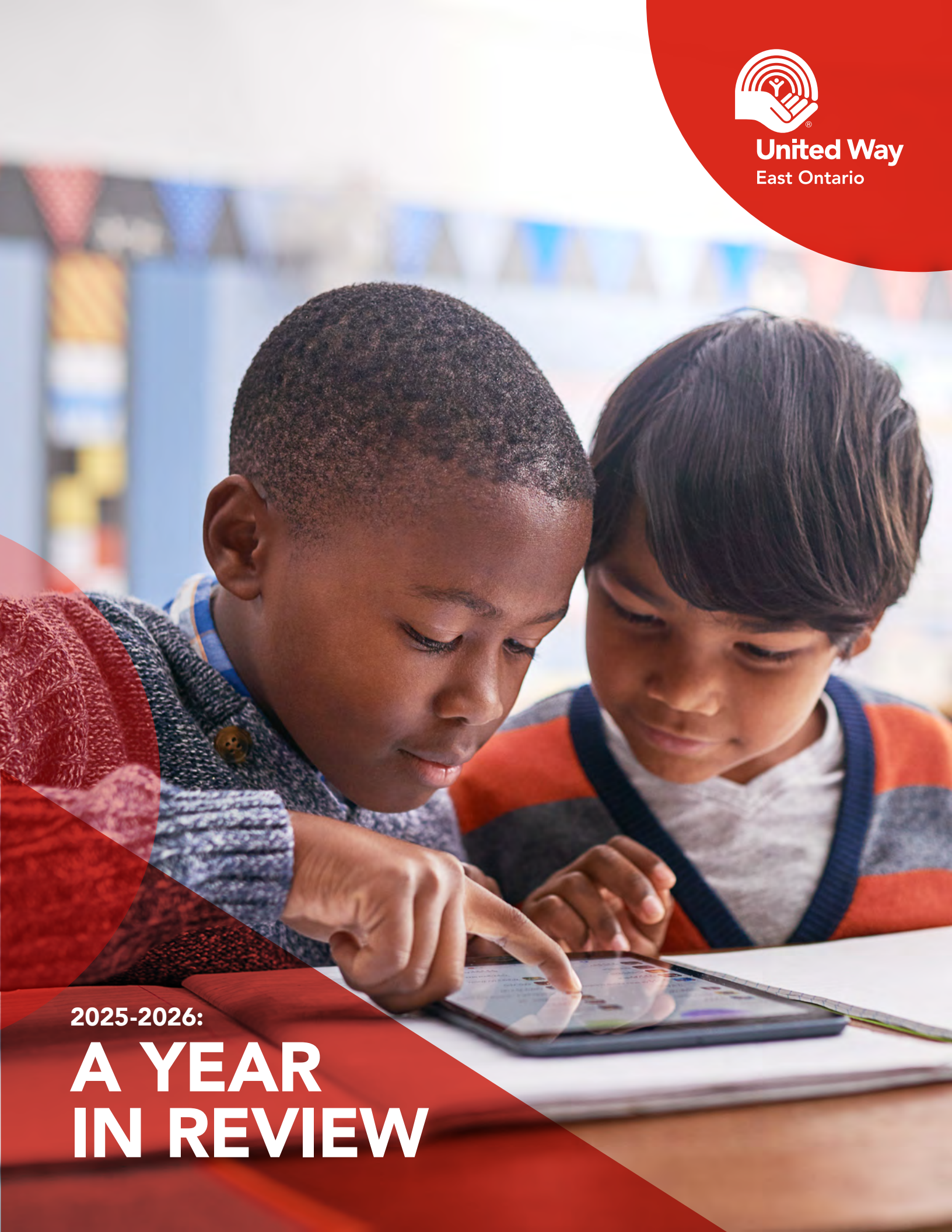




**United Way**  
East Ontario



2025-2026:

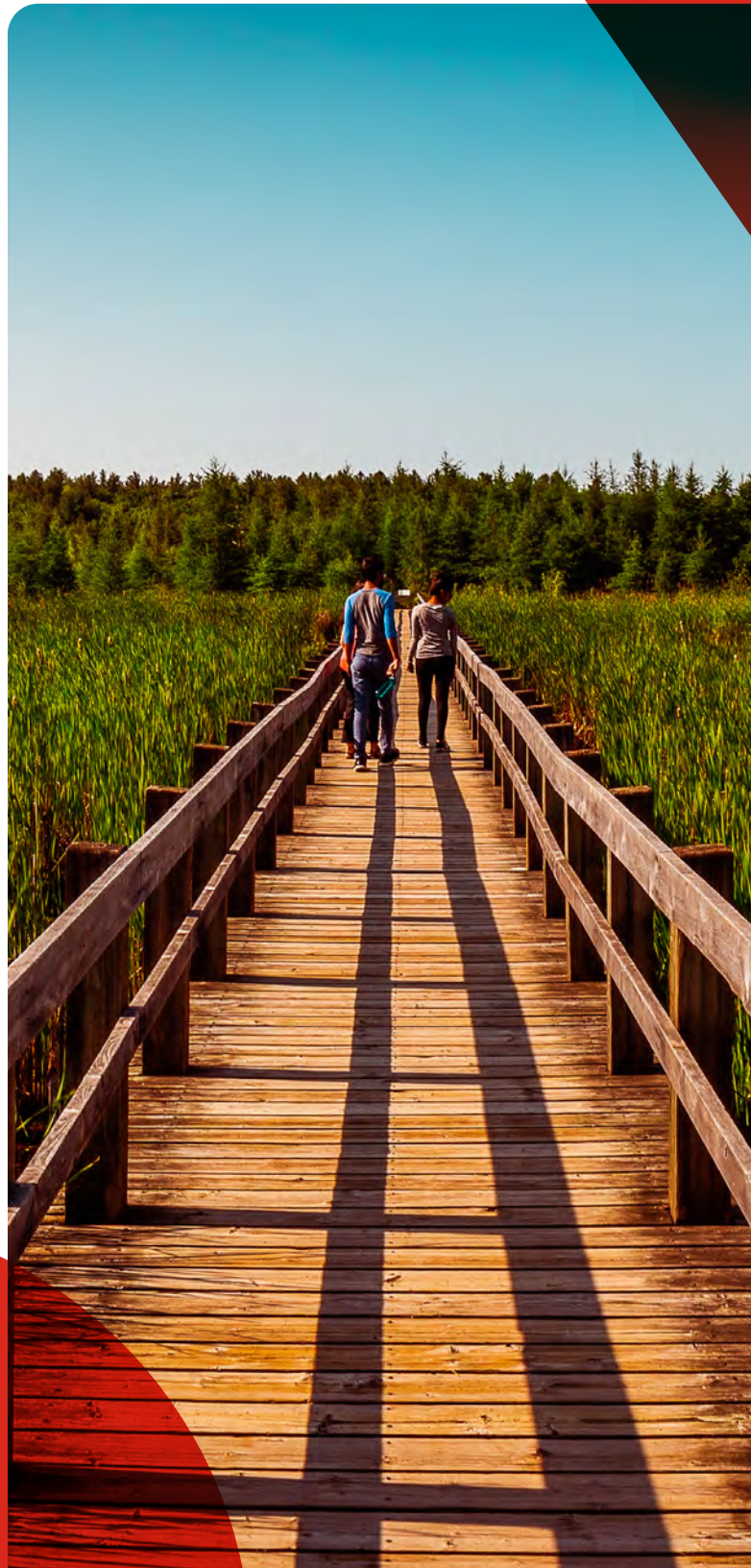
# A YEAR IN REVIEW

# Land Acknowledgment

United Way East Ontario operates on the traditional, unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation. We recognize and honour their enduring stewardship of these lands and waters—now known as East Ontario—and their leadership in preserving them for future generations.

We also acknowledge that this region is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, whose histories, cultures, and resilience continue to shape our communities. Moving forward, we remain committed to centering Indigenous wisdom, teachings, and self-determination in our work. We understand that reconciliation is an ongoing journey—one that requires active listening, ethical partnerships, and a dedication to truth, equity, and mutual care.

United Way is grateful for the guidance of Indigenous knowledge systems, which remind us of our shared responsibility to nurture sustainable, interconnected futures. Together, we will walk this path in a spirit of respect and collective healing.



# A Message from Our President and CEO

People have asked me why I joined United Way East Ontario. My answer is clear: United Way plays a critical role in solving the complex social issues facing many of us.

There is tremendous momentum in our communities right now to solve these problems—from housing and homelessness to mental health and addictions, poverty, basic needs, and more. All levels of government, local businesses, donors, and our partners in the social services sector are on board to help find where these challenges intersect and address them at their root.

I am passionate about ensuring everyone across our communities can thrive, and I am excited to join you in making that happen.

I also understand the effort it's going to take to get us there.

Events across the globe continue to send our cost of living skyward. Demand for services has never been higher, and it's not only adults in need—hundreds of young people in our region face homelessness, substance use, and mental health challenges each year.

It is in these extraordinary times that I am grateful for the work I witness every day at United Way. Our commitment—to bring leaders from various sectors to the table, to share information, contribute resources, align around a common goal, and amplify success—is crucial to finding answers for these challenges. We cannot do this alone.

Rachael Wilson



I'm also thankful for our donors, partners, supporters, volunteers, and staff members who continue to show up every single day, knowing that brighter futures are possible for so many across Prescott-Russell, Ottawa, Lanark County, and Renfrew County when we work together.

**This report provides an opportunity to look at how your support is changing lives. I hope it gives you pride and allows you to feel that much more connected with your community. With your support, we are fueling solutions to make our communities and neighbours stronger every day.**

This year, I have already had some fantastic conversations with partners in Prescott-Russell who are reducing social isolation for people in areas with limited resources. In Lanark County, I spoke with some of our partners who are addressing youth homelessness, and in Renfrew County, there is some truly ground-breaking work being done to stop gender-based violence and support victims.

In Ottawa, we are targeting youth homelessness by raising \$1 million over the next five years. I'm thrilled to advance United Way's work to end this issue, not just in the city, but across our region. We know solving homelessness is about more than providing shelter—we must provide wrap-around supports like employment, food security, transportation, and mental health services as well. This kind of support is only possible when we bring partners together and ensure resources are distributed to have the greatest impact.

