

## United Way Canada's National Community Priorities

### There are #UNIGNORABLE issues

Every day, people across the country struggle to build better lives for themselves and their families. These challenges are fueled by serious social and economic barriers including poverty, youth unemployment and community decline, among others, making it remarkably difficult to get ahead.

**1 in 10** Canadians live in poverty.

**10.3%:** The national unemployment rate for youth aged 15-24—almost twice the rate of working-age adults.

In any given year, **1 in 5** Canadians experience a mental illness or addiction problem.

### There's a way forward

United Way is committed to helping people and families across Canada build better lives—both today and tomorrow. We do this by moving people from poverty to possibility, helping kids be all they can be, and building strong and healthy communities.

**\$5** provides one meal to someone who is homeless, giving them refuge in a safe environment.

**\$260** provides 10 people with 10 weeks of programming on how to support a family member or friend struggling with mental illness.

**\$400** covers one week of work experience wages for a young person in an employment program.

**\$800** helps bring together 100 neighbours to identify common challenges and solutions, making their community stronger and safer.

**\$1,200** provides important household items to six families, helping them make a life-changing move to secure housing.

### But, there are barriers

Social and economic challenges like poverty, youth unemployment and isolation are issues that affect all of us. They widen gaps between those who are doing well financially and those who are not, and threaten the strong social fabric that is vital to healthy, connected communities.

Approximately **50%** of Canadian seniors report feeling lonely.

**\$7 billion:** the cost of homelessness to the Canadian economy each year.

**Less than 1 in 4** Canadian children and youth in need of mental health support actually receive it.

### That's why your local love matters

When you support United Way, you're helping to build a strong social safety net for Canadians in communities across the country. This means that people have access to all the supports they need the most, when and where they need them.

**\$365M** invested across Canada, empowering individuals and entire communities to reach their full potential.

**5,800+** programs and services help move people from poverty to possibility, help kids be all they can be, and build strong and healthy communities.

**10M+** individuals and families served across Canada.

### United Way Waterloo Region Communities' Local Community Priorities

#### There's an issue

Social issues do not discriminate; any of us could experience a crisis that will change our life dramatically. Thousands of people are facing challenges in Waterloo Region and living without adequate housing, food, income, health, and wellbeing.

More than **1 in 10** people in Waterloo Region live in poverty.

Nearly **1 in 4** adults in Waterloo Region fall in the lowest levels of literacy and 1 in 3 adults cannot read the dosage instructions of over-the-counter medications.

**1 in 10** young people between the ages of 15 and 19 report they are "quite a bit or are extremely stressed." Death by suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth.

#### There's a way forward

United Way Waterloo Region Communities is dedicated to helping people live better lives. We are fundraisers who support a network of agencies that are locally focused, informed, and deeply invested in helping people reach their full potential

**\$5** provides 1 individual with access to food.

**\$100** provides 2 individuals with access to therapeutic counselling to help reduce their level of distress.

**\$365** provides free rides for 36 seniors or adults living with disabilities to go shopping, attend a medical appointment, or visit family and friends.

**\$500** provides 8 individuals with improved basic life skills through reading, writing and financial literacy.

**\$1,200** provides 19 individuals with supports that reduce isolation and loneliness.

#### But, there are barriers

Homelessness is not caused by drug addiction. Hunger is not caused by poor budgeting. Loneliness is not caused by failure to participate. It can be a combination of many issues that contribute to the challenges people face.

**1 in 5** youth in Waterloo Region won't graduate from high school. High school graduation rates in Waterloo Region are approximately 4 points lower than the provincial average of 86%.

**1 in 20** households in Waterloo Region experience hunger. 1 in 4 food bank users are children under the age of 11.

**1 in 3** people lack a sense of belonging in Waterloo Region.

#### That's why your help matters

United Way Waterloo Region Communities invests in programs and services that deliver community-wide benefits. Our investments include everything from emergency food and shelter services that meet basic needs; to counselling and harm reduction programs that help people live healthier lives; to after-school and mentorship activities that give vulnerable youth a chance at a better future.

**\$16,087,088** invested throughout Waterloo Region over the last three years.

**56** programs & initiatives delivered by

**47** Partner Agencies, including those that work together as a part of 6 collaborative networks.

**149,380** individuals served across Waterloo Region in 2018-2019.