SHOW YOUR LOCAL LOVE

ReUnited
DONATE NOW

United Way 2022 Campaign
Communications Key Messages Playbook
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2022 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.

**Brand**

SHOW YOUR LOCAL LOVE

**Tagline/Call to action**

ReUnited

DONATE NOW

**Social media hashtag**

#LocalLove
#ReUnited

**Our promise**

100% LOCAL. ALWAYS.

Explore our stories

unitedwayem.ca/ReUnited
Your “elevator pitch”

ReUnited

A community where everyone matters is a community where everyone has a fair shot at a good life - home, a living wage, food on the table, connection and belonging.

People who were living in poverty or with low income before the pandemic are having even more difficulty now. While some of us settle into a new normal, far too many are living closer to the edge.

We see it in headlines, on our streets, and in every neighbourhood in our region - the impossible choices people are forced to make every day: pay rent or buy food, phone bill or new shoes for school, skip a meal so your kids can eat.

Inflation is at its highest level in 40 years, driving the cost of food and essentials way beyond wages. Finding safe, affordable housing is almost impossible, with vacancy rates close to zero. Across our region, one in four kids live in poverty, an increase over last year.

It’s time to reunite and reimagine a community where everyone matters.

We all want the same things: a safe place to call home, food on the table, the joy of friends and family, confidence we'll have support when we need it most.

United Way tackles poverty so that everyone has a fair shot at a good life right here in Elgin Middlesex. We take on the roles of investor, advocate and connector - roles you share when you support us through your contributions, your volunteer time and your voice.

United, we can accomplish so much. Last year, your donation helped United Way sharpen our focus on reducing poverty and increasing support for people most affected by social challenges in our region.

Thanks to you, we put more funding into five key areas to address urgent needs now: housing stability, basic needs and emergency support, Indigenous-led
programs, services to end gender-based violence, and education programs for children and youth.

Your support made sure we were at the table collaborating with all three levels of government and with non-profits, the private sector and labour to develop strategies for a healthy and equitable pandemic recovery.

Your backing helped us advocate for policy solutions that address the root causes of critical social issues our community is facing now.

United Way is an active ingredient in communities across this region, and you're part of the mix.

Everyone has the potential to need help from social services, neighbors and friends.

Everyone has the potential to give help too, whether that's a donation, joining United Way to advocate for issues that matter locally or collaborating with us to make meaningful change.

Like us, you have a fierce commitment to 100% local. Every donation and every act of kindness, no matter the size, helps ensure United Way-funded programs and services are there when our community needs them most.

Reunite. Reconnect. Recover. Show your local love today and reimagine a community where everyone has a fair shot at a good life.
2022 Campaign Case for Support

Topline key messages for conversations, presentations and written communications. Visit the Toolkit link at unitedwayem.ca to download the ‘Champion Presentation’, a PowerPoint version of this Case for Support.

Reunited for a community where everyone matters

A community where everyone matters is a community where everyone has a fair shot at a good life - home, a living wage, food on the table, connection and belonging.

People in our community who were living in poverty or with low income before the pandemic are having even more difficulty now. While some of us are settling into a new normal, far too many are living closer to the edge.

We all want the same things: a safe place to call home, food on the table, the joy of friends and family, confidence we’ll have support when we need it most.

It’s time to reunite and reimagine a community where everyone matters. You can be part of the equitable recovery we all want by joining the United Way 2022 Campaign.

Here’s why we need you...

The pandemic hasn’t affected everyone equally

Since the pandemic we've seen increasing inequity in our society. The chasm between thriving and barely scraping by keeps getting wider.

We see it in headlines, on our streets, and at school - the impossible choices people in our community are forced to make every day: pay rent or buy food, phone bill or new shoes for school, skip a meal so your kids can eat.

Here in our community:

- Inflation is at its highest level in 40 years, driving the cost of food and essentials way beyond wages
- Renting safe, affordable housing is almost impossible with vacancy rates
close to zero

- Across our region, one in four kids live in poverty, an increase over last year

**Your support is helping us meet these challenges**

United, we can accomplish so much. Last year, your donation helped United Way sharpened our focus on reducing poverty and increasing support for people most affected by social challenges in our region.

Today, $6.65 million in Community Fund grants and other investments is at work in local communities.

United Way is the largest non-government funder of social services in our region. Your donation stays 100% local, always.