I'm also looking forward to seeing *project step turn 20* in 2027. This partnership between United Way, local community health agencies, and school boards, addresses the need for support, treatment, education and prevention of problematic substance and technology use among young people. It's another example of how United Way provides key resources for vulnerable people at pivotal times to see them thrive.

As new President and CEO, my plan for 2026-27 largely involves listening and affirming our direction as an organization. I want to hear more about how our donors, volunteers, and community members see us showing up in their communities.

**I know how vital partnerships are in making our communities healthier, stronger, and safer for everyone. I believe there is a real commitment across our communities to see positive, long-lasting, meaningful change, and United Way is playing a critical role in turning that into action.**

**I look forward to working alongside all of you.**



**Rachael Wilson**  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
United Way East Ontario



# Table of Contents

● Land Acknowledgment .....	2
● A Message from Our President and CEO .....	3
● Our Role .....	6
● How You Help Us Make an Impact .....	7
● Investments Across the Region .....	9
● All That Kids Can Be .....	11
● From Poverty to Possibility .....	20
● Healthy People, Strong Communities .....	28
● Goals for the Future .....	36
● Women United .....	38
● The Tomorrow Fund Program .....	42
● Powering Change .....	44
● Fueling Impact .....	48
● A Message from Our Board Chair .....	50
● Senior Leaders and Volunteers Overview .....	52
● Appendix .....	56

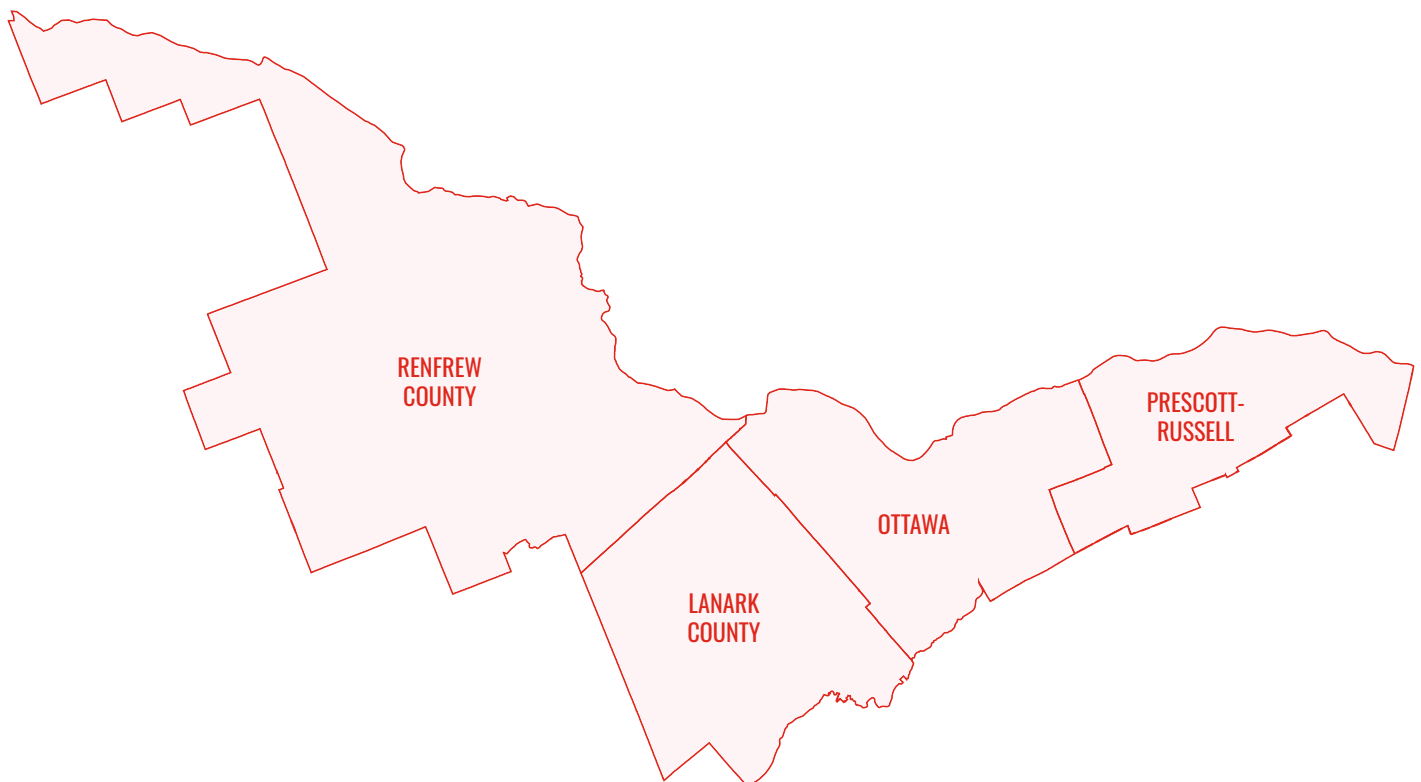
TACKLING THE TOUGH PROBLEMS:

# Our Role

At United Way East Ontario, we partner with committed, forward-thinking donors and partners to address the root causes of local issues. Together, we support long-term solutions that break down barriers, improve lives, and create opportunities for the people who need us most across Prescott-Russell, Ottawa, Lanark County, and Renfrew County.

- **Our mission** is to bring people and resources together to build strong, healthy, safe communities for all.
- **Our vision** is that the communities we serve are measurably better because of the work of United Way East Ontario and others.
- **Our values** are integrity, collaboration, respect, and results.
- **Our promise** is that we will invest resources where they are needed most and where they will have the greatest impact.

**Together, we can keep our communities strong.**



# How You Help Us Make an Impact

United Way East Ontario brings caring communities together to tackle our region's toughest social challenges.

The issues we face require collective action. By uniting the community—from donors, to businesses, non-profits, governments, and beyond—we help make our communities measurably better.

**Every day, we work to be innovative, nimble, and responsive to the needs of our communities and the interests of our donors.**

We start by understanding the challenge, then bring the right people together to drive solutions, advocate for change, mobilize resources, and invest where we can have the greatest impact.



## Our Focus Areas

### All That Kids Can Be:

By putting more kids on track to succeed, we can help all youth in our communities reach their full potential.

### From Poverty to Possibility:

By helping people achieve financial independence and stability, we can move them from poverty to possibility.

### Healthy People, Strong Communities:

By improving equity, connections, and wellbeing for vulnerable groups, our communities can be great for everyone.

## Our Tools



**Advocacy:** We speak up and advocate for action on issues that directly impact our community—especially for the most vulnerable, whose voices often go unheard.



**Convening:** We bring together the right people and organizations across all sectors to solve complex challenges.



**Investment:** Our community experts and volunteers evaluate and make recommendations to fund programs, collaborations, and initiatives that create measurable, lasting change.



**Research and Evaluation:** We use rigorous data analysis and evidence to inform our decisions and understand the diverse challenges our neighbourhoods face.



**Resource Development:** We recruit volunteers, secure resources, and build powerful partnerships with individual donors, businesses, and other organizations. We fundraise to fuel initiatives that will lead to the betterment of our communities.

# Investments Across the Region

Together, we turn your generosity into smart, strategic investments that drive real change across our region. This is the power of United Way—made possible by you.

Because of your support in 2024–2025, we were able to invest in:



As a result of these investments:



## How much we invested together in community work across our region in 2024-2025:

Total:\*

# \$5,199,703



\* Program reporting period: July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025 (12-month investments). Program reports due to United Way in August 2025. Outcome data analyzed and reported by United Way in September 2025.

# All That Kids Can Be

At United Way, we believe that every child has the right to a good life and a safe place to grow up, learn, and make good friends—no matter where they live or their personal circumstances.

## The Issue

Childhood doesn't look the same for everyone.

Across our communities, many children are navigating complex challenges that shape their development, wellbeing, and sense of belonging. They are falling behind on key developmental milestones, including opportunities to build social connection and emotional regulation skills. At the same time, children and caregivers alike are experiencing heightened stress and isolation as routines and supports continue to shift.

### **Economic pressures are putting a strain on families**

Caregivers are managing their own mental health challenges while struggling to afford necessities, including food, housing, and technology. Limited access to childcare and increasingly stretched youth-serving organizations further reduce the supports available, leaving many families with fewer places to turn in times of need.



As children grow into adolescence, these challenges often follow them.

Youth face heightened mental health and substance use risks, along with increasing barriers to safe, affordable housing. The presence of toxic substances in the drug supply makes this stage of life especially dangerous for vulnerable young people.

Supporting children early—and strengthening the systems that surround them—helps prevent crises later. When families have access to timely, community-based supports, children are better positioned to grow, learn, and thrive.

## Data shows

ALMOST  
1 in 4

hospitalizations among children and youth aged 5–24 was for mental health reasons.

47%

of people experiencing homelessness first experienced it before age 25.

2x

Between 2019 and 2023, the number of 5 to 13 year olds struggling with behaviours and soft skills like concentration, emotional regulation, social connection, and anxiety, nearly doubled.

NEARLY  
2 in 5

Ottawa students report struggling with their mental health, and 33% of those needing mental health support did not seek it.

## Our Response

At United Way, we partner with local, frontline agencies to deliver vital programs and services that create opportunity for children, youth, and families facing the greatest barriers. These include early childhood education, supports for young parents, after-school programming, mental health and substance use counselling, and services for youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

### All That Kids Can Be across our region:



### As a result of these investments:



### Insights into the outcomes:

- Many agencies were able to create new partnerships and connections within the community to serve more youth and their families.
- Sector capacity continues to be strained by high needs and limited resources, including funding and staffing.
- Youth needs are increasingly complex, and there is a rise in issues like mental health concerns and food insecurity which require more intensive supports.

## Impact Story

### Connecting young people with the tools they need to thrive

Natasha moved out of her Nova Scotia family home at 16. She couch-surfed for a long time and lived with her sister for a while but says she always struggled to find a consistent housing situation of her own.

Natasha eventually moved to Renfrew County, and while managing serious mental health concerns, soon found herself living in a shelter. She was in crisis.

