almost 70% of the money we raise comes from the pockets of individual people in our community, just like you.

This year, our goal is to mobilize the community to fight deepening poverty and mental health issues due to the COVID-19 crisis, issues that were already unignorable before the pandemic hit.

If you’re able, please give what you can. Every donation, each hour of volunteering, every act of kindness—no matter how small—helps ensure United Way funded programs and services are there when people in our community need them most.

2020 Campaign Case for Support

These are the primary key messages you should use in written and oral communications.

United Way is 100% Local. Always. You love where you live, and we do too. That's why we tackle issues linked to poverty and social exclusion through strategic leadership, advocacy, and investments in more than 125 programs proven to get results.

United Way Elgin Middlesex is the largest investor in social services in our region, second only to government.

We sustain a vital social safety net that provides thousands of people – your friends, neighbours and family – with much-needed support, year-round.

We're here every day. During times of stability and times of crisis. Over 120,000 people in our community used a United Way funded program or service – that's nearly 1 in 5 of us.

When COVID-19 hit, our community was already facing serious problems:

- 3rd highest child poverty rate in Canada – that's 1 in 5 kids
- Increasing youth homelessness
- 1 in 5 of us live with a mental illness

Because of this crisis, these problems are getting worse:

More people need help getting by. 1,000 people per month are visiting the South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre to access their emergency food cupboard and other basic needs supports. This is 10 times the number of visitors pre-COVID.

Mental health calls are up. CMHA has seen a 43% increase in calls to The Support Line since the pandemic started, many from seniors who don't have supports in the community and call every day just to talk to someone.

Domestic violence reports have soared. Rates of gender-based violence increased by 20-30% in some parts of the country.

We're getting through this together, but there are more challenges ahead:

- People who are unemployed will need help getting back to work
- Mental health supports will be more important than ever
- Many will still need help accessing food, shelter and other essentials

Together, more than ever, you can help our region recover and become stronger. When you show your local love, you help people, families and entire neighbourhoods thrive.

Your donation gives every person in every community across our region a fair shot at their best life. Thanks to you:

- We advocate for issues that matter
- We invest in a network of more than 125 essential programs
- We get the right people to the table to create change

Your donation helps:

- Parents working part-time jobs make ends meet
- Friends who struggle with depression and anxiety access remote mental health resources
- Elderly family members receive basic needs and social supports in their home

Your donation provides basic needs like food, shelter, physical and mental wellbeing close to home. 22,624 individuals participated in United Way funded physical activity and/or healthy food access/nutrition programs in 2019.

Your donation helps vulnerable people find shelter and stay housed. 1052 individuals served by United Way funded programs accessed affordable housing and financial products and services in 2019.

Your donation helps residents maintain mental wellbeing, social connection and safety. 36,140 individuals participated in United Way funded mental health and wellness programs in 2019.

Our promise to you: United Way is committed to putting your dollars to work in the most effective way possible.

How can you help?

- **Give** – Make a one-time or payroll donation to United Way
- **Learn** – Sign up to receive our eNewsletter or book an impact speaker for your workplace
- **Get involved** – Contribute to the conversation on social media and your workplace United Way Committee

Supporting Messages

The Basics

About United Way

United Way works so that every person in every community across our region has a fair shot at their best life. As the largest non-government funder of social services in Elgin and Middlesex counties, we tackle issues linked to poverty and social exclusion through strategic leadership, advocacy and investment in programs proven to get results. Donations stay 100% local, always.

Largest local non-government funder of social services

United Way Elgin Middlesex is the largest investor in social services in our region, second only to government. In the past year, we invested in more than 125 programs and services through our Community Fund and COVID-19 response efforts.

Why United Way

United Way works so that everyone has a fair shot at their best life. Our deep local knowledge, relationships and proven expertise empower people to make a personal impact in the communities they care about. United Way ignites awareness about the issues our community is facing, inspires action to help solve them, influences systems and policies, and invests in local solutions that get results.

What's raised local, stays local

All donations to United Way stay 100% local to fund impact strategies, community-building initiatives and vital programs that create opportunity right here at home. When everyone gets a fair shot at their best life, our whole community thrives.

United Way is accountable

United Way is honest and transparent in all that we do. Full, independently audited financial information is available on our website or by visiting Canada Revenue Agency online. United Way Elgin Middlesex is fully accredited by Imagine Canada and is listed as one of Charity Intelligence's "Top 100 Rated Charities."

