United Way Centraide
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry

2024-2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Strategic Vision

In 2024, we launched our three year strategic plan

Overarching goal

We aim to be a force for positive change as a trusted community resource, nurturing hope, and well-being for all. Through advocacy, education, and strong relationships, we'll address poverty stigmas, pioneer early intervention models and upstream support, and influence societal progress, while actively learning, modeling, and measuring best practices in equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation.

Strategic Directions

Increasing awareness:
addressing stigma & creating champions for change

Philanthropic evolution:
diversifying revenue and giving strategies

People power:
aligning & equipping our team

Empathy in action:
engaging community & collective advocacy

2024/25 Highlights

A snapshot of our year thanks to your support

Revenue

1.2
million dollars raised

77%
of funds raised invested in community

$519k
invested in housing research & programs

Community Impact

30k
lives impacted locally

50.4%
of individuals supported live in the rural townships

14
individuals/families who were unsheltered found stable housing

We, the employees, volunteers, and board members of United Way Centraide SDG acknowledge that our office is located on the unceded territory of the Akwesasne Mohawks and we are privileged to live, work, and play on this land. We are grateful to the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, and other Indigenous peoples that resided and were keepers of this land long before our own arrival.

We recognize we are on an ongoing journey of reconciliation and, as individuals and as an organization, still have much to learn and unlearn so as to create the safer spaces necessary to build true partnerships across all communities.

We pledge to do the work that has to be done, both inwardly and outwardly, to meet recommendations and lessons from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls to Justice, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. We are working on improving our conscious and unconscious biases that permit forms of discriminatory practices to be embedded in our work.

We believe in education, awareness, relationship building, addressing systemic issues and supporting self-determination of the marginalized groups that call our region home. It is only by doing this work that we can achieve our mission to improve lives and respond to our communities' needs and respect our vision of a future where collective action empowers us to create lasting positive impact, ensuring equitable access to support and opportunities for all members of our communities.

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A message from our Executive Director & Board Chair

2024 was a worrisome year for everyone.

In Canada, household spending increased as families tried to keep up with the rising cost of transportation, housing, and utilities. Data is showing that an average family of four spent an additional $700 just on food this past year compared to the previous year. For families that were already feeling the pinch, this became the push that forced them into using services they have never used or going back to services they thought they had left once they had found stable income.

Our local foodbanks alone saw the need for help skyrocket again this year with usage up over 30%. In Cornwall, 4000 were estimated to have used the foodbank in one month. **That is 8% of our population.**

These same household spending trends impacted some of our donors. Some needed to scale back how much they could give as everyone felt the pinch to keep their families safe, fed, and housed, or others saw losses in their investments for another year. We know, we felt it in our own pocketbooks this year and as individuals, we too made hard decisions on how and where we spent our money over the last year.

With the political and economic landscape remaining volatile, the year ahead insights worry.

When we began our roles as Executive Director and as a Board Director, we were facing the uncertainty and market disruptions with the global pandemic. And regardless of that fear looming over all of us, our communities came together to take care of each other. Our local United Way was well positioned to help the Government of Canada distribute nearly $950,000 to local projects to meet the unique needs caused by a health emergency. This was on top of our annual Community Investment Fund allocations that continue to impact tens of thousands of people across Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Cornwall and Akwesasne.

Today, we continue to see that willingness for our generous communities to take care of each other on our most uncertain and terrifying days.

So, we remain hopeful.

We are hopeful because regardless of the economic storm of the past year over 40 individuals asked friends and family to support them to Go Over the Edge for the United Way. We are hopeful because local workplaces continued to run payroll, and others did even more, with car washes, auctions, lotteries, and even a hockey tournament.

We are hopeful because, with all this generosity, we have been able to spend over one million dollars in housing over the last few years.

We have helped individuals and families find housing, remain in housing, and ensure their housing is safe and adequate through a variety of programs, like the Last Resort Program, the Community Hub and Warming Centre in Morrisburg, and assisting Habitat for Humanity Cornwall and the Counties launch their Critical Repairs program for homeowners.

We are hopeful because we remain connected to the community with our leadership and participation on multiple committees and working groups.

We are hopeful because we can see past the noise in the news and see people accessing the services they need within an extended and expanded service model. We see gatherings where our leaders are learning to be better allies for all of our communities. We see work to ensure everyone finds what they need, where they need it. We see youth leading the way forward and finding innovative solutions to help their peers.

We see the victories, the celebrations, and the joy.

For all of you that worked alongside us, that supported us, that believed in us, thank you for being part of this hope.

This report is a highlight reel of how your support and collaboration makes a difference in Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Cornwall and Akwesasne.

Thank you. Merci. Nia:wen.

Gerard McDonald
Board Chair
United Way Centraide SDG

Juliette Labossière
Executive Director,
United Way Centraide SDG

Our role

For more than 60 years, the United Way Centraide SDG has strived to break down barriers, create opportunities, and improve lives in our region.

We are here to bring people and organizations together in the public, private and social sectors across Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Cornwall, and Akwesasne to find innovative and effective ways to tackle complex social issues.

We are a small and passionate team who cares about our home. Like you, we want to live in a community where everyone is given the opportunity to belong and thrive.