Thanks to support from United Way East Ontario donors, Columbus House Pembroke extended its programming to connect more youth in crisis with the tools and resources they need to get ahead. Natasha was one of the first people through this newly expanded program in 2025.

**“Programs like these are what help pull our youth out of dark places,” says Natasha. “I’ve been able to step out of survival mode and plan for my future.”**

United Way’s support made it possible to hire more staff to manage an influx of referrals and add a counsellor to their services, says Tina Belanger, Executive Director at Columbus House. The partnership also helped the program reach deeper into the community.

Natasha, former youth in crisis



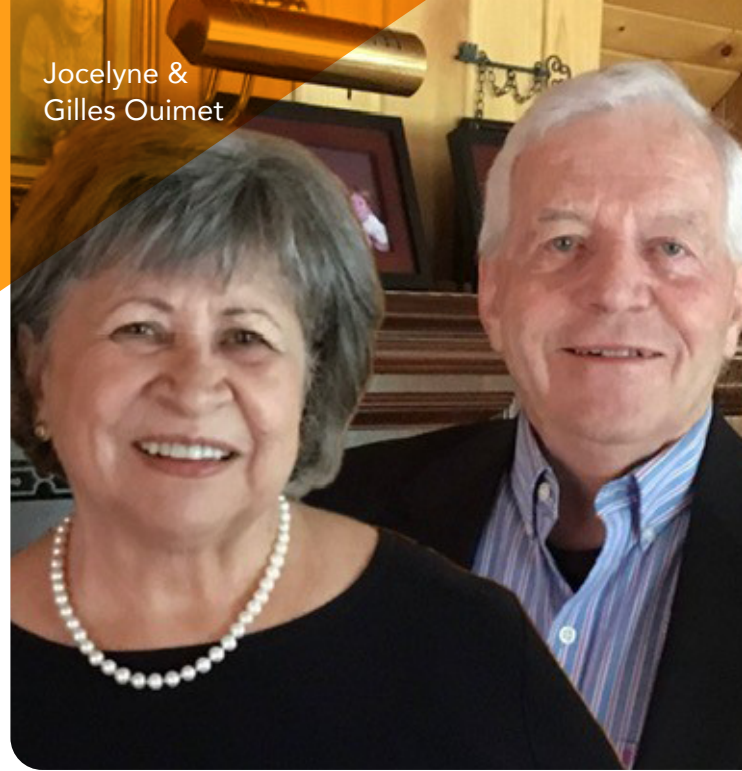
Click to watch the video

## Why I Give

“Through our family foundation, we’re focused on helping young people build a better future—especially in underserved communities. We know lasting change takes collective action, and by supporting youth today, we can create meaningful impact for generations. That’s why supporting All That Kids Can Be was a natural fit for us.”

**Jocelyne & Gilles Ouimet Foundation,**  
United Way East Ontario  
donors for 20+ years

Jocelyne &  
Gilles Ouimet



project step Annual Stakeholders Meeting



Bonnie, holding artwork created by students at Carlington Community Health Centre's Students Will All Graduate (SWAG)



Nepean High School Breakfast Club

## How United Way strengthens systems and improves outcomes for children, youth, and families:

### Spotlight on youth homelessness

Thousands of young people in Ottawa and across our region don't have a safe place to call home.

In January 2026, United Way East Ontario announced a bold commitment to raise \$1 million over five years to help prevent and end youth homelessness, inviting the community to join a growing movement supporting Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe's pledge to end youth homelessness by 2030.

"Our new investments will tackle youth homelessness at its root by focusing on early intervention and long-term stability," says Rachael Wilson, President and CEO, United Way East Ontario. "By preventing youth from entering the shelter system, we can end youth homelessness—early intervention changes lives."

Our supporters provide at-risk youth with:

- **Wrap-around supports** to build a more stable life, like mental health counselling, education, and life and work skills programs.
- **Support building positive connections** with family, friends, schools, and communities, so they have a safety net that lasts.
- **Resources** to help young people attain, advocate for, and maintain housing and food.

L-R: Kaite Burkholder Harris, Executive Director with Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, Rachael Wilson, President and CEO of United Way East Ontario, Mark Sutcliffe, City of Ottawa Mayor



Prevention is the solution. [Read more about United Way's commitment to ending youth homelessness.](#)



Each year, between 1,200 and 1,400 young people experience homelessness in Ottawa alone—with many more at risk across our region.

When we act early before a young person reaches a crisis point—we can change the trajectory of their life.

### Preventing and reducing rural youth homelessness

Youth homelessness is not limited to urban centres. In rural communities across East Ontario, young people face unique challenges, including limited services, transportation barriers, and hidden forms of homelessness that can escalate without early support.

United Way East Ontario works with partners across Prescott-Russell, Ottawa, Lanark County, and Renfrew County to address the root causes of youth homelessness—like family conflict, discrimination, and mental health and addiction issues—and invest in prevention-focused solutions.

This includes the Rural Youth Homelessness Network (RYHN), a collaborative initiative led by United Way East Ontario in partnership with A Way Home Canada and a broad range of community partners. RYHN provides a platform for rural communities to share knowledge, build capacity, and advance best practices rooted in rural realities.

Over the past year, RYHN focused on strengthening foundations for long-term impact, including addressing gaps in data

collection and measurement related to hidden homelessness and fragmented systems. This work is improving how rural youth homelessness is understood, tracked, and addressed. Looking ahead, we will continue to collaborate with RYHN to further strengthen their capacity to analyze and clearly communicate data that drives effective action.

These efforts are building the systems and partnerships required to ensure youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness receive the right supports, when and where they need them.



At least 32 youth are experiencing homelessness across Prescott Russell, Lanark County, and Renfrew County, and many more are couch surfing, unstably housed, or forced to leave their home community due to limited services and youth housing options.

## Spotlight on *project step*

Since 2007, *project step* has served as a community-wide response to youth substance use and mental health challenges, delivering addictions counselling, prevention education, and family support in every publicly funded high school in Ottawa, five community-based schools, and two residential treatment centres.

### *project step* milestones and impact 2023 to 2025

From 2023 to 2025, *project step* completed its three-year Goals and Milestones initiative, strengthening collaboration across six priority areas, including shared measurement, harm reduction, community engagement, and system-wide advocacy.

The initiative improved data, communications, and fundraising capacity; deepened youth and community engagement; and strengthened internal alignment through evaluation, updated governance tools, and shared guidelines. Together, these efforts have enhanced system coordination and ready *project step* for its next phase of impact.



**Working in every publicly funded high school in Ottawa, since 2007, *project step* has helped:**

**17,700+** students access school-based counselling

**289,000+** students receive education sessions

**16,100+** parents receive the support they need

## Youth voices driving real solutions

In 2025, *project step* completed its Youth Engagement Plan, formalizing a strategy that places youth with lived experience at the centre of program design, decision-making, and solutions.

Putting this approach into action, *project step* engaged young people through the Ottawa Youth Council and the SWAG (Students Will All Graduate) program. Thanks to donor support, these conversations deepened understanding of digital wellness, online safety, and the links between mental health and technology use. Youth insights reinforced the importance of prevention education, peer-to-peer support, shared accountability across systems, and safe spaces where young people can connect.

This type of engagement helps guide *project step's* evolving approach—shifting from programs for youth to solutions built with youth.



# From Poverty to Possibility

**At United Way, we believe everyone deserves a job, a purpose, and a sense of belonging.**

## The Issue

We know that poverty can happen because of an unexpected life change, but many people also have the cards stacked against them from day one. Poverty isn't a level playing field.

Many marginalized groups are more likely to live in poverty because of systemic issues—as many continue to face stigma, biases, and other forms of oppression, it can be even harder to secure a good job and financial independence.

In rural areas, limited public transportation options make it hard to get to school, work, medical appointments, and other essential services. In remote areas where internet connections can be spotty, access to information, education, and certain types of work are just not possible.

The lack of opportunities in some neighbourhoods and communities, paired with inflation and the rising cost of living, makes it harder for people to break out of the cycle of poverty.



## Data shows

2x

Unemployment rate among very recent immigrants was twice as high compared to those born in Canada in the age category of 25 to 64.

1 in 6

people with disabilities lives in poverty.

24+%

Food insecurity in East Ontario exceeds the provincial average of 24.8%, reaching nearly 26% in Ottawa and 31% in Renfrew

14.7%

The unemployment rate among youth aged 15 to 24 years reached 14.7% in September 2025, the highest youth unemployment rate for that month since 2010 (excluding 2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic).

## Our Response

At United Way, we bring together partners, donors, employers, and community leaders who want to help create long-term, sustainable solutions and employment programs that recognize work as a critical part of recovery, wellness, and long-term stability. These programs meet people where they are, addressing stigma and matching individuals' strengths, interests, and experiences with meaningful employment opportunities.

By strengthening connections across East Ontario, we help organizations access the tools and insights they need to build more inclusive systems that benefit everyone, especially those most marginalized in our communities.

### Poverty to Possibility across our region:



### As a result of these investments:



### Insights into the outcomes:

- Clients continue to have multiple and often overlapping needs and barriers to employment, which require additional resources and expertise.
- The current employment service system for people with disabilities presents some challenges for specialist providers with its incentive structure.
- The housing market and lack of affordable, safe housing can create longer waiting lists and makes it difficult for those in transitional housing to get out and move into independent housing.



Read Brandan's full story  
and watch the video.

## Impact Story

### Breaking down barriers to employment

Many marginalized groups are more likely to experience poverty because of systemic barriers, stigma, and discrimination—making it harder to achieve financial independence. With support from United Way East Ontario, the John Howard Society of Ottawa is helping change that through the Arches Supportive Employment Program.

