



United Way
Niagara

LOCAL GIVING. 100% LOCAL IMPACT.



CONTENT FOR WORKPLACE CAMPAIGNS

Employee Campaign Coordinator Tool Kit

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Within this document, you will find various types of impact stories, social media post templates, images and program highlights that you may use to help share the impact of supporting United Way with your colleagues.

These are the stories of real people in Niagara who have been able to access the support they needed, when and where they needed it – and are only possible with the support of donors like you.

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Section 1: Social Media Posts

Kick Off Posts

Twitter	Facebook	Instagram
<p>@uwniagara was able to help 175,398 people in community last year!</p> <p>The <Org Name> team is ready show our support this year to help @uwniagara turn barriers into opportunities for those in need.</p>	<p>@UnitedWayNiagara was able to help 175,398 people in community last year!</p> <p>The <Org Name> team is ready show our support this year to help @UnitedWayNiagara turn barriers into opportunities for those in need.</p>	<p>@uwniagara was able to help 175,398 people in community last year!</p> <p>The <Org Name> team is ready show our support this year to help @uwniagara turn barriers into opportunities for those in need.</p>
<p>DYK? @uwniagara supports nearly 150 programs across #Niagara!</p> <p>This year, we're raising funds for @uwniagara to support the community where we live, work and play. #MakeADifference</p>	<p>DYK? @UnitedWayNiagara supports nearly 150 programs across #Niagara!</p> <p>This year, we're raising funds for @UnitedWayNiagara to support the community where we live, work and play. #MakeADifference</p>	<p>DYK? @uwniagara supports nearly 150 programs across #Niagara!</p> <p>This year, we're raising funds for @uwniagara to support the community where we live, work and play. #MakeADifference</p>

Impact Posts

Twitter	Facebook	Instagram
<p>United Way Niagara supports a vast network of programs that help families overcome challenges.</p> <p>With the help of @uwniagara, 31,650 children and youth improved their emotional and physical well-being last year.</p>	<p>United Way Niagara supports a vast network of programs that help families overcome challenges.</p> <p>With the help of @UnitedWayNiagara, 31,650 children and youth improved their emotional and physical well-being last year.</p> <p>The <Org Name> team is proud to be raising funds in support of @UnitedWayNiagara's work in community this year!</p> <p>#BarriersIntoOpportunities #MakeADifference</p>	<p>United Way Niagara supports a vast network of programs that help families overcome challenges.</p> <p>With the help of @uwniagara, 31,650 children and youth improved their emotional and physical well-being last year.</p> <p>The <Org Name> team is proud to be raising funds in support of @UnitedWayNiagara's work in community this year!</p> <p>#BarriersIntoOpportunities #MakeADifference</p>
<p>1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.</p> <p>@uwniagara helped 50,301 individuals access programs that address mental health, addictions or personal advocacy last year.</p>	<p>1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.</p> <p>@UnitedWayNiagara helped 50,301 individuals access programs that address mental health, addictions or personal advocacy last year.</p> <p>We're proud to support @UnitedWayNiagara through our 2023 fundraising campaign!</p>	<p>1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.</p> <p>@uwniagara helped 50,301 individuals access programs that address mental health, addictions or personal advocacy last year.</p> <p>We're proud to support @uwniagara through our 2023 fundraising campaign!</p>