Let’s look a little deeper at what your donation can do…

**You help United Way invest in an equitable recovery**

Like many non-profits during the pandemic, United Way mobilized quickly to provide funding, advocate, and make connections so that frontline social services could do what they do best: meet urgent needs.

At the same time, we started transforming how we work to create a stronger social safety net by sharpening our focus on reducing poverty and increasing support for equity-deserving populations.

Thanks to you, we put more funding into key areas to address urgent needs now.

**Highlights include:**

- Over $800,000 for programs that provide basic needs and emergency support for people getting back on their feet in a lingering pandemic
- More than $315,000 for housing stability programs that provide one-to-one supports to help people experiencing complex challenges stay housed
- More than $425,000 for Indigenous-led programs that are of, by, and for Indigenous Peoples, just one way United Way is working toward reconciliation

The London Coffee House, a drop-in program run by the Canadian Mental Health
Association, is just one example. Every day, about 100 people -- double pre-pandemic numbers -- pop by to pick up a meal, have a conversation and get food, toiletries and other basic needs supplies. This program is solely funded through United Way donations like yours.

You help United Way advocate for issues that matter right here at home

United Way rallies behind policy solutions that address the root causes of critical social issues our community is facing now.

As a strong, non-partisan advocate, we work to keep important poverty and equity-related issues front-and-centre with leaders at all three levels of government:

- Like many, United Way added our voice to a long list of individuals and organizations supporting the London Muslim Mosque’s call for a National Action Summit on Islamophobia and the City of London’s Anti-Islamophobia working group recommendations. In February, we called on regional MPPs to support the Our London Family Act and oppose systemic discrimination and racism experienced by Muslim Ontarians.

- Provincially, we joined leaders across the province to propose 21 recommendations to address unignorable hurdles to a strong and vibrant Ontario, especially in the current crisis of affordability. Together, we’re focusing on four areas: Housing Security, Income Security and Inclusive Employment, Inclusive Communities, and Support for the Social Services Sector.

- Nationally, we joined United Ways across Canada to advocate for adequate funding for the social services sector. The Federal Government recently announced the Community Services Recovery Fund, a one-time, $400 million investment to help non-profits modernize in a post-pandemic world.

You help United Way connect people and organizations

Bringing community partners together is an integral part of who we are, and this collaboration muscle has never been more important as we work together to develop strategies for a healthy and equitable pandemic recovery.

United Way uses its deep connections to link people and organizations to get things done. Sometimes we bring our perspective as a funder. Other times, our role is to make meaningful connections. Always, we’re there to collaborate.
Here’s how:

- Listening and speaking up. Conversations at London Community Recovery Network and other tables like London Homelessness Coalition and the Child and Youth Network help to inform United Way’s strategies and decisions. There’s a direct link to the policy solutions we advocate for and the programs we fund.

- Collaborating in the county too. Participating in the Elgin St. Thomas Coalition to End Poverty and the St. Thomas Community Leader’s Cabinet, for example, keeps us informed about programs and services in Elgin County so we can make connections between organizations and individuals.

- Coordinating efforts. United Way works with other funders like local Community Foundations and participates in the London Funders Network to maximize impact locally.

**United Way is an active ingredient in communities across this region. And you’re part of the mix.**

Although people across our region are working toward social and economic recovery, we’re not there yet. The damage this crisis has done demands a united effort.

When you support United Way, you play a vital role in creating a recovery that harnesses the incredible power, courage and skills of the people that make our region such a vibrant, diverse and welcoming place to live.

You’ll join with us, our agencies, local partners and your neighbours to transform our community into a place where each and every person can thrive.

**Here are the most critical issues our community is facing now...**

As we move through pandemic recovery, reducing and preventing poverty, providing basic needs and emergency support, and helping people find and maintain a safe place to call home have surfaced as critical needs.

We know that systemic inequities, racism and discrimination continue to keep our friends and neighbours from the opportunities they need and deserve like stable income, an affordable place to live, nutritious food on the table, mental and physical health, and a community where each and every person is safe and
valued.

Since the beginning of this pandemic, United Way has been working with local agencies to provide funding so no one in our community is left behind.

Let’s look at these critical needs more closely...

Critical need #1: Reducing and preventing poverty

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 people feeling excluded and robs them of future opportunities.

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.

In fact...