Our mission is to improve lives and respond to our communities' needs

We envision a future where collective action empowers us to create lasting positive impact, ensuring equitable access to support and opportunities for all members of our communities.

Our values provide the philosophical foundation for all that we do, collectively and individually, with our agencies, donors, staff, volunteers, and our communitiy. We believe in:

Accountability
Trust
Respect
Engagement
Collaboration
Hope

We work as a **catalyst and coordinator** with organizations

We provide **training and support** for volunteers and agencies in our community

We raise **awareness** about social issues and needs in our community

We **fundraise** to invest in a range of health and social services for residents of our region

2024/25 Strategic Priorities:

- Build partnerships and collaboration to lead EDI and Indigenous Inclusion models in our region.
- Grow impact to respond to the needs of our rural communities.
- Raise awareness and tackle important issues; this past year it has been primarily focused around housing.

How we work

Our role is to **unite.**

We bring people together and build connections. One organization, business or government alone cannot solve the complex social issues that are currently challenging our community: poverty, health, hunger, housing, and homelessness. All of these are deeply layered and connected.

Our aim is to understand how our local non-profits, levels of government, businesses and community members can come together to find innovative solutions that prioritize the humanity and dignity of everyone living in our communities.

How do we accomplish this? By listening, learning and connecting with our communities to get a big picture view of what the needs are, who is and isn't accessing programs, what barriers may exist, and how we can ensure that no one is getting left behind.

One way we do this is by leading and participating in committees and networks that aim to share information, resources and work collectively on local issues.

The committees we led:

- Housing and Homelessness Working Group SDGCA (UWC SDG)
- Regional Emergency and Strategic Response Council (UWC SDG)
- Vibrant Communities' Poverty Pillar Working Group (SDC)
- Volunteer Administrators Network (SDC)
- National Indigenous Sharing Circle (United Way Centraide Canada)

The collaborative networks we actively participated in:

- A Home Committee (City of Cornwall
- Community Action Network Against Abuse (CANAA)
- Cornwall Youth Mental Health Committee (CCH)
- Decision Support Network (EOHU)
- Dundas County Housing Group (House of Lazarus)
- IDEA Community Coalition Leadership Table
- Linking Hands Steering Committee (House of Lazarus)
- United Way Centraide Government Relations Lead Meetings (UWCC)
- United Way Centraide Data & Insight Community of Practice
- United Way Centraide Women United
- United Way Greater Toronto Affordable Housing Leadership Table
- Vibrant Communities' Mental Health Pillar Working Group (SDC)
- Vibrant Communities' Community Well-Being Working Group (SDC)
- Vibrant Communities' Health Services Pillar Working Group (SDC)
- Vibrant Communities' Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Council (SDC)

IDEA
Cornwall
Stormont
SDGCA
Akwesasne
Dundas
Glengarry
COALITION COMMUNAUTAIRE
COMMUNITY COALITION

As a non-profit organization and one of the largest local nonprofit funders in our region, we have a responsibility to our community to be culturally safe, anti-racist and to have policies and processes that are anti-oppressive.

In our current climate where we are seeing businesses and organizations eliminate or scale back their time and monetary investments in Diversity, Inclusion and Equity policies and anti-oppression work, it is more important now than ever to continue our efforts to lead these difficult conversations with our communities to change the systems that continue to marginalize and exclude members of our communities.

We understand that anti-oppression must be at the foundation of all equity, diversity, inclusion, justice, and reconciliation work. Without it, there can be no real transformation.

That is why we have continued to play an active and leading role in the IDEA Community Coalition that has grown from 33 organizations to 42 organizations in its first year.

> The commitment to equity, diversity, and belonging is growing locally.

As part of the local network, we commit to put equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-oppression, Truth and Reconciliation at the forefront of our work to foster sustainable, meaningful, and authentic structural and community change. This work is led by Farhana Meghji, Equity, Culture, and Belonging Specialist with Cornwall Police Services and City of Cornwall.

Participating Organizations:

1. African Caribbean & International Association of Eastern Ontario
2. Agape Centre
3. Association des communautés francophones de l'Ontario, de Stormont, Dundas et Glengarry (ACFO-SDG)
4. Baldwin House
5. Canadian Mental Health Association – Champlain East
6. Centre de santé communautaire de l'Estrie
7. Children's Aid Society of SDG
8. City of Cornwall
9. Community Living Glengarry
10. Community Living Stormont
11. Cornwall Community Hospital
12. Cornwall Police Service
13. Diversity Cornwall
14. Eastern Ontario Health Unit
15. Eastern Ontario Training Board
16. Équipe psycho-sociale de SDG
17. Glengarry Inter-Agency Group
18. Glengarry Memorial Hospital
19. Great River Ontario Health Team
20. Inspire Community Support Services
21. Job Zone d'emploi
22. Koala Place
23. Laurencrest Youth Services Inc.
24. Les Amis du CERF
25. Maxville Manor
26. Naomi's Centre
27. Ontario Probation and Parole Services- Cornwall
28. Recovery Care
29. Roy McMurtry Legal Clinic
30. Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Cornwall)
31. Seaway Valley Community Health Centre
32. Sexual Assault Support Services of Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry & Akwesasne
33. Social Development Council of Cornwall and Area
34. St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre
35. St. Lawrence College- Cornwall
36. Tri-County Literacy Council
37. United Way Centraide SDG
38. Victim Services of S.D.G. & A.
39. Vista Centre Brain Injury Services
40. Warm Up Cornwall
41. Youth for Human Rights
42. YouTurn Youth Support Services

2024/25 by the numbers

We raised **$1,223,671** in 2024/25, and **77%** went directly into community programs and projects that are impacting local lives directly. The money we received came from multiple sources such as foundations, donations, fundraising, workplace campaigns (local and national), corporate donations, Government of Canada, the City of Cornwall, and the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry.