	#UnitedWayNiagara #MakeADifference #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities	#UnitedWayNiagara #MakeADifference #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities
In in 5 people in Niagara have experienced some form of social isolation. In 2022, @uwniagara helped 34,825 individuals improve their connections to local supports. #MakeADifference	In in 5 people in Niagara have experienced some form of social isolation. In 2022, @UnitedWayNiagara helped 34,825 individuals <u>improve their connections</u> to local supports. Our <OrgName> team is working together to raise funds for @UnitedWayNiagara to turn local barriers into local opportunities. #UnitedWayNiagara #MakeADifference #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities	In in 5 people in Niagara have experienced some form of social isolation. In 2022, @uwniagara helped 34,825 individuals improve their connections to local supports. Our <OrgName> team is working together to raise funds for @uwniagara to turn local barriers into local opportunities. #UnitedWayNiagara #MakeADifference #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities
Behind closed doors, local people are struggling with issues we can't see. The <Org Name> team is supporting @uwniagara to keep the safety net of social services protected for the most vulnerable in community. #UnitedWayNiagara	Behind closed doors, local people are struggling with issues we can't see. The <Org Name> team is supporting @UnitedWayNiagara to keep the safety net of social services protected for the most vulnerable in community. #UnitedWayNiagara #MakeADifference #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities	Behind closed doors, local people are struggling with issues we can't see. The <Org Name> team is supporting @uwniagara to keep the safety net of social services protected for the most vulnerable in community. #UnitedWayNiagara#MakeADifference #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities
In 2022, @uwniagara helped 43,588 individuals improve their food security. At <OrgName>, we're standing with @uwniagara to support a healthier community. #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities	In 2022, @UnitedWayNiagara helped 43,588 individuals improve their food security. At <OrgName>, we're standing with @UnitedWayNiagara to support a healthier community. #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities	In 2022, @uwniagara helped 43,588 individuals improve their food security. At <OrgName>, we're standing with @uwniagara to support a healthier community. #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities

Thank You Posts

Twitter	Facebook	Instagram
Thank you to everyone at <Org Name> who supported the @uwniagara fundraising campaign for 2023! Last year, @uwniagara invested in 143 programs for 175,398 people in Niagara to get the help they needed.	Thank you to everyone at <Org Name> who supported the @UnitedWayNiagara fundraising campaign for 2023! Last year, @UnitedWayNiagara invested in 143 programs for 175,398 people in Niagara to get the help they needed. Together we will create opportunities for local people in need! #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities	Thank you to everyone at <Org Name> who supported the @uwniagara fundraising campaign for 2023! Last year, @uwniagara invested in 143 programs for 175,398 people in Niagara to get the help they needed. Together we will create opportunities for local people in need! #TurnBarriersIntoOpportunities

<p>We're grateful to our <Org Name> team for coming together in support of @uwniagara</p> <p>DYK? @uwniagara works with a network of 90 agency partners across #Niagara to help our friends and neighbours thrive.</p>	<p>We're grateful to our <Org Name> team for coming together in support of @UnitedWayNiagara</p> <p>DYK? @UnitedWayNiagara works with a network of 90 agency partners supporting 143 funded programs across #Niagara to help our friends and neighbours thrive.</p> <p>Thank you for showing we can #MakeADifference!</p>	<p>We're grateful to our <Org Name> team for coming together in support of @uwniagara!</p> <p>DYK? @uwniagara works with a network of 90 agency partners supporting 143 funded programs across #Niagara to help our friends and neighbours thrive.</p> <p>Thank you for showing #MakeADifference!</p>
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Municipal Cup

Twitter	Facebook	Instagram
<p>Thank you to everyone at <Municipality Name> for supporting the @uwniagara fundraising campaign for 2023!</p> <p>Together we can #MakeADifference!</p>	<p>Thank you to everyone at <Municipality Name> for supporting the @UnitedWayNiagara fundraising campaign for 2023!</p> <p>Last year, local municipalities did their part to support the campaign and @UnitedWayNiagara invested in 143 programs for 175,398 people in Niagara to get the help they needed.</p> <p>Together we can prove that #MakeADifference!</p>	<p>Thank you to everyone at <Municipality Name> who supported the @uwniagara fundraising campaign for 2023!</p> <p>Last year, local municipalities did their part to support the campaign and @uwniagara invested in 143 programs for 175,398 people in Niagara to get the help they needed.</p> <p>Together we can prove that #MakeADifference!</p>
N/A	<p>Each year, local municipalities who support United Way Niagara may opt to participate in the Municipal Challenge.</p> <p>This initiative rewards the local municipality with the most employee participation in the annual campaign.</p> <p>Last year The Town of Fort Erie won the cup and we can't wait to see who takes it home this time! #UnitedWayNiagara</p>	<p>Each year, local municipalities who support United Way Niagara may opt to participate in the Municipal Challenge.</p> <p>This initiative rewards the local municipality with the most employee participation in the annual campaign.</p> <p>Last year The Town of Fort Erie won the cup and we can't wait to see who takes it home this time! #UnitedWayNiagara</p>