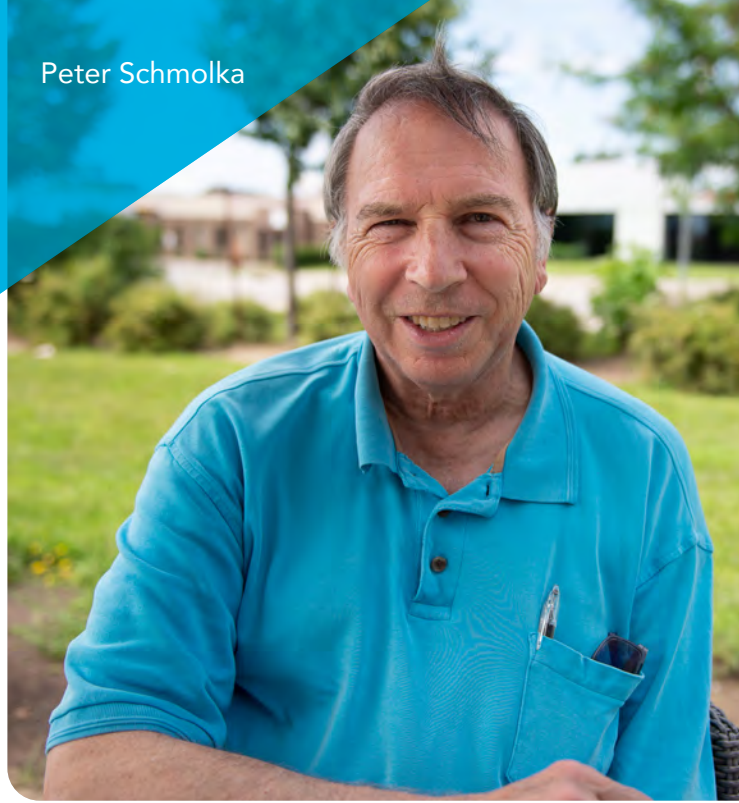
Brandan, a recent Arches client, shared his story to show how the right support can make a meaningful difference for people facing barriers to employment. Having overcome substance use challenges, Brandan joined the program to reconnect with the workforce as part of his broader health and life goals.

“From our very first meeting, Rachel (Arches Employment Facilitator) showed me a caring and compassionate approach,” said Brandan. “She was accepting of me, non-judgmental and made me feel like I was just the same as any other person who wanted some direction and change in their life.”

With personalized guidance, the program helped Brandan bridge gaps in his experience, rebuild confidence, and find meaningful employment.

Through hard work and dedication, he achieved his goal of working with the Canadian Armed Forces—a new start for the next phase of his life.

Peter Schmolka



## Why I Give

“Early in my career, I worked in a social service centre, and I know how vital United Way is in addressing our community’s growing challenges. As the need for help increases, government alone cannot solve these problems. United Way brings people and resources together to build a stronger, more equitable community for everyone. It’s better for everyone if no one is falling behind, and United Way is a way to meet our community’s needs.”

**Peter Schmolka**

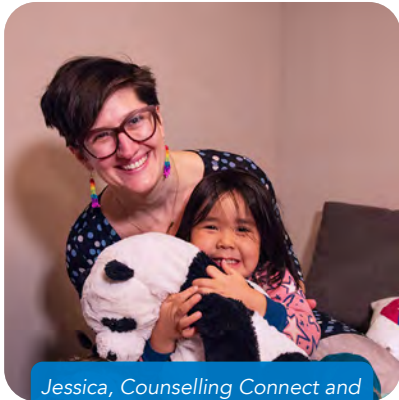
United Way East Ontario donor of 40+ years



Jen Broad, Workplace Inclusion Specialist, Live Work Play, with clients Nick and Percy



EcoEquitable’s Sewing for Jobs program.



Jessica, Counselling Connect and Family Services Ottawa client

## How United Way is creating pathways to employment, purpose, and belonging:

### Increasing opportunities for people with disabilities

The Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN) brings together employers, service providers, and community partners to eliminate barriers to employment for people with disabilities and now includes more than 180 member organizations. Through EARN, United Way supports inclusive hiring practices and connects employers with trusted service providers who can support workplace accommodation and long term job retention—building confidence, reducing stigma, and improving employment outcomes.

By coordinating initiatives such as the monthly job match call, EARN helps bridge employer needs with an often-overlooked talent pool. These calls provide a forum for employers to share current or upcoming job opportunities, helping turn connection into opportunity.



Since 2012, members of the EARN network have helped over 11,000 persons with disabilities find employment.



## Accessing the talents of skilled immigrants

**Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO)** supports employers in accessing the skills and talents of newcomers. By bringing employers, immigrant serving agencies, and other stakeholders together, United Way helps address systemic barriers that prevent newcomers from securing employment aligned with their education and experience—strengthening inclusive recruitment and integration practices.

On March 24, 2026, HIO's annual summit brought together 131 employers, industry leaders and partners to explore the theme "Employer Leadership in a Changing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Landscape". Employers were challenged to think differently, act more intentionally and measure what truly matters. Moving beyond performative actions toward accountable and measurable change.

### Hire Immigrants Ottawa in 2024-2025:

103 organizations and 234 individuals participated in programs.



## Building culturally safe workplaces for Indigenous Peoples

In partnership with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition, United Way East Ontario helps convene the Indigenous Employment Leadership Advisory Table, bringing together Indigenous partners, employers, service providers, and funders. Together, the Table works to remove employment barriers, strengthen employer understanding, and support meaningful job opportunities for Indigenous Peoples. This collaborative approach helps workplaces become more culturally safe, inclusive, and grounded in respect for Indigenous identity and worldviews.

Meeting quarterly, United Way's role is to bring partners together and offer support. We coordinate the table and walk alongside partners as they build culturally grounded, Indigenous led pathways to employment, reconciliation, and self determination.

In 2025, the annual unemployment rate for Indigenous adults in Ontario was 11% vs. 7.7% for non-Indigenous, and for Indigenous youth it was 21.5% vs 16% for non-Indigenous.

In May 2025, members met in person for a day of learning rooted in Indigenous ways of coming together. The meeting began and ended in Circle with an Elder, featured voices from Indigenous organizations, and included shared meals prepared by an Indigenous caterer. It was an opportunity to reinforce that this work must be guided by Indigenous leadership at every step, as well as the importance of creating culturally grounded spaces.



# Healthy People, Strong Communities

We believe in building a region that is great for everyone—made up of healthy, equitable, and vibrant communities.

## The Issue

The strength of our communities is determined by the health and wellbeing of those who live here. But many people across our region lack access to the support they need, impacting their quality of life.

Many face barriers accessing services rooted in systemic biases related to gender, race, age, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, ability, or economic status. Socially disadvantaged communities experience poor health outcomes at higher rates, and we know that institutional oppression, systemic and overt racism, and chronic exposure to discrimination are often the root causes.

Those who help to sustain our health and community services—like informal caregivers supporting the aging population—are experiencing high levels of stress and burnout. Our networks also continue to raise concerns about increased crisis situations like gender-based violence, rising levels of addiction, and a decline in mental health.



## Data shows

26%

of people in Ontario reported their mental health as poor or fair.

11%

of seniors living alone in Ontario are under the poverty rate, compared to 3% of seniors who live in a family setting.

6%

In Ottawa, reported incidents of intimate partner violence rose by 6% in 2025, totalling 7,840—an average of 21 per day.

## Our Response

At United Way East Ontario, we partner with local, frontline agencies to deliver vital programs and services that create opportunities for our region's most vulnerable people. These include 24/7 crisis lines, day-programs for seniors, and resident-led community-building initiatives.

United Way's role as a connector and leader allows us to leverage our network of partners and donors to help communities create long-term, sustainable solutions. We do this through initiatives that bring key stakeholders together around a shared mission.



## Healthy People, Strong Communities across our region:



## As a result of these investments:



## Insights into the outcomes:

- Several programs strengthen community partnerships and enhance their accessibility and capacity through new CRM systems, virtual service delivery, and other innovations.
- Community needs continue to be high and many clients have complex needs, which puts a strain on sector capacity given limited funding and staffing resources.
- Systemic barriers and political discourse create stress for many minority groups, including the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and racialized groups.

## Impact Story

### Caregiver support 'a life changer' for David and his wife

David cares for his wife, Helgard, who has dementia. He says his caregiving duties have taken a toll on him both physically and mentally.

"I was totally lost. I didn't know where to turn," said David.

Thankfully, he found the support he needed through Rural Ottawa South Support Services' (ROSSS) day program and caregiver services.

Thanks to donor support, United Way East Ontario partnered with ROSSS to support older adults and seniors with disabilities in rural Ottawa. They serve between 12 and 14 clients at each one of their day programs.

Having two days a week where he knows he'll get some reprieve has made a huge difference.

"With this program she gets five hours of activities and social time. And that gives me time to do some shopping and catch up with pals that I haven't seen for a while," said David.

The caregiver group then offers critical support for David to help him cope with his new reality at home.

"I meet people in the same situation as I'm in and that's been a real-eye opener. We share experiences, we share successes, and we share failures. It's a new social group that's really important for me."

David, loving caregiver to his wife, Helgard



Read David's full story and watch the video.

## Why I Give

"As a donor and campaign lead at my workplace, supporting United Way is personal for me. It contributes to the community I grew up in and am now raising my family in. We see the impact every day, which reinforces just how essential this support is. Knowing that the funds we raise through our workplace campaign helps families and address needs across Renfrew County and surrounding communities is what makes supporting United Way so meaningful to me."

### Ellen Gallant

United Way East Ontario donor and Workplace Campaign Leader, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, Chalk River



Betsy and Tracey, Elizabeth Fry Society



Morrison Gardens community portable, revitalized through the PCL Construction Hard Hat Heroes Neighbourhood Improvement Grant Program

## How United Way is advancing equity across our communities:

### Building connection and care in the face of hate and division

In 2025-26, United for All held a series of events, workshops and learning opportunities, focused on empowering community leaders to address anti-Black racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, anti-2SLGBTQIA+ ideology, and misogyny.

We collaborated with Strategies for Advocacy, Freedom, and Empowerment (SAFE) on training sessions for community leaders, with the aim to empower these folks to transition from passive bystanders to proactive 'upstanders.' They learned how to use practical strategies to safely and effectively intervene when witnessing hate or discrimination. The workshops were designed to equip leaders with tools they could bring and share with colleagues, peers, and neighbours.

By showing up where people are, addressing fear and isolation through learning and connection, and supporting community-led responses rooted in collaboration and care, United Way is helping build healthier people and stronger communities—where everyone belongs and feels safe to participate fully.