- 1 in 4 kids in our community lives in poverty
- 55% of newcomers in our community live at or below the poverty line
- 36% of Indigenous people in our community live at or below the poverty line

That’s why United Way invests in proven results:

United Way’s investments prioritize poverty reduction and increasing support for people most affected by social challenges in our region.

This year we are investing in 52 essential programs and 7 pilot projects at 41 local agencies, as well as 211 and New Beginnings Loan Fund.

We increased funding in five key areas to address urgent needs now: housing stability, basic needs and emergency support, Indigenous-led programs, services to end gender-based violence, and education programs for children and youth.

Here’s what your donation can do...

Your donation supports poverty reduction and prevention initiatives close to home like emergency food cupboards, access to fresh, healthy local food, and social and physical activities for kids, seniors and adults.
Your donation helped 446 individuals gain access to social benefits through advocacy services funded by United Way.

**Critical need #2: Basic needs and emergency support**

We know that as we emerge from this crisis, people will continue to need emergency support and help meeting basic needs as they get back on their feet.

In fact...

- 1 in 7 households in our community don’t have enough income to maintain a diet that is nutritious, adequate and deemed culturally acceptable
- Adults living in food insecure households account for more than 1 in 3 hospitalizations due to mental health problems

**That’s why United Way invests in proven results:**

This year, United Way invested over $800,000 for programs that provide basic needs and emergency support for people getting back on their feet in a lingering pandemic.

United Way invests millions of dollars every year in a broad range of programs and services close to home. This includes over $630,000 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.

**Here’s what your donation can do…**

Your donation provides basic needs like emergency food, hygiene supplies, diapers and baby formula close to home. With your support, 24,592 people in our community accessed United Way funded basic needs programs last year and 2,703 children and youth from low-income families increased their access to healthy food.

In total, United Way funded basic needs programs distributed over 1 million meals and almost 2 million emergency food items to members of our community last year.
Critical need #3: Finding and keeping a place to call home

As costs rise, people in our community are finding it more and more difficult to find and keep a safe and affordable place to call home.

In fact…

- A vacancy rate of 1.8% across the London and Middlesex region drives rent costs higher and makes it even harder to find decent, affordable housing if you’re a family living in poverty.

- Almost 6,000 households are currently on the wait list for affordable housing in our region.

That’s why United Way invests in proven results:

Without a stable home, it’s difficult to keep a job or go to school, deal with mental health issues and addictions, raise a family or feel like you belong in your community

United Way funds programs that provide one-to-one supports to help people experiencing complex challenges stay housed.

Here’s what your donation can do…

Your donation provides individuals with ongoing support from a Housing Stability Worker who they can meet with regularly and get assistance to feel comfortable in their new environment. 21 individuals participating in a United Way funded housing stability program indicated a strong feeling of social connection with their community which is a strong indicator of maintaining their housing.

Your donation provided 59 individuals participating in United Way funded housing stability programs with safety features such as locks for doors and windows, and outside lighting to feel safe in their residence.

United Way’s promise to you:

You love where you live, and we do too. That’s why United Way tackles poverty so that everyone has a fair shot at a good life right here in Elgin Middlesex.

We take on the roles of investor, advocate and connector - roles you share when you support us through your contributions, your volunteer time and your voice.
Your donation to United Way stays 100% local to fund impact strategies, community-building initiatives and vital programs, services and projects that create opportunity right here at home.

United Way is accountable and trustworthy. We are committed to putting your dollars to work in the most effective way possible.

**When you give to United Way, you help sustain our region’s social safety net and fuel systems-level change**

If there’s one thing the pandemic has taught us, it’s how vulnerable we are. And just how strong we can be.

Everyone has the potential to need help from social services, neighbors and friends.

We all have the potential to give help too, whether that's a donation, joining United Way to advocate for issues that matter locally or collaborating with us to make meaningful change.

**We’re ready to Reunite. Reconnect. Recover. That’s why we’re asking you now to show your local love and give to the United Way Campaign.**

A successful recovery from this pandemic involves all of us. We’re in this together.

Working together as friends, colleagues, neighbours, family, our individual actions contribute to a growing voice for social justice and building a fair and equitable community where everyone matters.

If you’re able to give to our community this year, please do. Your donation last year has been pivotal in helping our community stay strong during this difficult time.

We know that the fatigue is real. People are tired of talking about the pandemic, tired of bad news and tired of all the “calls-to-action” over the last couple of years.

But we believe in our community and good people -- people like you -- who give us hope. Throughout the pandemic, we heard so many stories about people going above and beyond to support their neighbours in need.