United Way Niagara Story Bank

- 1) Funded program stories – full for longer copy
- 2) Impact stories – short
- 3) Short program testimonials
- 4) Funded program impact statements – short

Funded program stories – full for longer copy

MENTORSHIP MATTERS FOR YOUTH IN NIAGARA

Teaching kids early about how to make healthy choices, handle life's challenges and prepare for school and adulthood can set them on the path to success. Supportive programs that do this are especially vital to children and families living in poverty. Research shows childhood adversity linked to poverty often leads to negative outcomes in adulthood, which can result in a continued cycle of poverty. Adverse childhood experiences (ACE) stem from a variety of life situations, and make the need for organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters vital for some.

"Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring programs offer children and youth the opportunity to spend time with a caring adult role model. We see how crucial significant relationships with supportive adults are to healthy child development. Mentors can help young people gain confidence, reinforce the importance of staying in school, help them to develop social skills, and so much more! Big Brothers Big Sisters relies on support from the community to operate, and United Way Niagara continues to be a great supporter and partner!" - Erin Graybiel, Executive Director

Good role models can make lifelong impressions on how children will handle the difficult situations that they will inevitably face in life. For young individuals who could benefit from an adult role model, mentoring programs can provide a crucial lifeline. The Big Brothers Big Sisters mentorship program strives to reach young people who face adversity and need an additional supportive relationship. Mentorship matches are impactful for both the mentor and the mentee.

Mentor John Kang was raised by his mother, so he is familiar with the challenges of growing up without a father in his life. His mother worked hard and made sure he had every opportunity to participate in his community but when she passed away suddenly a few years ago, the loss forced him to take a good look at his own life. He was faced with questions like "What relationships do I have to be proud of?" and "What do I want my legacy to be?" To honour his mother's legacy of giving back and prepare himself to be a father someday, he began the process of becoming a match in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

John was matched with Kieran nearly two years ago and has enjoyed every minute. The program makes matches based on common interests, personalities and so much more. The two connected from the beginning over a common love of music. "I picked him up that first day and I asked if he wanted to listen to something on the radio, and handed him the control – his face lit up and I knew – okay music, awesome!"

“Kieran used to talk about difficulties at school with his peers. He explained that he used to have trouble handling his emotions and would just explode sometimes. Nowadays those stories are replaced with self-reflection and emotional maturity. He has grown so much in such a short time. It’s very rewarding to know he’s comfortable with me, to say whatever is on his mind. We have built a really good foundation of trust. He is an amazing kid. So enthusiastic, so kind, so generous. I honestly couldn’t ask for a better match.” - John Kang, Mentor

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING - MORE THAN JUST SHELTER

Transitional housing is a vital temporary accommodation that is meant to bridge the gap from homelessness to permanent housing by offering structured support programs and services. Transitional housing is second-stage shelter, helping people secure permanent housing and rebuild their lives with confidence.

Bethlehem Housing & Support Services (BHSS) runs a comprehensive Transitional Housing Program, one that United Way is proud to invest in thanks to the dedicated support of our donors. “It’s a long journey for many of our residents,” says Lori Beech, Executive Director of BHSS. “Our supportive programs and staff are there to walk alongside residents every step of the way, helping them to make positive changes and get back on track.” Securing housing is never simple, every situation is unique.

The program, at its core, is client centered and uses trauma informed practices to support each resident’s unique challenges. Those who enter the program are provided with ongoing personal support, supplemented rent, life skills, education opportunities, income support, legal support and the list goes on.