Supporting Messages

COVID-19 + 2020 Campaign

- Many people in our region could not, and cannot, afford to prepare for the impact COVID-19 is having on their family. As we head into an uncertain recovery, we know that people already facing barriers—things like hunger, mental illness, and social isolation—will need even more help during this time.
- COVID-19 stretched the social services sector to its limits, pushing some of our most vulnerable friends and neighbours even further into crisis. Making sure no one gets left behind is United Way's most important job. This Campaign, that job starts with supporting the vital network of frontline agencies who make up our social safety net.
- The best thing we can do in a crisis is look after each other. As you protect your family and those closest to you to keep them healthy, we urge you to think of those who need help.
- We're getting through this together. When the pandemic hit, United Way worked with frontline agencies, government partners and other non-profits to uncover the greatest needs and mobilize rapidly to achieve the greatest impact.
- United Way is there every day, during times of stability and times of crisis. As the situation evolves, we will work with our community partners to adapt.
- The stronger the sense of connection—local people working together—the more resilient the community. You can help our region recover and become stronger. That's the power of community.
- Please give generously. Your gift will help keep our community strong, connected and supported today and for years to come.
- United Way supports programs that transform lives and local communities. Giving people a fair shot at a good life will not only help our friends and neighbours cope with this current crisis but also create change for the long-term.

Our Impact

1 in 5

United Way sustains a vital social safety net that provides thousands of people—your friends, neighbours and family—with much-needed support, year-round. In fact, nearly 1 in 5 people across our region used a United Way funded program or service last year—that’s more than 120,000 of us.

Strategic leadership for long-term solutions

Our trusted voice champions solutions to end poverty and social exclusion at community and government planning tables such as the Mayor’s Social Impact and Recovery Task Force, London Homelessness Coalition, the Child and Youth Network and the St. Thomas Community Leader’s Cabinet. United Way maximizes impact by coordinating efforts with other funders like local Community Foundations. These are just a few of the ways we provide strategic leadership and advocate for our community.

London for All

London for All, our city’s roadmap to end poverty in a generation, showcases United Way’s ability to get the right partners working together and influence systems and policies. As lead agency, we convened 60 community partners and over 100 volunteers, including 38 people with lived/living experience, who worked together on implementing 112 strategies over three years.

The project wrapped up this year with more than a few successes including \$555,420 invested in mental health and addiction services, 891 new licensed child care spaces, 1,374,048 subsidized bus rides for low-income Londoners, 19 Living Wage employers, and 159,000 kg of fresh food rescued and distributed to local agencies through the London Food Coalition.

Increasing community capacity

Last year, United Way mobilized community wide collection drives that distributed over \$350,000 in urgently needed supplies to local agencies. This included 813 pairs of winter boots for school-aged kids, 3,808 backpacks so that every kid can have a Best First Day, and 30,000+ menstrual hygiene products for women living in poverty.

United Way is a Community Connector

United Way uses its deep connections to link people and organizations to get things done

- Worked with Child & Youth Network and City of London on a number of key pandemic response initiatives including diversion of Ontario Student Nutrition Program funds to neighbourhood resource centres and supporting the re opening of Community Volunteer Income Tax Clinics with physical distancing protocols
- Connected Startech.com with Thames Valley District School Board and 80 laptops were donated and provided to families who needed devices for at-home learning
- Connected Emergency preparedness staff at Middlesex London Health Unit with 211 Ontario and set up a protocol for diverting non-medical related calls from COVID-19 hotline to 211
- Worked with local faith communities to identify opportunities to support local social service organizations through volunteering and/or collection drives during the pandemic

United Way invests in proven results

- 11,956 elementary/middle/high school youth participated in United Way funded school and/or community-based out-of-school time programs and/or received individualized supports in 2018/19, an investment of \$1.87 million
- 22,624 individuals participated in United Way funded physical activity and or healthy food access/nutrition programs in 2018/19, an investment of \$390,060
- 1,152 children (0-5) enrolled in high-quality early childhood programs supported by United Way, an investment of \$57,500
- 1,052 individuals accessed affordable housing and financial products and services funded by United Way in 2018/19, an investment of \$457,315

The Issues: Poverty

Hunger, basic needs, equity, access

Statistics

- London has the 3rd highest child poverty rate in Canada
- 1 in 5 kids in our community live in a household that struggles to pay rent and put food on the table. In some neighbourhoods, it's 1 in 4.
- Children living in poverty have lower literacy scores and less access to after-school programs
- An all-time low vacancy rate of 1.7% across our region drives rent costs higher and makes it even harder to find decent, affordable housing if you're a family living in poverty.
- Affordable housing is housing, owned or rented, that is adequate for the household and does not exceed 30% of household income. Families who spend over 50% of income on rent are at risk of homelessness.

