

“

It's about having the right support in place at the right time so people can move forward.”



United Way
Elgin Middlesex

2025-26 Impact Report

BETTER  POSSIBLE

Finding home

Everything changed for Lynda when she connected with a housing stability program. What started with access to safe housing quickly became something more. A foundation for healing, growth, and hope. Through the program, Lynda was connected to counselling, employment support, wellness resources, and a caring community that helped her feel supported every step of the way.

“Everything is moving in the right direction now... I owe it to these guys.”

After losing her husband, Lynda returned to St. Thomas hoping to be closer to her children and grandchildren and start over. Instead, she found herself without a place to call home, moving between shelters and couch surfing. She felt like she was “at ground zero” and had lost everything.

Lynda’s life feels far more stable now. She found a home. She secured employment. For Lynda, it was important to commit to “being in the community and helping out.” As a volunteer, she’s proud to be giving back to the program that helped support her through such a challenging time.

Having stable housing allowed her to rebuild her confidence and plan ahead. “I do have a place I can call home, and it’s given me hope for the future.”

“ You need to be able to start building your life back again, especially when you’ve lost everything that you had before. Now, I do have a place I can call home, and it’s given me hope for the future.”



Lynda, participant at a United Way funded Supportive Housing Program



“

Stable housing allows people to start working on the other areas in their life that they haven't been able to.”

Christina Wilson, a Community Stability Housing Worker at YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin

Housing Stability

- Last year, United Way funded programs that helped **807 people** on the journey to safe, stable housing
- **17,016 shelter nights** were provided for people who have not yet been able to move into stable housing
- **210 people** moved into stable housing, and **344 more** received support to maintain it

Staying connected and valued

Last year, we funded 16 programs that create welcoming spaces and improve access to opportunities for **6,300 people** – especially for those who face systemic inequities: like seniors, newcomers, and people with disabilities.

Inclusion & Belonging

- **3,097+ youth** participated in activities to promote healthy living and physical activity
- **1,669+ people** built social connections and learned about local services
- **753 interpretation sessions** helped newcomers access services and connect with the community

“

I never got to see them having fun with other children, or included in activities with such care.”

Grandmother of children attending the Kids' Breakfast Program at LUSO Community Services





Providing stability and care

When people don't have dependable access to healthy food, essential supplies, or the supports that help them get through each day, it becomes nearly impossible to plan for the future - let alone thrive. Last year, we helped **148,129 people** get those essential needs.

A worker at a Neighbourhood Resource Centre explains "It's not just about food. It's about access, dignity, and stability." These programs often act as an inroad for people to connect to other services – like mental health, or housing stability.

“

As a newcomer, you don't get to know a lot of people. When I got here and found this beautiful team, it made me feel like I had another family.”

Kristel, volunteer and part-time worker at South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre

Essential Needs

- **12,982** good food boxes were distributed to families
- **322,157 meals** and **44,083 snacks** were served
- **6,143 trips** to appointments were provided
- **27,150 people** got access to basic needs like toiletries and winter clothing



*SOAHAC distributed healthy & traditional aboriginal food to **1,050 clients** through United Way funding*

For many people, especially in rural areas, getting to and from medical appointments is challenging. According to one ride recipient, "This transportation program has been my lifeline. Without it, I would be isolated and unable to access the treatments that are essential to my survival."

Some programs, like Meals on Wheels, help reduce isolation, resolve transportation issues, and keep people fed at the same time. They told us they recently connected with a man who hadn't eaten for three days but was deeply embarrassed about asking for help. Their team mobilized same-day support, reassuring him that "seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness."

Helping families move forward

United Way funds programs to help women escape and recover after experiencing gender-based violence. Helping the kids affected by this violence is an important part of the solution. Rachel Veens, Child and Youth Advocate at Women's Rural Resource Centre, shared that "It's a safe, supportive place for children and youth to feel heard and begin to heal."

We also fund programming to break the cycle of violence and abuse that so often carries on from fathers to sons. At Changing Ways, they work with the abusers themselves.

Gender-Based Violence

- **505 individuals** including **254 children** got help healing from violent relationships



“ The program is teaching me how to be the Dad my kids deserve. I was like a volcano; always ready to erupt. My first instinct was to fly off the handle whenever something went wrong. Now, I've learned to change those patterns and act appropriately.” *Changing Ways program participant*

Mental health supports

We fund programs that increase access to effective, community-based mental health supports for individuals, families, and caregivers. In all, **2,199 people** received free or subsidized counselling services, and **7,048 counselling sessions** were provided.