Transitional housing is a critical step in securing housing. People can find themselves experiencing homelessness for any number of reasons, and the key to finding housing stability again is being prepared to face life’s challenges. With a 95 per cent success rate, transitional housing does just that.

Sophia made the difficult decision to leave her home in the Caribbean in order to escape the abuse she had been experiencing with her partner. Determined to build a new life for her and her two young daughters, Sophia was granted refugee status with the help of a friend. Although they had very little, Sophia was overjoyed to be with her daughters in Canada. Living arrangements became difficult and Sophia started moving from shelter to shelter throughout the Niagara region. Her thoughts consumed her as she felt the opportunities and goals in her life deteriorate. With no one to talk to and no guidance available, she started to lose hope in herself. Sophia found BHSS and felt relief and excitement when she was accepted into Bethlehem Place, a transitional supportive housing program.

“Under the guidance of my support worker, I was able to achieve my goals, and chances in life. My Support Worker talked me through my goals and what I wanted to become. She took the time to sit down with me and remind me just how important my life is. I would like people to know that Bethlehem Housing is a great organization that was there for me when I had nowhere to go, and that my support worker was there to help guide me every step of the way.” - Sophia, Program Participant

MEALS ON WHEELS DELIVERS MORE THAN A MEAL

Meals on Wheels (MOW) delivers nutritious, delicious and affordable meals to members of our community who are at nutritional risk, including: seniors, people with physical disabilities and cognitive

impairments, individuals suffering from illnesses and recovering from surgeries, and those who need special dietary planning and assistance. Access to well-balanced and affordable meals is imperative to the independence and sustenance of isolated individuals; this has been magnified immensely throughout the pandemic and continues to be a priority with increased food costs and higher cost of living.

But Meals on Wheels is so much more than that to its clients.

The program relies on volunteer drivers to deliver meals in the community. They also provide integral social support, security and wellness checks. These supports are the backbone of MOW and why so many seniors can stay home longer - where they feel safe and comfortable. As people age, there is often a decline in their overall health, resulting in fewer social interactions, increased risk of falls and other injuries and decreased ability to cook for themselves. All three of these potential outcomes weigh heavily on loved ones and are often the reasons seniors have to give up their homes and move to assisted living.

“The comfort we feel knowing dad is getting nutritious meals and being checked on every day is the only reason we are comfortable with him continuing to live independently. Dad wants to stay at home, where he and mom spent the last 60 years and Meals on Wheels makes that possible for him. We aren’t able to visit every day, so when we would call and he didn’t answer, it was incredibly stressful.” - Family of client

The volunteers and staff find the program equally as meaningful. The clients enjoy interacting with their volunteer driver, and the volunteers develop friendships with them. “It’s a mutually beneficial relationship,” noted one volunteer. “I deliver the same route every week and have grown to really enjoy my interactions with my new friends. I get updates on the great-grand babies and hear about promotions or other major life events. I’ve become part of the family in a way, and the clients are part of mine too. Seeing their smiling faces when they answer the door is one of the best parts of my week and sometimes theirs too.”

MOW clients aren’t always long-term clients – sometimes, the program is used to transition from hospital to home and throughout recovery from surgery or illness. It’s just as important in these cases, as it frees up hospital beds and gets patients home sooner, where they want to be. For example, Joanne became a client when she was discharged with a severe infection in her leg. Her mobility was very limited, and she was unable to get out to get groceries or stand to prepare meals for herself. The MOW program has assisted Joanne in returning home, and the volunteer is able to monitor her recovery progress. The wellness checks are just as important to Joanne’s loved ones as the meals, and she looks forward to her daily visitor too. Last year, United Way funding provided over 50,000 meals, supporting 902 individuals in Niagara.

Domestic Violence Support – supplied by program participant

Throughout our marriage I should have won an academy award. I always had a smile on my face, I appeared happy, I was social and outgoing. But inside our marriage, my husband was abusive and narcissistic.