Total Revenue by source

$275,058
Individual & Workplace

$217,823
Fundraising

$130,000
United Counties of SDG

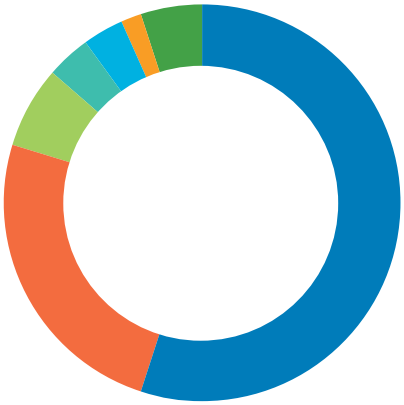
$257,280
City of Cornwall

$230,723
Foundations & Corporate

$43,027
Government of Canada

$69,760
Other

Total Commnunity Invesments by type



$519,855
Housing & Homelessness

$233,600
Mental Health

$62,000
Food Security

$34,344
Poverty

$16,500*
Youth-led Projects

$50,545
Impact & Research

$31,479
Community Services Recovery Fund

Total Expenses $1,444,434

37%
Community Investment Fund

40%
Programs & Research

25%
Management & General Operating

16%
Fundraising

Notes: In 2024, our expenses exceeded our revenue by 18%. Despite this funding gap, we chose to maintain investment levels comparable to previous years in order to meet the ongoing demand for the important community supports detailed in this report.

*This is the pledged amount for the 2025 Youth Investing in Community grants. While this report is being created, final reports are still being completed.

Our regional impact

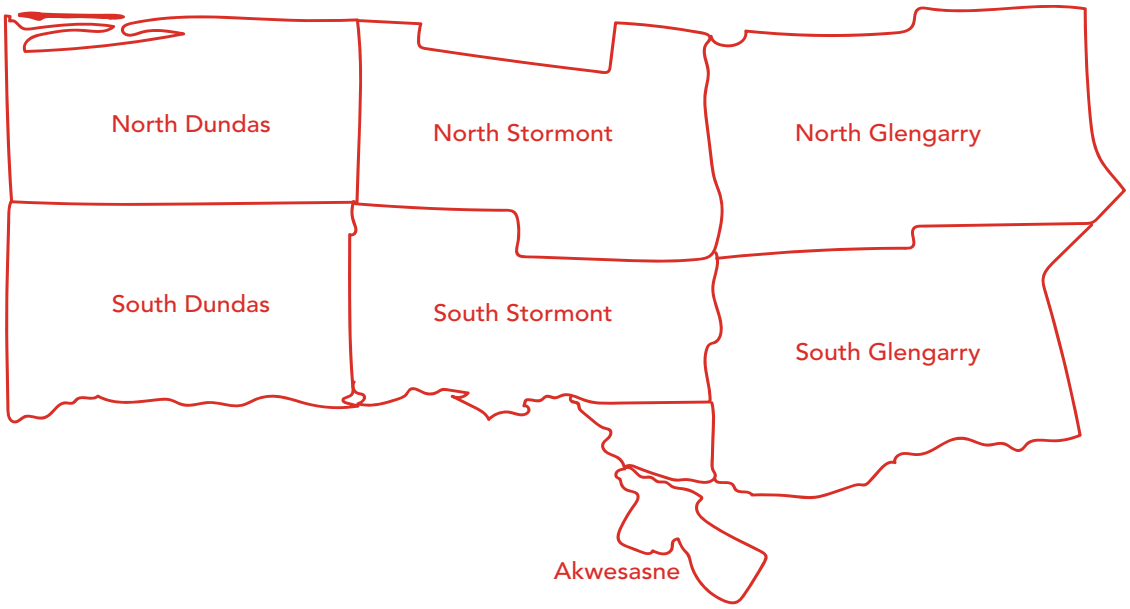
While our office is located in Cornwall, our local United Way covers the rural townships of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry along with Cornwall and Akwesasne. **Our region is large.** A total of 3,309 km^2 and a population of approximately 172,000 . It includes 6 rural townships, small towns, a mid-sized city and the territory of Akwesasne. All of these areas present their own unique challenges when it comes to social issues and service availability.

We fund programs that cover the majority of our region, and we aim to continue growing partnerships across our large region with the goal of making an impact in every community.