We’re rolling up our sleeves to work alongside local people who care about their neighbours. Together, we can help ensure that everyone in our community can
get a fair shot at a good life, even in tough times.

Thank you for standing with us today

**Here's how you can help...**

**Give.** Make a payroll or one-time donation to United Way

**Learn.** Sign up to receive our newsletter and learn about our advocacy in action

**Get involved.** Volunteer, join your workplace United Way Committee and follow us on social media @unitedwayemca
Key messages About United Way Elgin Middlesex

About United Way

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

Our focus is poverty

United Way focuses on reducing poverty and increasing support for people most affected by social challenges in our region. We define the state of poverty as one in which income is too low to provide an adequate standard of living. But poverty is about more than just income, it is also about exclusion from resources, opportunities, and connections.

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 in London, St. Thomas, Strathroy and other communities across Elgin County and Middlesex County. Almost 70% of the money we raise comes from individual people in our community, just like you. When everyone gets a fair shot at their best life, our whole community thrives.

Largest local non-government funder of social services

United Way Elgin Middlesex is the largest non-government funder of social services in our region, supporting a network of 52 essential programs and 7 pilot projects at 41 local agencies. United Way also funds essential 211 services and the New Beginnings Loan Fund for women leaving dangerous or abusive situations. Last year, almost 110,000 people in our community used a United Way program or service—that’s more than 1 in 5 of us.

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.

**Rooted in Labor**

With the support of Labour partners and partnerships, United Way works to bring grassroots issues like paid sick days, living wage, safe working conditions and affordable housing to the forefront, issues that became top of mind with the COVID-19 pandemic.

**United Way is committed to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples**

As a regional organization with deep local impact, we view reconciliation as an important opportunity to honour and elevate our commitment to Indigenous Peoples living in our region. We will demonstrate our commitment to this journey by creating an Indigenous collaboration strategy that is grounded in our relationships with Indigenous communities and integrated into our strategic plan, and by committing resources to it. Learn more about our [commitment to reconciliation](#).

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion every day**

United Way condemns racism as it is unjust and wrong. As community builders, we will work harder to ensure that Elgin Middlesex becomes a truly equitable, safe and inclusive place, particularly for Indigenous and racialized people. We are taking steps to challenge our own ways of working and thinking in all areas of our organization and its work. Learn more about our [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion journey](#).

**Why United Way**

United Way works to build a community where everyone matters. 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.
Our Impact

Investor, advocate, connector

INVESTOR

1 in 5

As our region’s largest non-government funder of social services, United Way sustains a vital social safety net that provides thousands of people -- your friends, neighbours and family -- with much-needed support, year-round. More than 1 in 5 people across our region used a United Way funded program or service last year, almost 110,000 of us.

Supporting county residents too

Last year, over 4,800 people in Elgin and St Thomas used a United Way funded program or service, getting the help they needed, when and where they needed it.

Last year, nearly 1,500 Middlesex County residents used a United Way funded program or service, getting the help they needed, when and where they needed it.

Reducing and preventing poverty across the region

United Way’s investments prioritize poverty reduction and increasing support for people most affected by social challenges in our region. This year, we increased funding in five key areas to address urgent needs now: housing stability, basic needs and emergency support, Indigenous-led programs, services to end gender-based violence, and education programs for children and youth.

ADVOCATE

Advocating for issues that matter

Addressing complex social challenges requires complex strategies. Public policy work, including advocacy and government relations, is part of what United Way does every day. As a strong, non-partisan advocate, United Way works to keep important poverty and equity-related issues front-and-centre with leaders at all three levels of government.
Like many, United Way added our voice to a long list of individuals and organizations supporting the London Muslim Mosque’s call for a National Action Summit on Islamophobia and the City of London’s Anti-Islamophobia working group recommendations. In February, we called on regional MPPs to support the Our London Family Act and oppose systemic discrimination and racism experienced by Muslim Ontarians.

Provincially, United Way joined leaders from across Ontario to propose 21 recommendations to address unignorable hurdles to a strong and vibrant Ontario, especially in the current crisis of affordability. Together, we’re focusing on four issue areas: Housing Security, Income Security and Inclusive Employment, Inclusive Communities and Support for the Social Services Sector.

This spring, the Ontario government announced an agreement with the Government of Canada to implement $10 a day childcare across the province by 2026, an issue United Way and championed alongside our partners in the labour movement.