I truly thought that by showering him with love and kindness that one day I would be able to change and fix him. It never worked. For many years I tried to find a way out but I didn't think that there was one. I thought that you had to be black and blue to go to a shelter and therefore quickly dismissed the thought when things were at their worst. I didn't think that I could go to friends or family because nobody knew my secret, I was everyone else's go-to when they needed help. In reality, I was the one who needed saving.

There was no safe place at home for me. No matter where I tried to hide, to avoid the conflict and shelter the children from the fighting, he would hunt me down and find me. I was running away from the house and visiting friends, going for walks or just sitting in my vehicle in a parking lot hoping and praying that when I got home he would be asleep and there would be no more conflict. The children and I were constantly walking on eggshells and things were becoming more dangerous. Finally, one of my children could not take the way that I was being treated anymore and stood up for me. At that point I knew that we all needed to find a way out.

Finally, I got the nerve to call Women's Place after yet another incident and they came to our rescue. The staff gave us clear instructions on what to do, what to bring and guided us to safety. We were so afraid but the further we drove away from our house we felt such relief as we headed to the shelter. We were greeted with love and kindness when we arrived at the shelter and for the first time in ages we all got a peaceful night's sleep without having to worry about anything. We all felt completely safe and I can't describe how absolutely amazing that felt.

The staff at Women's Place made us feel safe, secure, loved, supported and very special. Each staff member went out of their way to ensure that we had everything that we needed and they were always there to listen, offer guidance and support. Without the love and support of Women's Place my children and I would not have been able to leave my husband safely. I truly didn't think that there was a way out but I had been daydreaming about it for years.

Women's Place enabled us to finally escape. Our family is eternally grateful for everyone who makes the work that they do possible. Our journey is still ongoing and while our future may be uncertain, I can honestly say that coming to Women's Place and allowing them to rescue us has been the best decision that I have ever made for myself and my children. I know that with the help, love, support and guidance from Women's Place our story will have a happy ending.

Wraparound Supports – AJ's story (supplied by participant)

"I should have been successful, but I wasn't. When I was nine, I was diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). That led to other diagnoses: generalized anxiety and depression. Growing up, I was in the gifted program at school, but I got into shouting matches with my teachers. Things like that happened a lot. They were constantly telling me to leave. Eventually, I did. My OCD got so bad that I would shower up to four times a day. I had little social life, which really hindered my growth as a person. It also made it difficult for me to get along with my family. I really love my parents. They tried to help me to find doctors to help, but I felt like no one was listening to me.

My depression was so bad that it manifested in suicidal thoughts, and by the time I was 18, it was way too much for me. I had no money. I had no education. I ended up leaving home. I would go to the emergency room sometimes, or a homeless shelter. I didn't want to go home.

Eventually, I was connected with a social worker through a program funded by United Way. The social worker helped me get provincial disability support and access a range of services, including counselling, housing, peer support and skill development that made me feel more hopeful about my future.

Today, I volunteer with the agency that helped me. Helping others who were just like me gives me purpose, I no longer feel like a burden on society. I still work with my social worker one-on-one. She helped me find work, and now I'm applying to schools as a mature student. It's nice to know that people care about me and want me to succeed. That's pretty powerful." - AJ, program participant

Impact stories – short

"I started using hard drugs in my twenties while attending university. But because of my drug use, after graduating I ended up living on the streets for four years. I always utilized any resources out there, like food banks, shelters, and drop-in centres. So, I became familiar with United Way from that perspective. At one food bank, I made a real connection with someone who was working there. She was so loving and caring and never judgemental. I began volunteering there after that, working with their after-school program and food prep. I struggle with depression but volunteering got me up and out of bed. It changed my life. Today I have a place to live, and I'm no longer a hard drug user. I'm 62 years old, and I'm alive. So that's a success story." – Michele, program participant and volunteer