United for All is a coalition of more than 50 organizations, community leaders, and people committed to overcoming hate in East Ontario. Together, we proactively support and coordinate action that addresses hate, violence, and extremism.

[Learn more about this important work.](#)

## Housing a lifeline for women fleeing violence

Women fleeing intimate partner violence face urgent challenges, including limited access to safe, secure, and affordable housing—particularly in rural communities like Lanark County. Housing scarcity and financial pressure increase the risk that women and children will remain in unsafe situations or experience instability after leaving violence.

That’s what makes our partnership with organizations like Lanark County Interval House and Community Support (LCIH) so critical. The second-stage housing program at LCIH aims to support women for up to 18 months after leaving an abusive situation—an essential bridge between emergency shelter and independent living. Thanks to United Way East Ontario donors, this transitional program provides women and children with a stable, affordable place to heal, rebuild, and plan for the future.

United Way’s investment supports core program operations, including a dedicated support worker and counsellor. Women receive individualized, trauma-informed support to develop safety plans, build financial stability, and transition to independent living.

Through this work, United Way and its partners are helping women move beyond crisis toward stability, dignity, and renewed independence—strengthening families and community wellbeing across Lanark County.



Rachel O’Neal, Housing & Perseverance Pantry Coordinator, helps clients like Candace transition to stable housing



“When I entered the program, I felt like a broken person. I was facing significant legal fees. So, having access to safety, security, and affordable housing really made a huge difference.”

- Candace, former LCIH resident

[Read Candace’s story](#)

## Supporting caregivers through community-based care

As the population ages, unpaid caregivers—often spouses, family members, or neighbours—are providing increasing levels of care for loved ones with complex health needs. Without adequate respite and support, many caregivers experience isolation, burnout, and declining physical and mental health, placing strain on families and the broader health system.

United Way East Ontario partnered with Rural Ottawa South Support Services (ROSSS) to strengthen access to caregiver support groups, adult day programs, and transportation for seniors and caregivers living in rural communities. These services help address the unique barriers faced by caregivers who have limited access to public transit, health services, and peer support.

The generosity of donors allows us to invest in caregiver education and peer connection, while ensuring seniors take part in safe, engaging daytime programming.

This ensures caregivers can benefit from regular relief from their caregiving responsibilities, connect with others facing similar challenges, and access trusted information to navigate caregiving and the health system.

By investing in accessible, community-based caregiver supports, you are helping prevent caregiver burnout, reduce isolation, and sustain the health and wellbeing of both caregivers and the people they care for—strengthening families and community resilience across our region.



“Thanks to United Way, we’ve been able to coordinate caregiver support groups. Our partnership gives caregivers an education in navigating the challenges of everyday life, as well as the healthcare system. That’s been crucial for them.”

- Cindy Powell, Client and Caregiver Liaison at ROSSS

# Goals for the Future

## All That Kids Can Be

In 2026-27, together we will:

- **Advance a coordinated, region-wide approach to prevent and end youth homelessness** by convening cross-sector partners and supporting community-led solutions grounded in evidence and lived experience.
- **Work with partners and supporters to reduce the harm youth experience as a result of problematic substance and technology use.** To do this, we will work alongside youth, education, health, and community leaders to combine advocacy, shared learning, and targeted investment to strengthen and scale initiatives that drive sustainable change.

## From Poverty to Possibility

In 2026-27, together we will:

- **Champion and advance community wealth-building approaches across the region** using advocacy, partnerships, and investment to make it easier for people—especially those facing barriers—to find good jobs, build financial stability, and benefit from a local economy that works for everyone.
- **Remove barriers to economic participation** so that more people can avoid poverty or build pathways out of it—particularly those facing systemic exclusion.





## Community Wealth Building

A people first approach that keeps resources local, creates inclusive economic opportunities, and builds shared prosperity—so communities are stronger and more equitable.

### Healthy People, Strong Communities

In 2026-27, together we will:

- **Support building strong, connected communities to reduce isolation, inequity, insecurity, and fear for people facing the greatest barriers.** This includes strengthening training for front-line community developers, providing microgrants to bring community-led ideas to life, delivering vital community programs, and ensuring wellbeing supports are available when people need them most.
- **Deepen and mobilize partnerships to confront hate-based polarization and gender-based violence,** using advocacy, convening, and investment to drive systemic change.



GLOBAL MOVEMENT. LOCAL IMPACT.

# Women United

Women United is dedicated to improving the lives of women, girls, and gender-diverse people across East Ontario.

Our mission is simple yet powerful: to empower women to build strong, independent lives through collective giving and strategic investments.

Part of a global network, our local chapter launched in 2014, and Women United members have since given more than \$1 million to strengthen our community.



All Women United investments support one or more of our four priority areas:



Addressing Gender-Based Violence



Empowering Women in Leadership



Supporting Young Mothers and Their Children



Building an Equitable Economy

## Membership and Giving

Women United’s members help shape a more equitable future through the power of collective giving.

With an annual gift of \$300+, Women United members don’t just donate—they participate in shaping solutions for women and families in our region. Members help decide where their contributions go, directing support to initiatives that strengthen personal wellness, expand economic opportunities for newcomers, increase civic engagement, and provide critical supports for mothers and their children.

Women United is supported by a dedicated United Way team and guided by a cabinet of community members, known as the Champions, who help steward the group’s direction and impact.



There are more than 70,000+ Women United members worldwide—across six countries and 165 communities. As part of this powerful movement, our members leverage their time, talents, and funds to empower women in our communities to build strong, independent lives.



## Why I Give

"I support United Way through the Government of Canada Charitable Workplace Campaign to stay connected with and give back to my community. I especially value my involvement with Women United, as it provides the opportunity to connect with and learn directly from women community leaders whose work is strengthened through the funding I help support. Hearing firsthand how Community Action Grants empower women, build local leadership, and create lasting impact at the community level is incredibly meaningful. It has been personally rewarding to see the difference that I have helped to make."



### Rebekah Kletke

Chief Operations Officer, House of Commons Administration Government of Canada Charitable Workplace Campaign (GCWCC) donor, Women United Champion

## How Does Women United Make an Impact?

In 2025, Women United invested **\$165,821** to uplift women and girls across East Ontario, through both trusted community partnerships and grassroots leadership.

Of this total, **\$135,021** was invested in **eight programs** through the United Way Community Fund, directing support to where it can make the greatest impact on the lives of women and girls in our region. These investments were administered through our trusted partners at St. Mary's Home, Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre, City for All Women Initiative, Minwaashin Lodge, Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa, South East CHC, EcoEquitable, and Groupe Action.



Together, we can ensure all women have the supports they need to thrive.

[Join Women United.](#)

## Impact Spotlight on Community Action Grants

An additional \$30,800 was invested into 11 projects, elevating grassroots leadership through Women United's Community Action Grants (CAGs). These grants empower local women to turn their ideas into action by supporting small, community-driven initiatives that strengthen neighbourhoods from the ground up.

What makes CAGs unique is that Women United members decide which projects receive funding. Each year, a volunteer assessment panel, made exclusively of Women United members, reviews applications and selects the initiatives they believe will create the greatest change.

### Funded initiatives in 2025 included projects that:

- Created safe spaces for young women to talk about mental health, relationships, and belonging.
- Brought community housing residents together to learn, cook, share stories, and support one another.
- Supported newcomer and racialized women through leadership circles, financial literacy training, and culturally grounded workshops.
- Helped women and girls access nature, sport, and creativity—from wilderness retreats to expressive arts programs to inclusive fitness sessions.
- Celebrated local feminist leadership, spotlighting women who have shaped Ottawa's past and continue to influence its future.

These projects demonstrate the heart of Women United: real women supporting real communities, one idea at a time.

[Learn more about Women United](#)



Christine  
Lauzon-Foley

## PAVING A PATH FOR LASTING IMPACT

# The Tomorrow Fund Program

The Tomorrow Fund program is United Way's legacy giving fund, supported by gifts from donors who choose to include United Way in their will. These meaningful gifts strengthen long-term community impact by allowing United Way to plan for the future and respond to evolving needs. members have since given more than \$1 million to strengthen our community.



## The Power of Legacy Giving

"I have the privilege of helping lead a team at United Way focused on one essential question: how can we make the greatest possible impact in our communities, today and long into the future?"

Thanks to the generosity of Tomorrow Fund donors, we have the flexibility to do exactly that. Your legacy gift allows us to act with intention and creativity by investing in community-led solutions and innovative ideas that strengthen our ability to respond to complex challenges, like poverty, social isolation, and mental health.

One of the most meaningful aspects of the Tomorrow Fund is its ability to help United Way East Ontario support our communities when timely action can make all the difference. This may involve funding small but meaningful projects, investing in research, bringing partners together around shared issues, or building capacity where it's most needed. At other times, it means being ready to respond decisively when extraordinary needs arise, including during moments of crisis.

When you choose to include United Way as part of your legacy, you place deep trust in our work and in the strength of our community. I am incredibly grateful for that trust. Your generosity ensures that, long into the future, we can respond with care, creativity, and impact—creating lasting change for generations to come."

### **Christine Lauzon-Foley**

Senior Director, Policy, Planning and Investment,  
Community Impact, United Way East Ontario

## The Tomorrow Fund Program in Action

### Supporting Youth-Driven Community Solutions

In June 2024, a generous donor's contribution to United Way's Tomorrow Fund program helped advance youth leadership by enabling a youth led symposium that brought together Indigenous, Black, and racialized youth, community organizations, and local leaders to explore how Ottawa can better respond to the needs of young people.

The Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses—a network of neighbourhood community centres in low income and equity deserving communities—hosted the gathering, centring the lived experiences of youth most affected by systemic barriers and strengthening community approaches while helping ensure youth voices shape the supports designed for them.



Trisha Islam



“We know that youth are often left out of decisions that directly affect them. So, when the community came to United Way with an opportunity to amplify the voices of Indigenous, Black and racialized youth, the Tomorrow Fund allowed us to answer the call. The symposium brought together 137 young leaders, community organizers, and government officials to start planning local strategies that address the systemic inequities they face every day. This investment was a symbolic commitment to young people's voices and strategies driven by youth towards meaningful systems change.”