Nationally, along with our peers, we continue to advocate for adequate funding for social services, a sector that proved essential throughout the pandemic. The Federal Government recently announced the Community Services Recovery Fund, a one-time, $400 million investment to help non-profits modernize in a post-pandemic world.

CONNECTOR

Bringing community partners together is an integral part of who we are, and this collaboration muscle has never been more important as we work together to develop strategies for a healthy and equitable pandemic recovery.

Collaborating with all three levels of government, non-profits, the private sector and labour allows us to identify gaps, avoid duplication and develop innovative strategies to address complex social issues.

United Way uses its deep connections to link people and organizations to get things done. Sometimes we bring our perspective as a funder. Other times, our role is to make meaningful connections. Always, we’re there to collaborate.

Here’s how:

- Listening and speaking up. Conversations at London Community
Recovery Network and other tables like London Homelessness Coalition and the Child and Youth Network help to inform United Way’s strategies and decisions. There’s a direct link to the policy solutions we advocate for and the programs we fund.

- **Collaborating in the county too.** Participating in the Elgin St. Thomas Coalition to End Poverty and the St. Thomas Community Leader’s Cabinet, for example, keeps us informed about programs and services in Elgin County so we can make connections between organizations and individuals.

- **Coordinating efforts with other funders** like local Community Foundations and by participating in the London Funders Network to maximize impact locally.

- As a founding member of Inclusive Economy London, United Way is working with partners on initiatives like Community Benefits Agreements that combine economic development with social impact to improve community wellbeing through decent work, green initiatives and local purchasing power.

- United Way played a key role in coordinating Community Volunteer Income Tax Clinics across the region. These clinics helped over 15,000 people with low-income in Elgin Middlesex file an income tax return, ensuring access to government income benefits and support programs.

- United Way staff are involved in many activities even though direct funding is not provided. Local initiatives invite United Way to the table because they know the expertise provided will benefit the work of the collaboration. These activities are often coordinating bodies, problem solving groups, information sharing or mobilizing efforts. Usually, these efforts are focused on looking for solutions, increasing the capacity of the non-profit sector or increasing awareness of issues.
United Way Invests in Proven Results

*These aggregated indicators show United Way’s impact at a systems level*

Reducing and preventing poverty

- Your donation to United Way supports poverty reduction and prevention initiatives close to home like emergency food cupboards, access to fresh, healthy local food, and social and physical activities for kids, seniors and adults.
- Your donation helped 446 individuals gain access to social benefits through advocacy services funded by United Way.
- Your donation provides opportunities for recreation and connection. Last year, 3,076 children and youth from low-income families increased their physical activity and belonging at United Way funded programs.
- Your donation provides assistive devices for adults and seniors with a permanent disability and in financial need. Last year, 693 individuals received a variety of mobility or assistive equipment at United Way funded programs.
- Your donation helps residents maintain mental wellbeing, social connection and safety. With your support, 10,738 people increased their ability to cope and improve their situation after receiving support from a United Way funded program. 5,239 more said they were able to increase their sense of wellbeing.
- Your donation helps fund high-quality learning programs, mentoring and supports for children of all ages. Last year, 865 children and youth in Elgin Middlesex increased their literacy skills, 755 increased their numeracy skills and 730 were matched with a mentor at a United Way funded program. An additional 103 children and youth were able to graduate with their cohort.

Basic needs and emergency support

- Your donation provides basic needs like emergency food, hygiene supplies, diapers and baby formula close to home. With your support, 24,592 people in our community accessed United Way funded basic needs programs last year and 2,703 children and youth from low-income families increased their access to healthy food.
- Your donation provides basic needs like community meals, emergency food, hygiene supplies, diapers and baby formula close to home. United Way
funded basic needs programs distributed over 1 million meals and almost 2 million emergency food items to members of our community last year.

• Your donation provides assistive devices for adults and seniors with a permanent disability and in financial need. Last year, 693 individuals received a variety of mobility or assistive equipment at United Way funded programs.

• Your donation provides meal and snack programs. Last year, 7,216 children and youth from low-income families participated in United Way funded activities that promote healthy eating.

• Your donation ensured that 1,660 Good Food Boxes containing vegetables and fruit were distributed through the Neighbourhood Resource Centres in 2021.

• Your donation helped 37,963 individuals access basic needs and community meals through the Neighbourhood Food Bank Hamper Program at South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre for a total of 127,693 hampers.