"I was raised in a small village and when I moved here I needed help. That's what makes United Way so important—I realized it was something I could depend on. I didn't have to sit around worrying, I could get the support I needed. I realized I needed help after the pandemic had been going on for a few months. This support means I don't have to wonder when I'm going to eat, or what I'm going to eat. I receive groceries on Wednesdays, or even a gift card so I can do my own shopping, it makes me feel more stable. That help goes a long way when you don't have the means to do it yourself. Now I also volunteer at the program so I can pay it forward. Whether I'm working or receiving help, I feel more connected and much happier. Thank you for your support, United Way." – Chad, program participant and volunteer

"As a person with an intellectual disability, it's not always so easy for me to reach out. Yet, I know I have much to offer because I am sociable, friendly, and cheerful. It's important for me to have friendships. I have to overcome other obstacles because of my diminished vision and partial paralysis, but I find ways to look after my personal needs. That is why I rely on United Way-supported programs. They help me with social interaction, learning and recreation. Since joining the program, I have gained more confidence. Before, I was too shy to ask for help. Today, I am learning to communicate with others, to say things in the right way and to apply my filters. It was tough during the pandemic, I felt isolated. United Way support means I can have more control over my life. Thank you for helping." – Cindy, program participant

"I joined a United Way-supported program a few months after my daughter was born, struggling with the fact I was a 17-year-old mom with poor mental health and stuck in a toxic relationship. I was scared of everything and had lost my sense of hope. This program became my safe place. I learned that what I do matters and other strategies for daily life. I began taking care of myself again and learned to love myself and my daughter. This program also helped me get free from my toxic relationship. We have a second family there and love getting up and ready for school, the daycare is amazing too. If it wasn't for the

program, I'd be in a really bad place right now, and so would my daughter. I came here broken and now I am a much stronger person and mother." – Robin, program participant

Short program testimonials

"After my mother-in-law and sister-in-law passed away in hospice, I realized the importance of support for everyone during these difficult times. I began volunteering with a community hospice. It is fulfilling work and by blessing others, I am being blessed." – volunteer, West Niagara Palliative Care

"My sister has developmental disabilities and has really benefited from this program. She looks forward to every session and participates as much as she can. She is able to exercise, learn new recipes, play games and crafts. I am grateful she has found a program that supports her." – family of participant, Community Living

"I was having a hard time finding a job and supporting my family. I found this program that was able to help by providing financial assistance to stay in our home. It was important for our kids to have stability and because we could stay, they were able to be part of this community. We are forever grateful." – program participant, Community Care West Niagara

"The meal delivery program helps me maintain a balanced diet. I will be 91 years old this year, and live alone. Shopping for food and preparing meals for myself has become difficult for me since experiencing a fall last spring. I appreciate very much the support and friendly service provided to me through this program." – program participant, Meals on Wheels

"My daughter really struggled with school, especially through remote learning times. Her confidence was so low. After she began a literacy program, we saw an immediate change in her attitude and behaviour, as well as her skills. She is so much happier now." – parent of participant, Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara

"I find it difficult to use public transit due to my limited mobility, so going to the grocery store is a challenge, not to mention the cost of fresh food these days. Having access to all these fresh vegetables right in my backyard will allow me to cook a wonderful meal for my whole family. We are so grateful." – program participant, Community Pop-up Produce Markets

"As a parent, I understand the importance of good nutrition. I am honored to be part of a program that assists families and children in getting a nutritious start to the day. I've witnessed the impact filling foods can make. These kids are better prepared to learn and focus." – volunteer, Niagara Nutrition Partners

"I was having multiple falls in my home but I had no means to pay for a walker. United Way was able to assist and provide me with a sense of security. I'm living in my home and going out in my community feeling confident with my new walker." – program participant, Seniors Health & Well-being support

“The Welland breakfast program expanded to serve vulnerable folks seven days a week due to the increase in need last year. The Food Support Grant funding we received is a blessing that will allow us to continue to serve meals and support our vulnerable friends in Welland. We are very grateful.” – Food Support Grant recipient