#### **Trisha Islam**

Director, All That Kids Can Be,  
United Way East Ontario

Learn more about the  
[Tomorrow Fund Program.](#)

# Powering Change

Community events help our team build meaningful relationships and invite the community to get involved. They are an important opportunity to bring donors, partners, and community members together to learn, connect, and see the impact of their involvement.

Getting involved and supporting United Way helps us share the stories behind our work, increase visibility for the issues facing our communities, and invest in the programs, partnerships, and advocacy that create lasting change. Thank you, we couldn't do this without you!



Ultimate Burger Battle

## United Way Ultimate Burger Battle doubles funds raised in second year

In just its second year, the United Way Ultimate Burger Battle brought together local restaurants, community members, and partners for a month of friendly competition and delicious burgers, supporting programs that strengthen connection, mental wellbeing, and social supports for those who need them most.

Twenty restaurants across Prescott Russell, Ottawa, Lanark County, and Renfrew County took part, rallying their customers and communities to join. Each restaurant created a limited time "Ultimate Burger," with \$2 from every burger sold donated to United Way East Ontario.

Throughout November, **5,570 burgers were sold, raising \$28,398.** Together, local restaurants and burger lovers helped United Way build stronger, healthier, and safer communities across our region.

## A swinging success: tee up for change raises \$76,070

Our Tee Up for Change golf tournament brought local changemakers together for a day of camaraderie, friendly competition, and meaningful community impact at The Marshes Golf Club in September 2025. Attended by a **sold-out field of 144 golfers**, these champions of United Way enabled vital services for vulnerable individuals and families across Prescott-Russell, Ottawa, Lanark County, and Renfrew County.

From unlocking locks that symbolized barriers in our region, to drone-delivered drinks and a challenge from a pro golfer courtesy of title sponsor PiiComm, the day was a powerful reminder of what our community can achieve when we come together with a common goal. We are deeply grateful to every participant, volunteer, and supporter who made the day possible.



## Hitting the bullseye: United Way's axe-throwing fundraiser rallied supporters around mental health

In February 2026, the community came together for BATL for Mental Health, a night of axe-throwing that proved that making an impact can also be a lot of fun. With 18 teams rallying behind a shared cause, the **event raised \$16,893** for programs and initiatives that provide accessible, community-based mental health support across our region. Whether participants were seasoned axe-throwers or picking up an axe for the first time, everyone played a meaningful role in helping ensure that no one faces their struggles alone.

## A summer of pride: celebrating across our region

Together with 2SLGBTQIA+ communities across our region, we attended pride celebrations in Prescott-Russell, Ottawa, Lanark County, and Renfrew County. From flag-raising ceremonies to pride parades, our staff connected with community members, sponsored events, and affirmed our belief that everyone deserves to be heard, included, and celebrated for who they are.

Our commitment to 2SLGBTQIA+ communities extends year-round through the support of community led programs that create safety, connection, and belonging. We prioritize funding for organizations led by, and serving these communities; strengthen access to mental health, housing, and social supports; and work with partners to address discrimination, reduce isolation, and build more inclusive systems across our region.



## Community Builder Awards: recognizing those who go the extra mile

United Way East Ontario's Community Builder Award program recognizes outstanding volunteers and changemakers who make a meaningful difference across the region. Each year, the Community Builder Awards honour individuals whose dedication to their communities goes above and beyond, people who give their time and talent to causes that matter, whether that's supporting vulnerable families, advocating for those who need a voice, or building stronger, more connected communities. Through celebrating these changemakers, we shine a light on the power of volunteerism and inspire others to make an impact.

This year, we were honoured to add Richard Ferland, Yves Brunet, Lisa Allaire, John Allaire, Elliott Bourgeois, Pastor Carmen Hamilton, and Jocelyne Constant to our Wall of Inspiration—a permanent recognition display in Ottawa City Hall as well as locations in Prescott-Russell, Lanark County, and Renfrew County—where their names will serve as a permanent reminder of the incredible work happening across our region.



Lisa and  
John Allaire

# Fueling Impact

## Committed to building community: Andrew and Pat Staneland

Andrew and Pat Staneland didn't set out to build a life in Ottawa, but over time, the city became an important part of their lives in ways they hadn't expected.

Their connection began years ago, when Andrew's parents were living in Ottawa. Wanting to be close and provide support as they aged, Andrew and Pat purchased a condo just across the hall. Between familiar cycling routes and favourite restaurants, it grew into a place they felt connected to. Today, Andrew and Pat continue to split their time between their home in the Kawartha Lakes area and their condo in Ottawa.

"Even though we don't live in Ottawa full time, we've developed a community here," says Pat.

That sense of community and the sense of responsibility to give back is at the heart of how Andrew and Pat think about giving.

"I think what motivates me is knowing that my parents always donated. As we grew up, we knew they were making donations to all these organizations," he says.

Pat and Andrew Staneland



Andrew's father, Herbert, supported United Way East Ontario for more than 30 years through steady giving, eventually setting up a family trust guided by his financial advisor. As Andrew and Pat later became more involved in managing the trust, their understanding of United Way's impact deepened.

"It opened our eyes to what United Way is all about and how strong they are," Pat reflects.

After Herbert passed away, they took on the responsibility of continuing to support the charities most important to him. A responsibility they put a lot of care into.

As Andrew puts it, "We can't fix everything, but just knowing that we're helping somebody—that's really the key in what we're doing with our giving."

United Way felt like a natural continuation, not only because of Herbert's long-standing support, but because its work aligns closely with Andrew and Pat's shared belief that communities thrive when multiple systems come together to help people where they are.

"Building community is important. There are so many parts to a community, and you have to support them all," they say about why their giving is often focused on building community supports.

From helping young people access stability and opportunity to ensuring seniors are not forgotten, they are drawn to organizations like United Way that take a community-wide approach to building stronger communities.

Through United Way East Ontario, Andrew and Pat continue a family legacy of giving and now supporting a community that has become an important part of their lives.



# A Message from Our Board Chair

As I close out my term in this role, I've been reflecting on many moments and experiences, but one thought continues to stand out: the future is bright for United Way East Ontario.

Choosing a new leader for an organization that is so vital to solving some of our community's greatest challenges is no easy task, but our Board of Directors really stepped up this year to put in the extra time and effort needed to ensure we made the right choice.

President and CEO Rachael Wilson's position in our community as an experienced, respected, and connected leader gives United Way the opportunity to maintain and strengthen our convening and advocacy work. Her background as a fundraiser also ensures we are well-equipped for long-term growth, which is key in today's economic climate.

Our strategic plan, unveiled this past year, was another huge undertaking which I was proud to see come to fruition. The process in creating it was so well thought out, and engaged our community, partners, donors, United Way staff, and volunteers in meaningful ways. It's going to allow us to be that much more intentional when it comes to tackling the toughest issues facing our communities going forward.

We could not have pulled off these major structural feats if not for the extraordinary leadership of Dennise Taylor-Gilhen. On behalf of the board, I want to thank



Dennise for all that she has contributed to United Way over the years. She stepped into the interim president and CEO role at a critical time and, as an advisor, has continued to help move the organization in a positive direction.

On behalf of our entire board, I would also like to thank past chair George Brown as he wraps up his time with us. George has been a mentor to me and has had a major influence on many of our volunteers in his time with the board. He will be greatly missed.

With a new leader and course set, I believe United Way is set to play an even bigger role in solving some of our region's toughest social issues. Of course, we need your support to continue this critical work.

Giving time as a volunteer at United Way can be equally valuable, if you are looking to make a long-lasting, positive impact on your community. My experience has been incredibly positive, and we are always looking to bring more diversity to our board.

As outgoing chair, I want to give one last thank you to the entire team at United Way East Ontario. I truly admire you. Your enthusiasm and dedication for making a difference in our region is unmatched. It's a privilege to stand with all of you, and I'm hopeful that others who share our vision will join us in creating meaningful change.

Sincerely,



**Thom Donnelly**  
Board Chair,  
United Way East Ontario



In 2025, United Way East Ontario brought together voices from across our community to shape a results-driven strategic plan that will guide our work for the next five years.

[Read the strategic plan](#)



# Senior Leaders and Volunteers Overview

United Way is supported by a collective network of leadership and advisory bodies, including our Board of Directors, Executive Leadership Team, and senior volunteer advisory groups. Together, these leaders help guide strategic direction, provide oversight of financial performance, and ensure accountability for achieving organizational objectives. Their combined expertise, experience, and influence play a vital role in strengthening resilient and caring communities across our region.

We thank all past volunteers for their time, effort and support towards United Way and our communities.

Individuals listed are accurate at time of publication (June 2026).



## Board of Directors

### Thom Donnelly

#### Board Chair

Senior Investment Advisor  
RBC Dominion Securities

### Sean McKenny

#### Board Treasurer

President  
Ottawa & District Labour Council

### Rachael Wilson

#### Board Secretary

President and Chief Executive Officer  
United Way East Ontario

### George Brown

#### Past Board Chair

Lawyer, Principal  
Integral North

### Jessica Barrow

#### Chair, Community Impact Cabinet

Partner  
Perley-Robertson, Hill & McDougall LLP

### Nicki Collins

#### Chair, Lanark County Advisory Council

Retired

### Oliver Jacob

#### Chair, Renfrew County Advisory Council

Assistant Manager  
Renfrew County Joint Transportation  
Consortium (RCJTC)

### Nathalie Ladouceur

#### Chair, Prescott-Russell Ontario Advisory Council

Community Member

### Kevin Barwin

Co-Chief Executive Officer, Founding Partner  
Clariti Group Inc

### Erin Benjamin

Executive Vice President, Advocacy & Strategy  
Ottawa Board of Trade

### Lauren Dodds

Deputy Director  
Environment and Climate Change Canada

### Tracy Lavallee B.A., J.D.

Director of Community Engagement  
Office of the Special Interlocutor for Missing  
Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites

### Jennifer Madigan

Vice President, Media and Communications  
Syntax Strategic

### Will Majic

Vice President, Finance  
Calian Group

### Glenn Sheen

Regional Director of Marketing and Citizenship –  
Ontario North and East  
RBC Royal Bank