$268,997
invested in rural-led projects and programs in 2024-25

50.4%
16,923 rural individuals supported through programs and funded projects

49.6%
16,631 urban individuals supported through programs and funded projects



How we respond to local issues

Housing, homelessness, poverty, food insecurity, and mental health are deeply connected—and deeply complex. None of them exist in isolation, and none can be solved without understanding the root causes, the systems at play, and the real impact on people's lives.

That's where the United Way comes in.

We don't focus on a single issue—we look at the whole picture. We listen to our communities, identify the gaps, and invest in programs that meet urgent needs today while building pathways towards an equitable future where everyone has access to the resources they need to thrive.

We invest in **prevention.**

We respond to the now through programs focused on **intervention** and meeting people where they are.

And we conduct **research** and spread **awareness** on key issues to build a strategic vision that aims shape a better future for everyone.

Our response to

Housing & Homelessness

The issue

76%

of people currently living in SDGCA could not afford to get back into the housing market if they had to start over tomorrow.

74

people are recorded as actively homeless in SDGCA as of April 2025 according to the City of Cornwall By-Name List.

1 in 5

renter households in Canada spend more than 50% of their income on rent.

Housing is just the beginning.

A home is more than four walls and a roof — it's the foundation for a stable, healthy life. It's the first step toward accessing education, employment, health care, food, and a sense of belonging.

Yet today, too many people in our region are living in uncertainty and stress. As access to safe and affordable housing becomes increasingly out of reach — especially in the rental market — more individuals and families are finding themselves unable to hold onto their homes or find new ones when life takes a turn.

In Cornwall and SDG, **nearly two-thirds of residents wouldn't be able to re-enter the housing market** if they lost their current home and had to start over. This isn't a niche problem — it's a growing crisis that is mpacting the majority of our of our communities in varying ways.

At the United Way, we know that homelessness is never a choice. It doesn't happen because of one event, but rather due to a complex combination of systemic barriers, service gaps, and personal hardship. **And it can happen to anyone.**

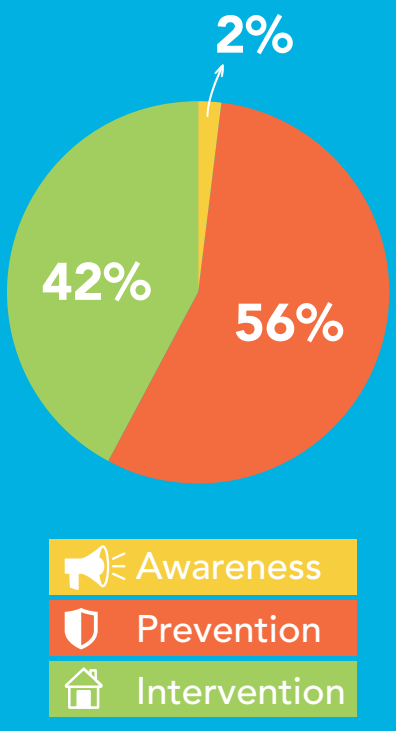
That's why we're committed to a Housing First approach — one that recognizes housing as a human right and provides people with a safe, stable place to live, no matter their circumstances. From emergency shelter and supportive housing to affordable rentals and homeownership, we're working with our partners to support the full spectrum of housing needs in our community.

In 2024, we made our largest-ever investment in housing programs, recognizing the urgent and growing need in our region. We also took a bold step forward by adding a Housing Projects Coordinator to our team — a dedicated role focused on driving innovative, community-based solutions for the hundreds of people locally who are experiencing homelessness or living in housing precarity.

In the pages ahead, you'll learn more about these critical investments into awareness-, prevention-, intervention-focused programs while also building a long-term, collaborative vision for housing solutions that meet the needs of all members of our communities.

Because when people have a place to call home, everything else becomes possible.

$519,855 Invested
1,155 Lives Impacted



Community Collaborations

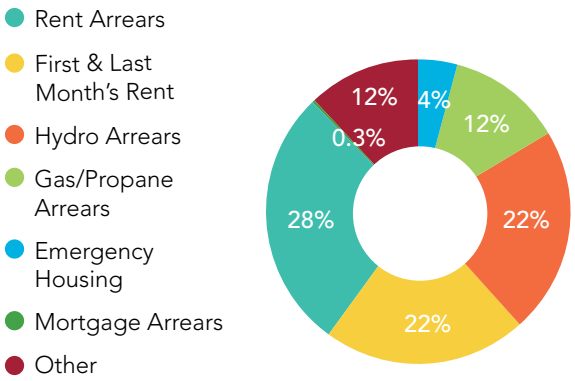
Last Resort Program

In 2021, with the generous support from two major donors, we launched the Last Resort Program – the first program that could support members of our community, regardless of their income level, with an emergency expense to both keep them housed safely or to support the down payment required for a new rental unit. In four years, **$827,125** was invested and **789** households were supported.

Thanks to the generosity from The City of Cornwall, the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry, and the Kinsmen Club of Cornwall in 2024/25, we were able to make the largest investment in this critical program with a total of $335,000.00 invested, supporting over **304** households in 2024/25.