Housing stability and homelessness prevention

• Your donation provides a vulnerable individual with ongoing support from a Housing Stability Support Worker who they can meet with regularly and get assistance to feel comfortable in their new environment. 21 individuals participating in a United Way funded housing stability program indicated a strong feeling of social connection with their community which is a strong indicator of maintaining their housing.

• Your donation helps vulnerable people find shelter and stay housed. Over 400 individuals and families obtained or maintained their current housing last year through United Way funded programs that help people find a safe place to live and avoid homelessness.

  • Your donation helped 174 individuals maintain their housing with supports through housing stability programs funded by United Way

  • Your donation ensured 227 individuals were able to obtain housing through United Way funded housing stability programs

  • Your donation provided 59 individuals participating in United Way funded housing stability programs with safety features such as locks for doors and windows, and outside lighting to feel safe in their residence.

  • Your donation provided over 6,700 shelter nights through United Way funded programs
$52 Proof Points

$52 supplies an individual in the London Cares Housing Stability programs with bus tickets so they can attend important community appointments and receive supports like job training, interviews, medical appointments and legal counselling.

$52 provides 21 participants with a nutritious meal at the London Coffee House

$52 provides 33 individuals experiencing mental health distress with inclusive and welcoming phone support from a trained volunteer at the CMHA- Elgin Middlesex Support Line

$52 provides a yearly membership to BGC London with access to academic support; pre-employment training and leadership development; individualized health and fitness programming, as well as other programs and events throughout the year

$52 provides one week of emergency food for a young woman participating in the housing stability and homelessness prevention program at the YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin

$52 provides one hour of legal advice with a paralegal at Pathways Employment Help Centre on landlord-tenant issues, along with guidance to file appeals with the Landlord Tenant Board

$52 provides two weeks of nutritious, subsidized meals for a senior on a low income, delivered by Meals on Wheels

$52 pays the mileage for a trained volunteer from Mennonite Community Services of Southern Ontario to take a person from their home in East Elgin to a medical specialist appointment at a London hospital
$130 provides over two weeks of emergency food for a young woman participating in the housing stability and homelessness prevention program at the YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin

$130 provides 50 participants with a nutritious meal at the London Coffee House

$130 ensures 29 participants have access to laundry detergent to wash a load of laundry each week at the London Coffee House

$130 provides the purchase of 2 cots for guests to sleep on at The INN in St. Thomas

$130 covers the cost of a home phone for three months for a participant at Unity Project to maintain connection to their community and supports

$130 provides nutritious meals at Supper Club from BGC London for two youths for one year

$130 provides a client at Daya Counselling Services with a one-hour session which can increase a person’s sense of wellbeing

$130 provides a healthy and nutritious breakfast for 43 children and youth at South London Neighborhood Resource Centre

$130 provides a refreshing snack for 230 campers and staff on a hot summer day at Stevenson Children’s Camp

$130 covers the cost for one hour of family therapy or professional consultation at Vanier Children’s Services
$365 Proof Points

$365
helps to support a participant in the housing stability program at London Cares with tenant insurance costs

$365
ensures 81 participants have access to laundry detergent to wash a load of laundry each week at the London Coffee House

$365
provides 121 healthy and nutritious meals for women at My Sister’s Place who are experiencing poverty or low income

$365
provides an individual with counselling and support to make positive changes in their life, improve wellbeing, and develop healthy coping skills through John Howard Society

$365
provides a family with one year of a monthly Emergency Food Hamper that contains fresh fruits and vegetables at the Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre

$365
provides a woman at risk of experiencing homelessness with a month of safe housing at YWCA of St. Thomas-Elgin Woman’s Residence
$1,200 Proof Points

$1,200 funds one week of at least 3 intensive case management in-home visits by a Housing Stability Worker at London Cares who can carry a caseload of up to 10 high-needs individuals, preventing costlier interventions such as emergency department visits.

$1,200 helps to support a participant at London Cares in securing furniture and kitchen supplies for their new home.

$1,200 provides basic needs like emergency food, hygiene supplies and clothing for 40 participants for one month at the London Coffee House.

$1,200 provides 35 hours of intensive case management for a young woman to gain housing stability and leave homelessness.

$1,200 matches a youth with a mentor for 10 months, including guidance and training for the mentor, oversight of the program and ongoing support to families of the youth through Big Brothers Big Sisters of London & Area.