## Executive Leadership Team

### Rachael Wilson

President and Chief Executive Officer

### Jessey Bird

Vice President, Marketing and Communications

### Brad Bissonnette

Chief Financial Officer

### Kristian Bowie

Chief Information and Technology Officer

### Kelly Mertl

Vice President, Community Impact

### Dennise Taylor-Gilhen

Executive Special Advisor, Strategic Initiatives

## Advisory Council for Lanark County

### Nicki Collins

Chair

*Retired*

### Stephen Cotnam

*Retired*

### Kurt Greaves

Chief Administrative Officer

*Lanark County*

### Jennifer Miller

Executive Director

*Big Brothers Big Sisters Association  
of Lanark County*

### Karen Simpson

*Retired*

### Kara Symbolic

Community Programs &

Communications Coordinator

*ConnectWell Community Health*



## Advisory Council for Renfrew County

### Oliver Jacob

Chair

Assistant Manager

*Renfrew County Joint Transportation  
Consortium (RCJTC)*

### Peter Emon

Representative of the County of Renfrew

*Reeve of Renfrew, Councillor County of Renfrew*

### Kelley Jaros

Marketing and Economic Development Officer

*Town of Arnprior*

### Dr. Jason Morgenstern

Medical Officer of Health

*Renfrew County and District Health Unit*

### Doug Steeves

*Retired*

## Advisory Council for Prescott-Russell

### Nathalie Ladouceur

Chair

*Community Member*

### Catherine deQuimper

Supervisor

*Early Years Service, United Counties  
of Prescott and Russell*

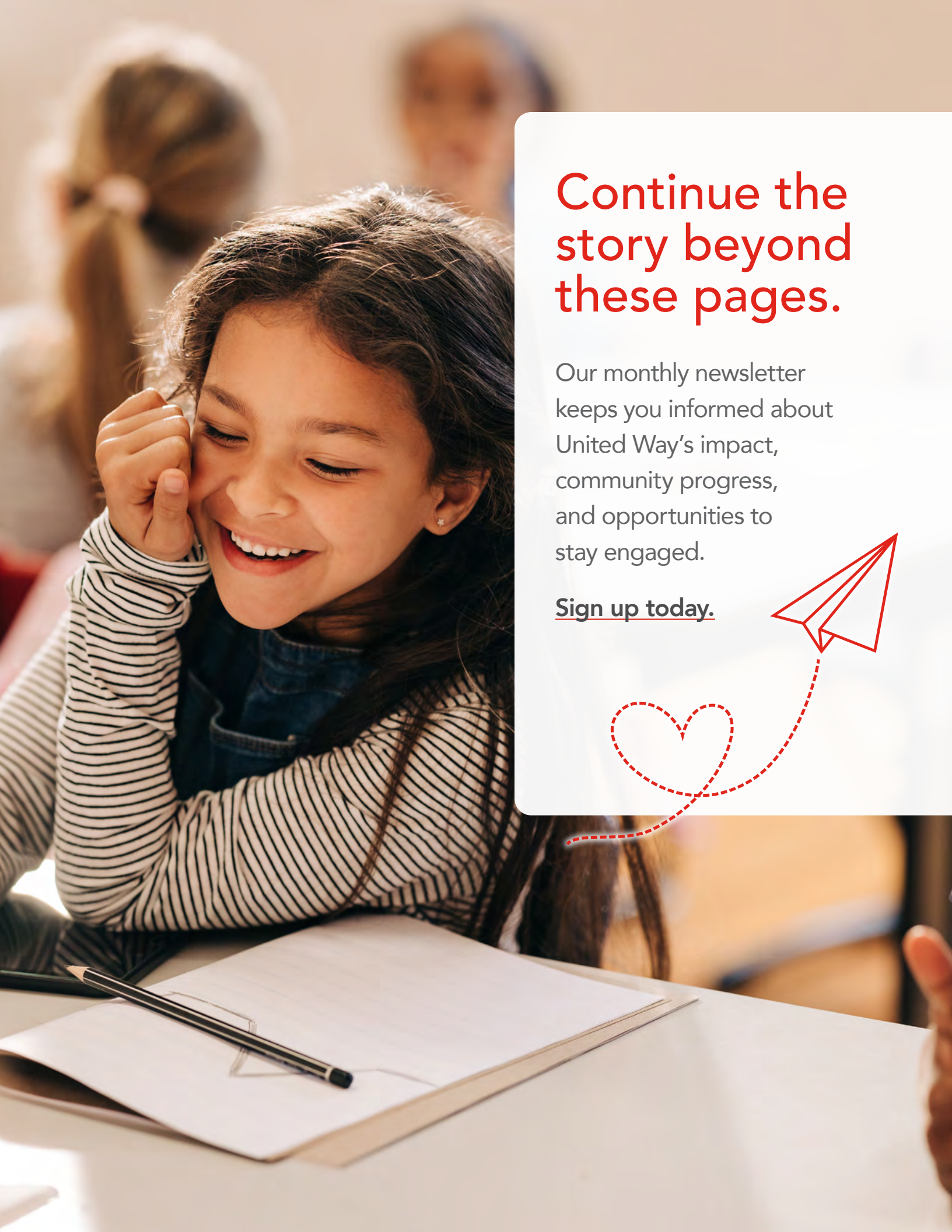
### Marie Rosalie Sagna Ph.D.

Consultant

*Sociology, Equity, Diversity,  
and Inclusion*

### Denis Vaillancourt

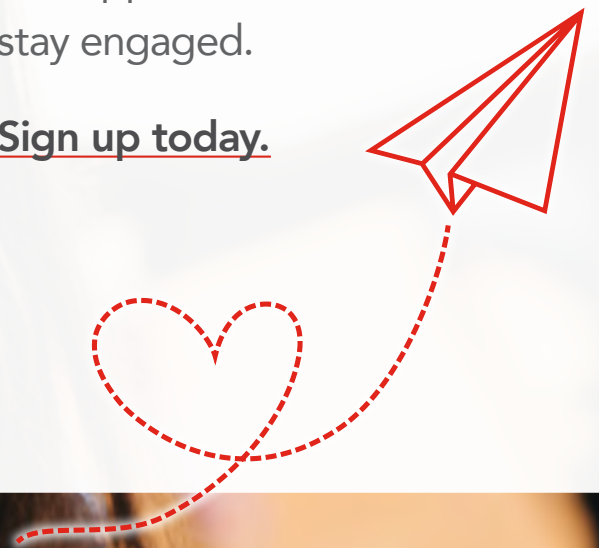
*Community Member*



# Continue the story beyond these pages.

Our monthly newsletter keeps you informed about United Way's impact, community progress, and opportunities to stay engaged.

[Sign up today.](#)



# Appendix

## Investment Breakdowns

### Terminology

**Focus Area:** Through research, consultation and analysis we identify where our community needs the most help and where our investments will have the greatest results. Our three focus areas are: All That Kids Can Be, From Poverty to Possibility, and Healthy People, Strong Communities. All projects funded through the Call for Proposals advance these priorities, address root causes, and are grounded in evidence and collaboration.

**Community Wide Initiatives:** Based on research, Community Wide Initiatives enhance our community impact and investment strategies. Community Wide Initiatives mobilize stakeholders to address community-wide challenges and create a collective response to affect systemic change.



**Donor Designed Investment(s) and Affinity Programs:** These are investments in a focus area, strategic priority, program or project, achieved through highly customized cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of a donor and in consultation with our agency partners.

**The Tomorrow Fund program:** When United Way receives a gift through a will without direction from the donor, it is guided by Board policy. The first \$100,000 each year is set aside for one-time Community Impact investments in programs and community initiatives, with remaining funds supporting operations. All funds are used to advance United Way's focus areas and strategic priorities.



## All That Kids Can Be: 12-Month Funding Period

### Focus Area Partner Funding

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE (Renfrew County, United Counties of Prescott Russell, multi-community programs)	8	Youth after school programs, mentoring, family supports	\$381,944

### Strategic Priority Partner Funding

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Critical Hours	12	Homework clubs, leadership programs, mentoring	\$622,995
School Readiness	3	Parenting support, parent-child activities, skill development	\$174,000
Youth Homelessness	3	Wrap around housing supports, transitional housing, system coordination	\$130,000
Mental Health & Addictions (Children and Youth)	1	Rural youth mental health program	\$50,000
Crisis Supports (Children and Youth)	1	Crisis support services	\$28,000

### Strategic Investment(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
None	0	N/A	N/A

### Community Wide Initiative(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Critical Hours/ School Readiness	1	Ottawa Child and Youth Initiative (OCYI) - Community collaboration	\$75,000
Mental Health/ Addictions	5	<i>project step</i> (non-mainstream school and out of school support programs, counseling, parent programs, research, school counseling programs)	\$270,000

### Donor Designed Investment(s) & Affinity Programs

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Critical Hours	3	Enhanced Homework Clubs + Summer Achievement Gap, Art programming	\$197,002
Mental Health/ Addictions	1	Rapid Opioid Response, school counseling	\$50,000

### Tomorrow Fund Initiative(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Mental Health/ Addictions	1	Rural Ottawa Youth Mental Health Collective – Piloting a Resident Leadership Group	\$12,573
Youth Homelessness	1	2024 National Conference on Ending Homelessness	\$25,000
School Readiness	2	School Avoidance Brochure, Maintaining the child development website “theirworldisus.ca”	\$8,073

## From Poverty to Possibility: 12-Month Funding Period

### Focus Area Partner Funding

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
POVERTY TO POSSIBILITY (Renfrew County, United Counties of Prescott Russell, multi-community programs)	2	Financial literacy and crisis support, social procurement support	\$101,000

### Strategic Priority Partner Funding

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Employment for Newcomers	3	Supportive employment programs/ employment readiness programs	\$160,000
Employment for People with Disabilities	4	Social enterprises/Supportive employment programs/Employment readiness program	\$135,000
Agency Capacity Building	1	Financial literacy capacity building	\$19,050
Beginnings & Transitions	1	Financial literacy capacity building	\$20,000

### Strategic Investment(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
None	0	N/A	N/A

### Community Wide Initiative(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Employment for Immigrants and New Canadians	1	Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO) and IRCC Grant	\$134,333
Employment for Immigrants and New Canadians	1	Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO)	\$13,726
Employment for People with Disabilities	1	Social enterprises/Supportive employment programs/Employment readiness program	\$164,335
Indigenous Employment Leadership Table	1	Financial literacy capacity building	\$50,000
Community Wealth Building	N/A	N/A	\$105