- **14** Individuals assisted were unhoused
- **$1,310** Average assistance
- **$1000** Median amount given
- **85** households were able to stay housed
- **66** accessed permanent housing with first & last month's rent
- Highest demand overall was **Rent Arrears**

Breakdown of support types



Cornwall
Administered by Agape Centre
141 households supported

Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry
Administered by House of Lazarus
163 households supported

Funded by:

Stepping Stone Project

On November 9, 2023, we collaborated with the City of Cornwall to develop the Stepping Stone Project, a temporary residence for people experiencing homelessness in Cornwall, to ensure they had a warm and comfortable place to stay during the coldest months along with access to the resources needed to find stability and a permanent home when ready. In 2024, this residence remained in operation with 30 rooms.

How we supported this project:

$51,276 invested to help the City of Cornwall maintain the project for costs such as security, garbage water, internet and phone.

$21,800 invested to purchase furniture for newly vacant rooms. This included beds, pillows, blankets, a mini fridge and a small table.

Funded and run by:

Furniture funded by:

The Tom and Gail Kaneb Family Foundation

Habitat for Humanity Critical Repairs Program

We invested **$25,000** to support the launch of Habitat for Humanity Cornwall & The Counties' Critical Repairs Program. This program supports costly and unaffordable repairs and upgrades to help local homeowners to live safely in their homes. The first project of a new barrier-free tub allowed a woman with arthritis to bathe safely and independently, and a second project is underway to rebuild two decks for a senior couple, enhancing accessibility and improving

Programs we administer

Energy Poverty

In 2024, more households in our region struggled to keep up with rising energy costs. Energy poverty—defined by the Canadian Urban Sustainability Practitioners as spending over 6% of income on electricity and heating—has become increasingly common in rural communities like ours, where residents are more likely to face income insecurity, live in older or less efficient homes, and belong to larger or aging households.

United Way Centraide SDG administers two key energy assistance programs:

- Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP): provides ongoing monthly bill reductions for low-income households. We support with the application process for households with limited access to digital technology and for applicants who had a recent income change that is not reflected on their most recent tax return.
- Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP): offers emergency, one-time support to households at risk of disconnection. We support with the application process for this program for two local utility companies.

In response to growing need, the Ontario government expanded eligibility for OESP by increasing household income amounts needed to qualify, while the Ontario Energy Board worked with companies to expand their investment into LEAP. Local utility partners—Cornwall Electric and Rideau St. Lawrence Distribution Inc.—stepped up to help make a bigger impact in our region.

58 Cornwall Electric households supported through LEAP — a 71% increase over the previous year.

58 Rideau St. Lawrence households supported through LEAP — a 728% increase over the previous year.

284 OESP applications supported and approved for a monthly rebate, helping households lower monthly energy costs — a 15% increase over the previous year.

Community Investment Fund

House of Lazarus
695 individuals helped

We invested **$51,306** in House of Lazarus for a full-time staff to run the Community Hub and Warming Centre in Morrisburg, Ontario. This is a safe space for people experiencing homelessness in our rural communities to visit for access to a kitchen, shower, toilet, bed and warm/cold space to relax.

Investing in the future

A new United Way Centraide SDG Housing Projects Coordinator

This year, we received generous funding from two local foundations to hire a Housing Projects Coordinator. This role is the only one of its kind in our region. Our staff member, Olivia, is dedicated to research and education, advocacy, partnerships, and project development and management.

In research and education, Olivia is committed to becoming an expert on affordable housing to generate innovative solutions that work for our communities and can be shared across the country. She creates and disseminates accessible resources to increase local understanding of housing and homelessness in a way that respects everyone's protected right to safe and stable housing.

As an advocate, the affordability crisis and housing shortage are recognized. Olivia openly supports resident rights and expresses how our communities are negatively affected by the housing crisis. Our Housing Projects Coordinator has a duty to respond to housing issues within our community, offering a non-partisan and dignity-based voice to advocate for those in precarious and devastating housing situations within our region

To tackle issues as large as a housing crisis, it takes more than one organization. Our Housing Projects Coordinator engages in a variety of partnerships to mobilize affordable and community housing projects. In doing so, she is able to leverage existing funds, skills, and resources within our organization and throughout the region to advance housing solutions. It is Olivia's role to source funds for strategic investment in the housing sector and in United Way Centraide SDG's future projects to increase housing supply and affordability for all.

Our response to

Mental Health

The Issue

41% of people in Canada experiencing financial challenges considered suicide in the past year according to Mental Health Research Canada.

1 in 7 people in Canada uses health services for a mental illness every year

1 in 5 older adults is living with a mental illness or dementia in Canada

6.5x Rates of hospitalization for self-harm in very remote areas compared to urban areas