$1,200 covers the full cost for two families to receive a comprehensive assessment for their child experiencing mental health distress and 14 weeks of supportive family counselling in Vanier Children’s Services Focused Family Therapy program.

$1,200 connects a woman who has experienced sexual violence to a supportive counsellor for four months of specialized, one-to-one counselling through Anova’s Counselling Services.
The Issue: Poverty

Reducing and preventing poverty across our region

Statistics

1 in 4 kids in our community lives in poverty

55% of newcomers in our community live at or below the poverty line

36% of Indigenous people in our community live at or below the poverty line

78% of workers aged 18-29 in our community are employed in precarious jobs

Women who leave an abusive partner and are raising children as a single parent are five times more likely to end up living in poverty than if they had stayed with their abuser. For these women, it is a choice between violence and poverty.

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 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.

Systemic inequities, racism and discrimination continue to keep our friends and neighbours from the opportunities they need and deserve like stable income, an affordable place to live, nutritious food on the table, mental and physical health,
and a community where each and every person is safe and valued.

Poverty and other social challenges impact everyone but Indigenous, racialized and other equity-seeking populations are disproportionately impacted because of deeply embedded social and structural inequities. The ongoing legacy of systemic discrimination and racism continue to influence our current system of laws, our institutions, and our culture. As a result, many people in the community are denied opportunities to reach their full potential.

United Way defines poverty as the state in which income is too low to provide an adequate standard of living. But poverty is about more than just income. It’s about exclusion from resources, opportunities, and connections too.

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
The Issue: Basic needs

*Hunger, basic needs, emergency support equity, access*

### Statistics

1 in 7 households in our community don’t have enough income to maintain a diet that is nutritious, adequate and deemed culturally acceptable

1 in 8 households in Canada are food insecure

Adults living in food insecure households account for more than 1 in 3 hospitalizations due to mental health problems

### Key messages

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, housing and recreation are there when people need them.

United Way invests in millions of dollars every year in a broad range of programs and services close to home. This includes over $630,000 in neighborhood resource centers, community hubs located in priority neighborhoods that provide a safety net of basic needs for families and a springboard to community services. Kids and family succeed, our whole community prospers.

We invest in drop-in centres across the region that provide free, safe, and inclusive spaces for youth to get a healthy meal or snack and pick up basic needs supplies, 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.

United Way’s New Beginnings Loan Fund gives loans of up to $500 to support women with emergency and basic needs so that they can safely leave violence in
the home and rebuild their life. Approximately $25,000 is available annually for women looking to start a new life free, and safe from violence. Loan repayments are returned to the Fund for the benefit of other women who need the help in the future.

Community disasters and pandemics aggravate stressors and vulnerabilities, including intimate partner violence, social isolation, job loss, and related housing insecurity, poverty and food insecurity—most of which have robust links to increased mental illness.
The Issue: Housing stability
Finding and keeping a place to call home

Statistics

A vacancy rate of 1.8% across the London and Middlesex region drives rent costs higher and makes it even harder to find decent, affordable housing if you’re a family living in poverty.viii

Almost 6,000 households are currently on the wait list for affordable housing in our region.ix

The number of youth experiencing homelessness in our community is growing and these youth are younger than ever. Across Canada, 20% of people experiencing homelessness are between the ages of 13-25.x

Over 6,000 women and children in Canada sleep in shelters on any given night because it isn’t safe at home.xi

People with serious mental health conditions are disproportionately affected by homelessness. CMHA Coffeehouse reports that 90% of visitors are experiencing mental health challengesxii

Key messages

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.

As costs rise, people in our community are finding it more and more difficult to find and keep a safe and affordable place to call home. United Way funds programs that provide one-to-one supports to help people experiencing complex challenges
stay housed.

Without a stable home, it’s difficult to keep a job or go to school, deal with mental health issues and addictions, raise a family or feel like you belong in your community.

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i StatsCan
ii StatsCan
iii StatsCan
iv StatsCan
v Middlesex London Health Unit
vi Middlesex London Health Unit and StatsCan
vii StatsCan
viii StatsCan https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en/TableMapChart/Table?TableId=2.1.31.2&GeographyId=35&GeographyTypeId=2&DisplayAs=Table&GeographyName=Ontario; City of London Housing Stability Action Plan 2019-24
ix City of London
x StatsCan
xi StatsCan
xii CMHA London Coffee House