“I became part of the trusteeship program when I was 16 years old. My Ontario Works worker referred me to Community Care because I was underage and needed a trustee. During the time I was on the program I was able to get housed and had lots of help by my caseworker advocating to my landlord over several moves. I graduated high school and graduated from the trusteeship program. I have been off now for close to two years and my case worker still helps me when I struggle from time to time. I was recently able to get help fighting an eviction and get a fulltime job. This has improved my quality of life because without help from my worker getting me a full-time job, I would be getting evicted not being able to pay my rent.” – program participant, Community Care St. Catharines & Thorold

“Before I came to Bethlehem my world was turned upside down. After meeting with the workers everything changed in my life and my son's life for the better. 6 months later and I have to say that Bethlehem Place has made my life a wonderful one. Bethlehem Place has now opened many doors and opportunities for me. Everyone at Bethlehem Place makes you feel comfortable and secure.” – program participant, Bethlehem Housing and Support Services

“In a very dark time, my husband of 40 years had a brain injury and will remain in a nursing home forever – Port Cares helped me with everything that I needed, moral support, financial help, job opportunities, I am looking forward to some training in the future, the situation was very scary for me – to be alone and starting over. With their help, I am feeling much better.” – program participant, Port Cares

Funded program impact statements – short

ATTCH Niagara specializes in treatment for complex issues and traumas. Since 2020, referrals have dramatically increased, and with over 50 per cent of their clients with active suicide ideation and self-harm behaviour, the need for immediate support is crucial. Supported by United Way, a waitlist group and aftercare program is possible, serving 210 people in need last year.

Accessible Nature Trails at Heartland Forest offer the invaluable experience of immersing in nature to all ages and abilities. Thanks to support from United Way to complete the project, more than 9,000 people are able to enjoy the benefits of nature. Being in nature is proven to reduce anger, fear and stress, increase pleasant feelings and positively impact overall well-being.

Mini Mobile Closet provides immediate access to seasonal new and used clothing to people experiencing a clothing crisis, making clothing more accessible where and when it is needed by frontline workers. The program assisted 2,081 people in crisis with clothing last year; including individuals experiencing homelessness, domestic violence survivors, shelter residents and hospital patients.

Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound provides innovative wrap-around services designed to help inadequately housed or homeless Indigenous mother-led families to earn college diplomas, start careers,

and achieve economic self-sufficiency. Last year, the rent subsidy program supported by United Way helped 57 mother-led families in Niagara.

Play Therapy, supported by United Way, is a program guided by a trained therapist and used to explore emotions and deal with unresolved trauma for children. Funding provided care to 18 children in urgent need last year – victims of abuse and neglect and witnesses to violence. Through play, children can learn new coping mechanisms and how to redirect inappropriate behaviors as they recover.

Food4Kids summer food program was able to increase capacity, supporting an additional 75 children, thanks to United Way last year. The program operates during the summer, when school nutrition programs are not available, providing weekly food packages to low-income families in Niagara. This ensures that families in need face no interruption to a stable food supply during summer months.

Section 3: Impact in Action Images

Downloadable, good quality images are available via this shared [Google Drive](#).

Section 4: Impact in Action Captions



IMAGE: 1 – Student nutrition

A gift of \$5 per pay, or \$130 per year, can provide 13 students with nutritious food at school.

#IMPACT #UnitedWay



IMAGE: 2 – Secure, stable housing

A gift of \$260 provides 29 hours of essential youth support to obtain and maintain housing, avoid homelessness and remain engaged in education.

#IMPACT #UnitedWay



IMAGE: 3 – AJ's story

"I should have been successful, but I wasn't. When I was nine, I was diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). That led to other diagnoses: generalized anxiety and depression.

Growing up, I was in the gifted program at school, but I got into shouting matches with my teachers. Things like that happened a lot. They were constantly telling me to leave. Eventually, I did.

It was a United Way-supported agency that turned my life around.

Today, I volunteer with the agency that helped me. Helping others who were just like me gives me purpose, I no longer feel like a burden on society. I still work with my social worker one-on-one. She helped me find work, and now I'm applying to schools as a mature student. It's nice to know that people care about me and want me to succeed. That's pretty powerful."