Investing in Community-Based Mental Health Supports

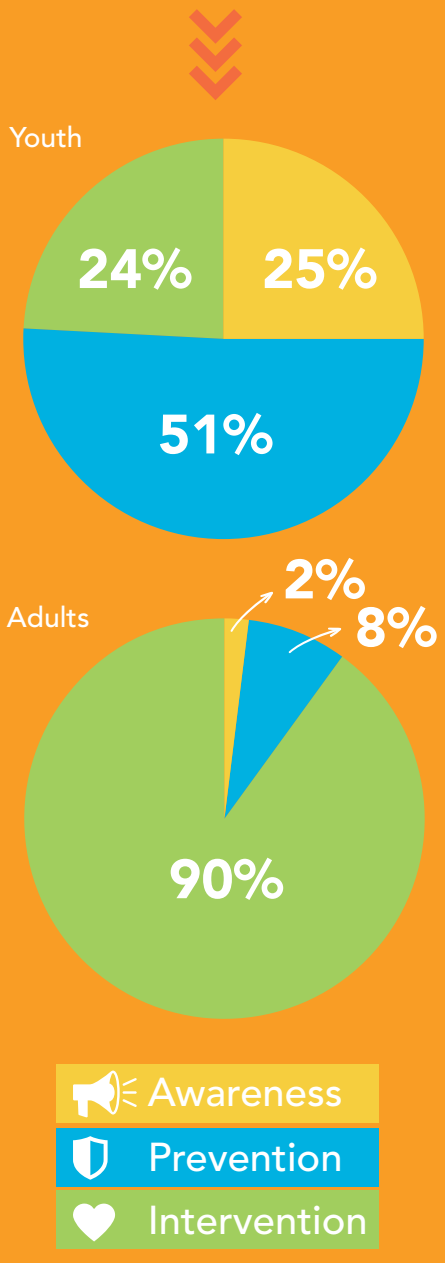
Mental health isn't a secondary problem. It's a leading concern, and one that can perpetuate poverty and homelessness.

Over the past few years mental health has become an important part of public health conversations—but access to care remains unequal and inconsistent, especially for those facing systemic barriers.

While publicly-funded systems cover some essential clinical services, it's often non-profit organizations that step in to provide the affordable, accessible supports people rely on to fill in the gaps of specialized care. These community programs provide vital help like youth mental health support, respite care for caregivers, counselling for women leaving abusive situations, 2SLGBTQ+ affirming care, mental health education, and one-on-one specialized therapy.

Thanks to your generous support, we can invest in grassroots programs that are spreading awareness and reducing stigma, preventing crisis, and intervening with specialized counselling services to meet the complex and varying needs of people living in Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Cornwall and Akwesasne.

$233,600 Invested
28,535 Lives Impacted



Community Investment Fund

Bereavement Families of Ontario - SER
50 youth supported

BFO SER supported youth grieving a loss by providing a bilingual, emotionally safe day camp where they could share their experiences of loss. We invested **$7000** to bring youth together in a supportive peer setting, helping participants feel less alone and empowering them with tools for coping, self-expression, and remembrance. These activities fostered emotional healing and resilience, helping youth navigate their grief more constructively.

BGC Cornwall/SDG
298 youth supported

Youth are more likely than any other age group to experience mood or anxiety disorders. In 2020, nearly 1 in 4 hospitalizations for children and youth were for mental health conditions. We invested **$55,000** in youth programs in Cornwall, Dundas and Glengarry run by BGC Cornwall/SDG that created meaningful experiences to promote healthier lifestyles and stronger social-emotional skills. Through regular access to structured physical activities, teens developed healthier habits and reduced stress, while consistently describing the Club as a safe, supportive space where they felt accepted and heard. Ultimately, the BGC strives to provide whatever local youth need to thrive.

CMHA Champlain East
28,000 people reached

We invested **$30,000** in CMHA Champlain East's mental health awareness initiatives aimed information sessions in schools (grades 9-12), presentations to social work students, community events, and a locally produced Cogeco TV series sharing educational content and personal stories. The program's largest event drew 300+ participants, featuring student visits to info kiosks, a Talking About Mental Health (TAMI) speaker, and an awareness parade led by the Cornwall Colts. As a result, more people felt less alone, more open to talking, and more confident seeking help—boosting community mental health support.

Diversity Cornwall
45 people supported

We invested **$20,000** in Diversity Cornwall to ensure that individuals seeking care could access the support they need, filling a critical gap in trans specialized services within the community. The program connected people with gender-affirming healthcare providers and covered the costs of appointments and related medical services. Participants received assistance accessing HRT, completing blood work, and filling prescriptions. The program also offered support for legal name changes, gender marker updates, and referrals for gender-affirming surgeries. For those without internet or technology access, in-office resources and hands-on guidance ensured no one was left behind. Throughout, families were supported in navigating complex healthcare systems with compassion and care.

Équipe psycho-sociale
24 youth with complex mental health needs supported

Navigating school and everyday life can be very challenging for youth with complex mental

illnesses and behavioural disorders. We invested **$19,800** in Équipe psycho-sociale de SDG (now Bien Ici) day treatment program's materials and activities to offer a therapeutic learning environment that is tailored to the unique needs of youth who struggle in conventional academic settings. The program also made a significant impact by preventing some family breakdowns, stabilizing crisis situations with targeted therapeutic interventions, improving intersectoral collaboration across schools, child support services, justice, and addiction services while equipping caregivers with strategies for emotional regulation and crisis management.

Inspire – Community Support Service

81 people supported
19 caregivers supported

A **$36,500** investment enabled the delivery specialized mental health services, filling gaps of affordable therapy support, aimed at teaching their clients coping skills to manage anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. Although the program does not provide long-term care, it equips individuals with practical tools and strategies to navigate future challenges and achieve short-term goals.