Daya Counselling Centre's program focuses not only on counselling, but also on creating a sense of safety and connection for clients as they navigate life's challenges. We're able to do this because of the support of the community," says Da-Qing Wong, their Executive Director.



“ I was planning to take my life. I had nothing left but this therapy. My therapist heard me, and let me cry, and let me be. She didn't just tell me I'd be ok. She got to work. She performed her duty.”

Daya Counselling Centre program participant

Poverty connects it all

In Elgin and Middlesex, poverty shows up differently for everyone, but its effects are woven into our community in ways that affect us all. Rising costs, limited access to services, and deep-rooted systemic barriers make it harder for people to meet their basic needs, find stability, and live with dignity.

Poverty is the thread that connects all the issues we work on: **Essential Needs**, **Housing Stability**, **Mental Health Supports**, **Gender-Based Violence**, and **Inclusion & Belonging**.

These aren't isolated issues. They are all connected.

“ Before I left my abuser, I was told I would never be anything without him. I now have moved on... I'm building my life up without him and it feels so freeing and empowering” *Second Stage Housing program participant*



Common problems like a lost job, a medical bill, or a violent relationship can easily snowball. A mental health episode can trigger a housing crisis. Housing instability makes it nearly impossible to meet basic needs. Violence at home isolates people from the supports they need most. And without a sense of belonging and connection, the path forward is harder to find.

This is how poverty works. It's why the solution also has to be about connections. Many of the services we fund help with more than one aspect of poverty, or help people build the connections that can lead them forward.

Together — with our donors, partners, and volunteers — we're building a community where everyone has a fair shot at a good life.



“ My dad's in the hospital, and instead of going home and being alone, I get to come here instead.”

Ignite Youth Centre program participant

Building connections

One of our most cherished ways of connecting with our supporters is through our annual Sponsored Employee Program. Participants are “sponsored” by their full-time employers to receive special training from United Way and step into the heart of our community campaign for 16 weeks. They bring energy, fresh perspectives, and gain skills that last far beyond the placement.



More than words

Accepting the 2026 “Welcoming Workplace” award on behalf of United Way from the London Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership, our team member Juan said “Inclusion is not just about opening the door, it’s about what happens after. It’s about trust. It’s about belonging.”



Volunteers with heart

In October, Ontario’s Ministry of Citizenship & Multiculturalism honoured two of our long-serving volunteers, Kimmarie Harris and Wil Osbourne-Sorrell, with Volunteer Service Awards, which honour those “who continue to show up for others through selfless, sustained service.”



Growing capacity

This year, we helped local organizations secure over \$138,000 through the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s School Food Infrastructure Fund to improve nutrition programs for hundreds of children and youth across our community.

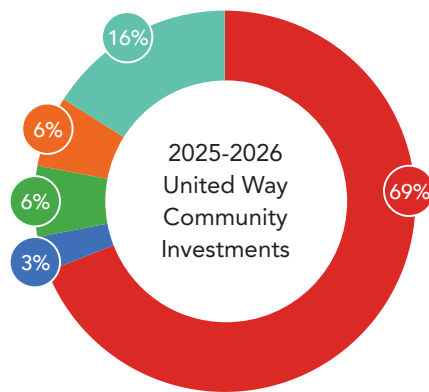




Working with the allocations committee was really an impressive process. I was able to learn more about the agencies in the city, and the important role that they're playing. I also saw how great the need is because the request for support far outstrips the available funds.

John W. Murphy, longtime volunteer and recipient of this year's ChangeMakers Lifetime Achievement Award

Last year, our Community Fund granted **\$4 million** to 39 agencies to help **157,964 people** have a fair shot at a good life.



- 69%** Community Fund
- 3%** One-time Program Fund
- 6%** Donor-Directed Funds
- 6%** Static Investments
- 16%** United Way Community Services

Detailed financials available at unitedwayem.ca

Our Community Fund is directed by a team of volunteers who devote hundreds of hours to review grant applications and determine where our funds can do the most good for the community as a whole.