Additional Key Messages

- Poverty is a daily struggle for too many people in our community. It forces families to make impossible choices like whether to pay the rent or put food on the table. It leaves kids, seniors and vulnerable populations feeling excluded and robs them of future opportunities.
- Poverty impacts people differently. Some groups and communities are more likely to experience poverty because of deeply embedded social and structural inequities. For example, indigenous peoples, newcomers, women and LGBTQ2+ populations (among others) experience poverty at higher rates and are subject to the harmful effects of stigma and discrimination.
- Poverty touches almost every aspect of life, from food, shelter and employment to mental and physical well-being. It is a social and economic issue that impacts entire communities, including all of us who live here.
- United Way invests **millions of dollars** every year in a broad range of programs and services close to home. This includes almost half a million dollars in Neighbourhood Resource Centres, community hubs located in priority neighbourhoods that provide a safety net of basic needs for families and a springboard to community services. When kids and families succeed, our whole community prospers.
- United Way takes on local poverty by helping people and families in **four important ways**:
 - Ensuring access to a broad range of programs and services close to home
 - Bridging the opportunity gap to improve social and economic futures
 - Empowering people to join us in tackling local poverty and powering positive change
 - Connecting organizations to work together on solutions to local issues
- United Way helps meet urgent basic needs and works to ensure that fewer individuals, families and neighbourhoods are vulnerable in the first place. This includes making sure that essential building blocks such as food, transportation access, housing and recreation are there when people need them.

Proof Points

\$52

helps 5 families to secure a gardening plot, compost, water, seeds, seedlings and instructional resources to grow food for one season

\$365

ensures that a child from a low-income family gets a good start to the day by receiving a healthy breakfast everyday during March break and summer holidays

\$365

covers the cost for 3 sessions of counselling for a family

\$1200

matches a young person with a mentor for 3-4 hours a week of guidance, fun and growth

\$1200

provides a traditional indigenous-led parenting class which can bring about awareness to assist in positive family outcomes for urban indigenous families

The Issues: Mental Health

Well-being, social isolation, safety, connection

Statistics

- 1 in 5 Canadians live with a mental illness and only 1 in 5 children and youth in need of mental health support actually receive it
- 1 in 5 sexual assaults are committed against Indigenous women
- Almost 67% of domestic violence victims were women and girls
- Community disasters and pandemics aggravate stressors and vulnerabilities, including family violence, social isolation, job loss, and related housing insecurity, poverty and food insecurity—most of which have robust links to increased mental illness.
- Together, these can trigger mental distress, suicide, and drug use and compound pre-existing mental illnesses. The impacts on mental health may only show up months after a disaster has passed.
- The number of youth experiencing homelessness in our community is growing and those youth are younger than ever. Across Canada, 20% of people experiencing homelessness are between the ages of 13-25.
- 78% of workers aged 18-29 in our community are employed in precarious jobs
- \$10 spent on housing supports for chronically homeless individuals equals \$21.75 in savings related to health care, social supports, housing and involvement with the justice system.
- Young people who participate in a mentoring program are 17% more likely to be employed as adults
- \$1 invested in mentoring programs returns \$18 to society. Kids matched with an adult mentor build self-esteem, confidence and social skills.

Additional Key Messages

- Depending on where they live, many people can't access vital services and supports, particularly those who are racialized, newcomers, indigenous, LGBTQ+ or from low-income families.
- Without a stable home, it's difficult to deal with mental health issues and addictions, keep a job or go to school, raise a family or feel like you belong in your community.
- Today's young adults are deeply affected by the changing nature of work and many are struggling to connect with their communities, finish high school and find meaningful jobs.
- Vacancy rates are at an all-time low across our region and thousands of families are on the wait list for social housing. If you're living in poverty, affordable housing is near impossible to find. If you're dealing with mental health issues or addictions too, it can be equally hard to keep.
- United Way's New Beginnings Loan Fund gives small loans to support women with basic needs so that they can safely leave intimate partner abuse. Approximately \$25,000 is available annually. Other investments include counselling at Anova for sexual assault survivors, counselling for children at Women's Rural Resource Centre and Elgin St. Thomas Second Stage Housing, and counselling for men at Changing Ways
- United Way invests in programs that target the most at-risk youth in our community, so that every young person gets the opportunity to succeed. This includes vital supports for kids and their families and youth engagement programs that set young people up for lifelong success and economic security.
- We invest in drop-in centres that provide free, safe, and inclusive spaces for youth to receive life and career counselling, make social connections and learn alternatives to high-risk behaviours and activities. Youth develop a sense of purpose, learn new skills and set academic and employment goals.
- We invest in outreach, intervention and counselling to rural youth facing challenges with substance abuse, school, anger management, employment and housing. Direct support decreases the likelihood that youth will get involved with the criminal justice system and increases their capacity to be contributing members in school, home and community.

Proof Points

\$52

provides 5 individuals with access to a single-session of counselling at a walk-in clinic for effective treatment that is goal-oriented, solution focused and accessible

\$52

allows 5 community palliative care clients to make social connections at St. Joseph's Hospice

\$365

provides an annual subsidized membership at Horton St Seniors Centre for a low-income senior

\$365

helps to provide survival kits with clothing, toiletries and food for 10 youth in the community

\$1200

provides a father in the Caring Dads program with an intake/assessment and 16 group counselling sessions

\$1200

provides 10 months of counselling to one child whose family has experienced domestic violence

\$1200

provides 12 sessions of personal counselling for a person struggling with depression, anxiety, trauma or other challenges to their mental health

Sources available on request