In Canada, one-third of working aged adults with severe disabilities are living in poverty. With the lack of employment opportunities and limited government assistance, this can put the responsibility of care on their families. We invested **$19,000** in Inspire – Community Support Service's Independent Relief Service Program to provide respite for caregivers, so they have time to run errands, visit with friends and family, and prioritize their own well-being.

SASS for Women

34 women/female identifying individuals supported

We invested **$46,300** in mobile outreach counselling services for 34 female-identified survivors aged 16+, living across rural and remote areas in Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Cornwall, and Akwesasne who are often left out of program and service options due to availability of service in their area. The mobile service removes obstacles such as transportation limits, financial constraints, and geographical distance, bringing SASS for Women's services directly to clients in their communities.

Youth Investing in Community **Grants**

SPOTLIGHT

During the transitional period between childhood and adulthood (12-25), youth are more likely than any other age group to experience mood or anxiety disorders. We're seeing a mental health crisis growing at an alarming rate across Canada as youth hospitalizations for mental health disorders are rising, suicide is the second leading cause of death among this population, and more are reaching out for help.

As 70% of people living with a mental illness start experiencing symptoms before they turn 18 years old, early recognition and appropriate supports are critical for reducing the impact of mental illness.

In 2023, our Board of Director's youth officers introduced our first Youth Investing in Community Grants to harness the creativity of local youth who want to make a difference in their communities. This year, Jacob Pilon, Olivia Soares, and Leland Sellwood helped to grow its impact across our region.

This year, there were a total of **11 projects** led by **162 youth,** impacting more than **2,500 of their peers**. The grants helped youth come together, build community, and support their fellow peers.

Funded projects:

- Pollinator Garden Expansion Workshop and Take-Home Kits (YFCA- Youth for Climate Action Team)
- Tentewaienahsheke Helping Each Other & Working Together (Ahkwesahsne Mohawk School)
- Youth-led Sharing Pantry Enhancement (CCVS)
- Mental Health Champions School Initiatives (Holy Trinity Catholic Secondary School)
- 2025 SDG Mass Band Showcase (North Dundas District High School)
- South Dundas Health Literacy Program (Municipality of South Dundas)
- Diversity Awareness (St. Joseph's Catholic Secondary School)
- After School Enrichment Program (St. Matthew's Catholic School)
- Where 2 Turn Wellness Event (BGC Dundas)
- Seaway Valley Spartans Hockey Program for Children with Disabilities (Seaway Valley Spartans)
- La Gala du mérite (École secondaire catholique La Citadelle)

RBC Foundation

Walmart

Regional Emergency Strategic Response Council

Our response to

Food Insecurity

45,988

the number of times 7,970 people currently living in SDGCA used a local foodbank in 2024.

70%

of local food bank clients in SDGCA received social assistance (Ontario Works, ODSP).

30%

increase in visits to local foodbank in one of our rural communities in 2025.

Food Security in Our Communities

Food insecurity is a growing crisis in Canada and greatly impacts our local communities in Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Cornwall, and Akwesasne. Soaring inflation, unaffordable housing, and stagnating wages are forcing more individuals and families into difficult choices—often between paying rent or buying food.

Between January 2020 and June 2024, food prices rose by 24%, while rental costs outpaced wage growth, straining household budgets. In 2024, nearly 40% of Canadians reported cutting back on groceries to afford other bills. For those in low-wage or precarious jobs, the risk of food insecurity is even higher, with many relying on food banks or meal programs to get through the month. These financial pressures are not distributed equally: Indigenous communities, already impacted by colonial policies and systemic marginalization, face disproportionately high rates of food insecurity, particularly where traditional food systems have been disrupted by environmental and regulatory changes.

Locally, we fund two community meal initiatives that serve breakfast four days a week and lunch on weekends—ensuring that those facing food insecurity have access to nutritious, reliable meals. These programs are essential in a region where the food bank system is increasingly stretched. By supporting inclusive, community-driven solutions, United Way SDG is helping to build a more equitable and food-secure region for everyone.

$62,000 Invested
~325 Lives Impacted

Intervention

Community Investment Fund

Agape Centre
150 people supported

For many years, there were no programs for families experiencing food insecurity on weekends in Cornwall. With the increased demand for support through their food bank and weekday lunch program, Agape Centre stepped up to fill a gap in service. We invested **$30,000** to support their Saturday lunch program which includes a hot meal along with a take-out meal for Sunday.

Centre 105
~145 people supported

With a **$30,000** investment, we helped Centre 105 expand its free breakfast program to four days a week—offering more meals and safe space time for anyone who needs it. This support addresses growing food insecurity while fostering connection and dignity for participants in a safe environment.

Regional Emergency Strategic Support Council

Emergency Gift Cards

We invested **$2,000** in emergency grocery gift cards—$100 for families and $50 for singles or couples—distributed through community partners. These cards provided urgent food support for those unable to access other services, while giving individuals the dignity and flexibility to choose the food that best meets their needs.