Thank you to everyone who helped us raise funds through two new special events. In 2025 we held our first Plane Pull and Ultimate Burger Battle.



Together, we're creating lasting change.

unitedwayem.ca | uw@unitedwayem.ca | [@unitedwayemca](https://www.instagram.com/unitedwayemca)   

Financial Statement Summary

Statement of fund revenue and expenses years ended March 31, 2022 to March 31, 2026.

2026
Total \$

2025
Total \$

2024
Total \$

2023
Total \$

2022
Total \$

Revenue

Net donations, grants and special events	5,863,049	6,422,267	7,250,122	7,371,908	7,491,241
One-Time Funding (including CSRF)	141,979	54,549	2,091,458	39,627	900,000
Investment income	287,598	259,614	274,148	189,836	212,239
Unrealized gain on investments	141,918	95,565	170,301	(109,609)	(40,191)
Other income	85,827	67,001	32,558	106,751	4,604

Gross revenue	6,520,371	6,898,996	9,818,587	7,598,513	8,567,893
----------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

Community investments

Community Fund	3,275,000	4,200,000	4,205,000	4,661,000	4,655,255
One-Time Funding (including CSRF)	138,581	-	2,002,725	1,600	850,000
Donor Directed Funds	267,976	287,768	374,964	411,768	399,027
Strategic Investments	285,043	260,990	292,231	244,552	231,364
United Way Community Services	747,846	752,890	890,965	737,448	514,829

Total Investment	4,714,446	5,501,648	7,765,885	6,056,368	6,650,475
-------------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

Excess of revenue over community investments	1,805,925	1,397,348	2,052,702	1,542,145	1,917,418
---	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

Less: fundraising and administrative expenses	1,589,759	1,715,920	1,690,208	1,495,608	1,614,052
--	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

Excess of revenue over expenses	216,166	(318,572)	362,494	46,537	303,366
--	----------------	------------------	----------------	---------------	----------------

Return of Capital - Stability Fund	150,000	-	-	-	-
------------------------------------	---------	---	---	---	---

Transfer from (to) Strategic, Contingency & Stability Fund	471,762	219,858	(265,305)	11,604	(290,012)
--	---------	---------	-----------	--------	-----------

Transfer from (to) Property/Equipment Fund	(914,461)	6,693	(87,201)	33,172	(49,416)
--	-----------	-------	----------	--------	----------

Excess (Deficit) of revenue over (under) expenses after transfer	(76,533)	(92,021)	9,988	91,313	36,062
---	-----------------	-----------------	--------------	---------------	---------------

A leader in organizational effectiveness

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

Our donors are the foundation of United Way. Your generosity supports a vital network of programs and services that enable United Way to address the root causes of social issues and create lasting change in our community. Our commitment to you is that we will continue to ensure that your donation has maximum impact in people's lives right here in Elgin and Middlesex Counties.



Thank you for being #United for our community

Board of Directors

Colin Yausie, Chair
Maly Bun-Lebert, Past Chair
Mohammad Alnaser
Christy Bacik
Wadhah Baobaid
John Downing
Lauren Donohue
Mark Egbedeyi-Emmanuel
Victor Harris
Megan Komenda
Jamie Kruspel
Brian MacDonald
Eric Mallory
Biju Mathai
Anita Miersma
Rob Roes
Sharon Stanley

Campaign Cabinet

Kristen Korhonen, Chair
Allie Bachtold
Joseph Calvo
Doug Carter
Cathryn Clemente
Michael de Henestrosa
Paul Meadows
Kim Miller
Dave Whiting

Growth & Innovation Committee

Victor Harris, Chair
John Downing
Megan Komenda
Jamie Kruspel
Colin Yausie

Agency Partnership & Investment Committee

Trishul Jotangia, Chair
Karen Dalton
Wil Osbourne-Sorrell
Ryan Pierce
Maria Reece
Adam Roberts
Megan Stacey
Megan Telfer
Allison Tisdale
Elizabeth VanHooren

Finance Committee

Rob Roes, Chair
Mohammad Alnaser
Christy Bacik
Bill Bouwmeester
Colin Couchman
Victor Harris
Eric Mallory
Colin Yausie

Nominations Committee

Maly Bun-Lebert, Chair
Wadhah Baobaid
Megan Komenda
Colin Yausie