[optional: link to full story]

#IMPACT #UnitedWay



IMAGE: 4 – Seniors – meal delivery

A gift of \$52, or just \$2 per pay, can provide 5 seniors with a hot meal delivered to their home.

#IMPACT #UnitedWay



IMAGE: 5 – Emergency shelter

A gift of \$45 per pay can provide emergency shelter for a family experiencing homelessness.

#IMPACT #UnitedWay



IMAGE: 6 – Mentorship

A Leadership Gift of \$1,200 per year can provide one at-risk youth with on-going support through a life-changing mentoring relationship.

#IMPACT #UnitedWay



IMAGE: 7 – Rent subsidy and wraparound

The Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound program, supported by United Way, provides innovative wrap-around services designed to help inadequately housed or homeless Indigenous mother-led families to earn college diplomas, start careers, and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Last year, the rent subsidy program supported by United Way helped 57 mother-led families in Niagara.

#IMPACT #UnitedWay



IMAGE: 8 – Mental health supports

Last year, United Way funding enabled 19,921 people to access in-person mental health support when they needed it most.

"Our son was diagnosed with borderline personality disorder. We have missed work, lost friends and become distanced from family over the last 10 years trying to cope with our situation. Our 1:1 sessions with our counsellor provided us with the tools and the hope to move forward. We realize that our journey with mental illness will not end anytime soon but now know that there are resources we can call upon for guidance and direction. Thank you for funding this program because it has improved our son's life and given us some hope for even greater gains on his part in the future."

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IMAGE: 9 – Indigenous literacy

United Way program highlight: The Indigenous Literacy Enhancement Project

The project focuses on empowering indigenous children and youth to build connections to their land, history, family and selves through storytelling. This innovative book vending machine provides free access to Indigenous literature, supports literacy, education and steps towards reconciliation.

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IMAGE: 10 – Wraparound support

A gift of \$250 can provide drop-in access to crucial wraparound supports for 125 individuals experiencing homelessness.

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IMAGE: 11 - food insecurity

Did you know that there are currently, more than 75,000 people in Niagara are experiencing food insecurity? United Way is working hard to increase access to healthy food for everyone.

"I was raised in a small village and when I moved here I needed help. That's what makes United Way so important—I realized it was something I could depend on. I didn't have to sit around worrying, I could get the support I needed. I realized I needed help after the pandemic had been going on for a few months. This support means I don't have to wonder when I'm going to eat, or what I'm going to eat. I receive groceries on Wednesdays, or even a gift card so I can do my own shopping, it makes me feel more stable. That help goes a long way when you don't have the means to do it yourself. Now I also volunteer at the program so I can pay it forward. Whether I'm working or receiving help, I feel more connected and much happier. Thank you for your support, United Way."



IMAGE: 12 – program spotlight ATTCH

United Way partner spotlight: ATTCH Niagara specializes in treatment for complex issues and traumas.

Since 2020, referrals have dramatically increased, and with over 50 per cent of their clients with active suicide ideation and self-harm behaviour, the need for immediate support is crucial.

Supported by United Way, a waitlist group and aftercare program is possible, serving 210 people in need last year.

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IMAGE: 13 – social assistance support

A gift of \$520 per year can assist 21 people secure, maximize and maintain income from social assistance programs.

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IMAGE: 14 – newcomer support

A gift of \$100 can provide learning workshops, support and opportunities for 30 newcomers.

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IMAGE: 15 – domestic violence support

“Women’s Place enabled us to finally escape. Our family is eternally grateful for everyone who makes the work that they do possible.

Our journey is still ongoing and while our future may be uncertain, I can honestly say that coming to Women’s Place and allowing them to rescue us has been the best decision that I have ever made for myself and my children. I know that with the help, love, support and guidance from Women’s Place our story will have a happy ending.”

[optional: link to full story via intranet]

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