### Donor Designed Investment(s) & Affinity Programs

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
None	0	N/A	N/A

### Grants Based Initiatives

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Energy Poverty	3	LEAP, Hydro-Relief	\$189,644

### Tomorrow Fund Initiative(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Mental Health/ Addictions	1	Rural Ottawa Youth Mental Health Collective – Piloting a Resident Leadership Group	\$12,573
Youth Homelessness	1	2024 National Conference on Ending Homelessness	\$25,000
School Readiness	2	School Avoidance Brochure, Maintaining the child development website “theirworldisus.ca”	\$8,073

## Healthy People, Strong Communities: 12-Month Funding Period

### Focus Area Partner Funding

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
HEALTHY PEOPLE STRONG COMMUNITIES (Renfrew County, United Counties of Prescott Russell, multi-community programs)	11	Mental health counselling, seniors’ care, basic needs support	\$379,600

### Strategic Priority Partner Funding

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Agency Capacity Building	4	Collective impact initiatives, capacity building agency supports	\$177,000
Mental Health/ Addictions	8	Counselling and peer supports	\$502,000
Crisis Supports	1	Crisis counselling and intervention	\$48,000

Successful Aging	7	Programs that help seniors remain in their home, recreational programs, day programs	\$275,448
Strong Neighbourhoods	6	Resident engagement, supporting community initiatives, asset mapping	\$290,000

### Strategic Investment(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Crisis Supports	1	211 (Referral service)	\$143,360
Strong Neighbourhoods	1	Ottawa Neighbourhood Study	\$115,000
Mental Health	1	Labour Community Services	\$112,695

### Community Wide Initiative(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
None	0	N/A	N/A

### Donor Designed Investment(s) & Affinity Programs

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Strong Neighbourhoods	12	Community Action Grants; Hard Hat Heroes	\$78,800

### United For All Initiative(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Mental Health	1	UFA	\$9,920

### Tomorrow Fund Initiative(s)

Investment Area	Programs	Types of Programs	Total Investment
Crisis Supports	1	Healing circles	\$7,500
Agency Capacity Building	1	Collective impact training	\$600
Successful Aging	1	Support for End-of-Life Care	\$15,000
Strong Neighbourhoods	2	Neighbourhood Equity Index, Community Services Advocacy Plan, Community programming	\$30,000



# Outputs

Outputs measure the quantity and quality of services provided by partner agencies (e.g. clients served, hours of service, activities that took place, sessions held, etc.).

In other words, outputs measure how much we made possible and how well it was executed.

## All That Kids Can Be

Focus Area	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22*	2019-20
People supported	16,679	13,439	19,857	20,471	31,194
Programs	35	46	45	50	47

## From Poverty to Possibility

Focus Area	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22*	2019-20
People supported	5,036	4,752	4,912	8,044	6,151
Programs	15	17	14	24	17

## Healthy People, Strong Communities

Focus Area	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22*	2019-20
People supported	67,947	73,957	77,583	93,764	53,710
Programs	49	49	56	56	36

The number of programs we invest in changes year to year based on updated priorities and activities, and by prioritizing collective impact initiatives where many partners work toward a common goal. Our outputs are also influenced by moving from a three-year funding cycle to a one-year funding cycle and fluctuations in the dollars we have available to invest.

\*In 2021-2022, we reported on 18 months of investments.

# Outcomes

Outcomes measure the results achieved through the delivery of services, in this case at the program or project level. Outcomes quantify the effect the agency's efforts have on its objectives. For agencies who work with clients, outcomes could be changes in (or maintenance of) skills, knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, or circumstance. For agencies who work at a system level, outcomes could be changes in (or the maintenance of) system-level statistics, conditions, policies, etc.

In other words, outcomes measure if people are better off, or in the case of system-level programs, whether the desired goal has been achieved. United Way East Ontario sees outcomes as the best measure of impact when reporting on our investments, and we are uniquely positioned to deliver on these 14 outcomes through rigorous accountability processes and capacity building for agencies.

## ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE

- Children are ready to learn
- Children and youth are successful in school
- Children and youth have access to mental health, addiction, and crisis supports
- Children and youth experiencing homelessness receive supports
- Children and youth are actively engaged and resilient

## FROM POVERTY TO POSSIBILITY

- Newcomers are engaged in the labour market
- People with disabilities are engaged in the labour market
- Youth are supported in their transition to employment
- Priority populations are engaged in the labour market
- People in financial crisis receive supports

## HEALTHY PEOPLE, STRONG COMMUNITIES

- Adults have access to mental health and addiction supports
- Seniors have improved wellbeing and are less isolated
- Neighbourhoods achieve positive change
- Adults in crisis have access to immediate supports

## ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE

THE OUTCOMES	IMPACT	RESULTS
Children are ready to learn	87% of caregivers reported having increased confidence in their parenting ability	894 families/caregivers served that were provided with information, resources, tools, trainings, and/or teaching skills
Children and youth are successful in school	85% of children developed soft skills like time management, communication, and critical thinking	1,186 youth served who participated in school and/or community-based out-of-school time programs focused on academic success
Children and youth have access to mental health, addiction, and crisis supports	87% of youth achieved their counselling goals	6,995 youth accessed a mental health, addiction, and/or crisis support program
Children and youth experiencing homelessness receive supports	160 youth moved into affordable housing with no limitations or requirements	163 youth living in emergency shelters or transitional housing received supports to live independently
Children and youth are actively engaged and resilient	88% youth reported improved emotional wellbeing and better access to positive coping strategies	15,622 youth served who were equipped with tools to improve their emotional wellbeing, prosocial behaviors, and positive coping strategies





## FROM POVERTY TO POSSIBILITY

THE OUTCOMES	IMPACT	RESULTS
Newcomers are engaged in the labour market	<b>37%</b> of newcomer job seekers found employment	<b>1,353</b> individuals served by employment programs for newcomers <sup>1</sup>
People with disabilities are engaged in the labour market	<b>74%</b> of job seekers with disabilities found employment	<b>1,408</b> individuals served by employment programs for people with disabilities <sup>2</sup>
Youth are supported in their transition to employment	<b>44%</b> of clients enrolled in time limited education or training	<b>225</b> youth served by employment programs
Priority populations are engaged in the labour market	<b>46%</b> of participants found outside employment as a result of the program	<b>3,268</b> individuals served by employment programs for all priority populations, including rural residents, Indigenous job seekers, newcomers, youth, and people with disabilities <sup>3</sup>
People in financial crisis receive supports	<b>96%</b> of people supported felt safer and more secure	<b>1,661</b> people in financial crisis received financial services and supports

<sup>1</sup>Includes HIO | <sup>2</sup>Includes EARN | <sup>3</sup>Includes EARN, HIO, and IELAT



## HEALTHY PEOPLE, STRONG COMMUNITIES

THE OUTCOMES	IMPACT	RESULTS
Adults have access to mental health and addiction supports	88% of clients had improved mental health outcomes	12,207 individuals received mental health and addiction supports
Seniors and caregivers have improved wellbeing and are less isolated	93% of clients reported reduced feelings of isolation and loneliness	2,091 seniors and caregivers accessed programs to improve their wellbeing and sense of community
Neighbourhoods achieve positive change	89% of participants had increased meaningful connections as a result of their engagement	6,863 residents engaged with their community on issues of shared importance
Adults in crisis have access to immediate supports	66% of clients experienced a reduction to their distress	34,328 individuals received crisis supports

## Measurement and Collection Methods

### Indicator Assessment Definitions for Agency Partners

This is how we ask our partners to report back on the front-line work United Way donors have helped make possible.

**Type:** Output or Outcome

**Indicator description:** An outcome indicator normally implies directional change using words such as increase, decrease, strengthening, reduce, improved etc. An output indicator typically reports on short-term results or actions that are needed to achieve an outcome and uses action words such as trained, completed, identified, held, disseminated, evaluated, launched etc.

**Target:** Targets should be specific, realistic and ambitious. With few exceptions, targets should be numeric. They cannot be a range (e.g. 45-55 is not acceptable, 50 is acceptable). There is no need to qualify a target (e.g. 50 children) because who or what the agency is measuring should be very clear in the indicator description (e.g. increase in children attending homework clubs).

**Unit of measure:** The most common units of measure will be number or percentage. For activities such as getting a policy approved or holding a major event, a unit of measure such as complete/incomplete may be more appropriate.

**Definition:** Agencies can outline what the different terms/words used in the indicator mean to them, since often, terms used are open to interpretation. For instance, in the indicator “decrease in the number of people using drugs”, it would be helpful to further define that ‘people’ are program clients and to be counted as someone no longer using drugs, they must have been off drugs for at least six weeks by the end of the one year program.

**Frequency and timing of data**

**collection:** How often and when data is collected. Daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, each January and July, annually, etc. Is there a specific time period when data is collected (e.g. only during the school year, during tax season)?

**Method to data collection or**

**calculation:** A description of the approach or plan to collect the data, including where data will be kept and how results will be calculated.

**Data source:** Where the data needed to calculate or track the indicator will be coming from. It should be clear whether the source is internal to the organization or external. If an agency is asked to provide evidence of the figures it calculated or provided for an indicator, they are expected to provide documentation or a source.

**Person(s) responsible for data**

**collection:** When designing an indicator, it is important to think about who will be responsible for collecting and maintaining the data, to ensure that it will be feasible to collect. Is this a staff member? A consultant? A volunteer? The title of the person responsible should be identified.

# About United Way East Ontario

Working with communities in Prescott-Russell, Ottawa, Lanark County, and Renfrew County, United Way East Ontario invests resources where they are needed most and will have the greatest impact. Through research, evaluation, and partnerships with community experts, we identify the root causes of the biggest social challenges facing our communities and help find solutions that change tens of thousands of lives for the better. 100% of donations to United Way are put to work in the communities where they are raised to help those most in need.

[UNITEDWAYEO.CA](https://www.unitedwayeo.ca)



**United Way**  
East Ontario