



United Way
Elgin Middlesex

COMMUNITY IMPACT AGENDA



Introduction

United Way Elgin Middlesex creates real, lasting change to improve the quality of life in our communities. United Way identifies and understands the root causes of social issues; brings together research, experts and resources; initiates and invests in effective programs and services; and builds capacity in the non-profit sector.

We believe the root of all action for change is the ability to see and feel ourselves in the situations of others. We believe all people and all communities have the potential to overcome challenges. We treat people with dignity, fairness and equality. We make decisions based on the needs and expectations of our community and we believe it is imperative to measure and communicate our impact.

Our community impact strategy is guided by our organization's vision, mission, values, and input from our community. This strategy builds on previous community impact strategies including United Way Centraide Canada National Focus Area Frameworks.

Impact measurement continues to be a priority for United Way Elgin Middlesex. An evaluation framework, which includes clear and measureable outcomes and indicators for each impact priority will be implemented to ensure the measurement of progress.

Our vision

A community where everyone matters

All people are important and deserve a good quality of life. All people have the potential to need help and the potential to help. 'Success' and 'quality of life' mean different things to different people but we're driven by the ultimate goal to have our community made up of people enjoying a good life and helping others to achieve the same.

Our mission

To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action

The most important thing United Way can do for our community is to use our reputation, relationships and expertise to bring together our community's resources of people, time, talent, relationships, expertise, technology, money and more. By channeling our community's power behind solid strategies we can achieve lasting changes in the social conditions of individuals, families and our community.

Our core values

Empathy

We believe the root of all action for change is the ability to see and feel ourselves in the situations of others. We believe all people and all communities have the potential to overcome challenge. We treat people with dignity, fairness and equality. We understand and live the correlation between improving the life of one to improve the lives of all.

Inclusiveness

We believe in 'us and us', not 'us and them'. All people, groups and sectors are equal and deserving of the same respect and opportunities. We seek out and value diverse ideas, opinions and experiences. Our most effective, creative and innovative solutions come about when we join with others.

Shared leadership

We believe the work of change is a shared responsibility. We are a catalyst. We engage and empower all sectors of our community to come together to share their experiences, expertise and energy. The power of partnerships and collaborations multiplies our impact and leads us to find progressive and lasting solutions.

Integrity

We change lives. Therefore, we believe we must hold ourselves to the highest of standards. We embrace the responsibility that our donors, volunteers and partners have entrusted to us and we are accountable to them. We are honest and transparent in all that we do. We make decisions based on the needs and expectations of our community and we believe it is imperative to measure and communicate our impact.

Our funding model

Community Fund Grants	Donor Guided Grants	Responsive Grants
<p>Unrestricted funds raised through our annual Campaign are pooled into our Community Fund and then distributed as grants to local nonprofit organizations tackling poverty in our region. Funding decisions are made through a rigorous process led by skilled volunteers representative of our community.</p> <p>Our Community Fund Priorities: Essential Needs, Housing Stability, Mental Health Supports, Inclusion & Belonging, and Gender-Based Violence.</p>	<p>Restricted grants guided by donor intention. These grants come via our Donor Choice program offered through our annual Campaign, and through major and transformational gifts internally designated to an aligned priority area of a specific United Way-led project.</p> <p>Example: New Beginnings Loan Fund Private Foundation Partnerships Regional Strategies – Aylmer & Strathroy</p>	<p>Specialized and time-sensitive funding opportunities, often in partnership with governments or other organizations. The funding criteria are often set externally, and UWEM administer the funding locally to get help where it's most needed.</p> <p>Example: <i>School Food Infrastructure Fund (SFIF)</i> <i>Community Services Recovery Fund (CSRF)</i> <i>Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)</i> <i>Local Love in a Global Crisis</i> <i>United for Refugees</i></p> <p><i>*Urgent Issues</i></p>

Our community impact strategies

Together with our partners, United Way Elgin Middlesex is committed to social change in our community by leading activities and initiatives that employ the following strategies:

Inspire

Inspire awareness, understanding, and contributions of dollars, influence, time, and knowledge to drive social change in our community through:

- Storytelling
- Evaluation
- Engaging individuals, donors, partners, and organizations

Influence

Influence systems and policies through advocacy and by strengthening relationships with:

- Governments
- Corporate partners
- Community organizations
- Community networks

Invest

Invest resources, including dollars, time and knowledge, in programs, services and bringing community together to:

- Strengthen social service networks
- Increase community resiliency

Innovate

Innovate by responding in timely and effective ways to community-identified emerging needs and building partnerships that:

- Develop new programs and services
- Mobilize resources effectively
- Address urgent social challenges

Our community impact priorities

United Way Elgin Middlesex focuses on five impact areas that create opportunities for everyone in our communities to live a better life:

WE TACKLE POVERTY SO THAT EVERYONE IN OUR REGION HAS A FAIR SHOT AT A GOOD LIFE

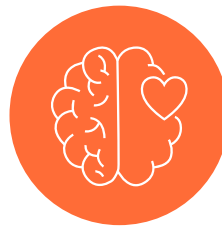
Through an equity lens, we work to address the root causes of poverty by removing barriers that prevent individuals and families from thriving.



**Essential
Needs**



**Housing
Stability**



**Mental Health
Supports**



**Inclusion
& Belonging**



**Gender-Based
Violence**

Our community impact priorities

Our impact priorities focus on the essential, stabilizing factors in a person's life.



Essential Needs

Provide access to essential needs, including food, health supports, and other basic services, to ensure individuals and families can live with dignity and stability. This includes emergency provisions and critical services for those facing urgent needs.



Housing Stability

Provide access to safe, permanent housing for individuals at risk of homelessness through supportive programs that help them obtain and maintain housing stability. This includes, but is not limited to, affordable housing supports, housing search assistance, and ongoing supports to ensure housing stability.



Mental Health Supports

Provide access to timely community-based supports that reduce stigma and provide sustainable mental health services for individuals, families, and caregivers. This includes, but is not limited to, subsidized counselling, community-based resources, and peer support programs.



Inclusion & Belonging

Provide access to programs that reduce social isolation, promote mentorship and foster opportunities for peer support among populations facing systemic barriers to inclusion.



Gender-Based Violence

Provide trauma-informed supports and services that help individuals affected by gender-based violence find safety, healing, and stability. Focus on both immediate support and long-term recovery through accessible, inclusive, and empowering community programs. This includes but is not limited to, subsidized counselling, community-based resources, and peer support programs.