Our response to

Poverty

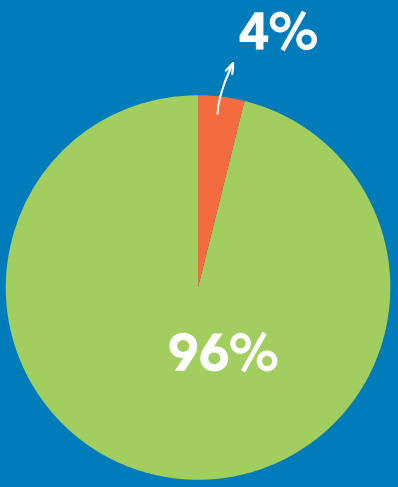
Poverty is a Systemic Challenge That Demands a Collective Response

An outcome of poverty is the absence of adequate income to cover the cost of living; however, the roots of poverty go much deeper. It is the result of complex, interconnected barriers that limit individuals' ability to access stable housing, healthy food, education, and meaningful employment. While financial literacy and planning are important tools, they cannot address the broader structural realities that contribute to economic instability.

In our region, many individuals and families work hard yet still struggle to meet their basic needs. Factors such as the rising cost of living, lack of affordable housing, limited access to child care, and gaps in support during times of transition all contribute to the persistent cycle of poverty.

This is why we invest in programs that support people in building skills, finding stable employment, and navigating times of crisis. It is why we advocate for policies that reflect the real cost of living and the importance of equitable opportunity. Addressing poverty requires more than short-term solutions—it requires a commitment to long-term change, grounded in dignity, inclusion, and shared responsibility.

$34,344 Invested
363 Lives Impacted



Community Investment Fund

211 Ontario
775 people supported

We invested **$13,250** in 211 Ontario to support outreach in Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Cornwall and Akwesasne—ensuring residents know there's a number to call for help. In 2024, 775 callers from our region were connected to the programs and services they needed. In several cases, 211 staff went beyond referrals, advocating directly to ensure individuals received timely support in a system that can be difficult to navigate

Tri-County Literacy Council
113 learners supported

Essential skills training and education are critical for employment, yet many programs remain out of reach for those with learning challenges or limited income. We invested **$20,000** in Tri-County Literacy Council's Volunteer Coordinator to support the delivery of free, accessible programming. By leveraging the time and talent of dedicated volunteers, the Council offers vital one-on-one tutoring and small group training—empowering adult learners to build literacy, numeracy, digital, and job-readiness skills at their own pace.

Our Advocacy Work

We advocate for a Living Wage

We believe that paying employees a livable wage that reflects the cost of living in our region is one piece of the puzzle of tackling the complexity of poverty in our region.

A living wage is the hourly wage a worker needs to earn to cover their basic expenses such as shelter, transportation, food, medical, and childcare to live comfortably and participate in our community. It reflects what people in SDGCA need to earn to cover the actual costs of living and draws on community-specific data to determine the expenses.

A living wage is not the same as the minimum wage, which is the legislated minimum all employers must pay and is set by the provincial government. Living wage employers voluntarily decide to pay a living wage and can be a certified living wage employer.

To calculate a living wage, the Ontario Living Wage Network — a network of employers, employees, non-profits, and researchers – start by determining the costs of the basic goods for three types of families: two parents aged 35 and two children aged 7 and 3, a single parent with a child aged 7, and a single adult in communities across the province. The living wage calculation is a weighted average of these three different household types.

Living Wage Employers
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry

period promise

Our Period Promise

With the rising cost of living, menstrual hygiene products are getting harder and harder for people in our region to afford. And these products are necessary.

Without access to menstrual hygiene products, people who menstruate risk having to miss work/school or resort to unsafe alternatives to get through that time of the month.

No one should have to choose between their health or dinner on the table or rent.

In March 2025, we ran the fourth menstual product drive, newly named Period Promise, in our community and received over **700 product donations (approximate value $8000)** and **$2000** in cash donations to support those who need them.

Thank you to the businesses and service clubs for their support with donations and as collection sites:

- Booster Juice Cornwall
- Emard Bros. Lumber
- Food Basics (Second St. E)
- FreshCo Cornwall
- James & Jen's No Frills
- Jen Blair Manley & Dream Team
- Morrisburg Chiropractic
- Pharmachoice (Maxville)
- Pharmasave (Cornwall)
- Pharmasave (Long Sault)
- Pharmasave (Winchester)
- Remedy'sRx Pharmacy (Avonmore)
- Rotary Club of Cornwall Sunrise
- Seaway Valley Pharmacy (Chesterville)
- Shopper's Drug Mart (Brookdale)
- Starbucks Cornwall
- Walmart Logistics

We donated to 12 local agencies across SDGCA

- Agape Centre
- BGC Cornwall/SDG
- Centre 105
- Community Food Share
- Cornwall Hospital - Community Addiction & Mental Health Services
- House of Lazurus
- Inspire – Community Support Services
- Maison Baldwin House
- Naomi House
- Salvation Army Cornwall
- Social Development Council of Cornwall and Area
- Society of Saint Vincent de Paul - Alexandria

Everything we do would not be possible without the support of our donors & volunteers.

Fundraising is vital to the work we do in the community. Thank you to the **500+ donors** and the **616 employees from 41 workplace campaigns** who have so generously donated to us in 2024/25 to help care for our community. You are part of the solutions that are tackling the social issues impacting our region.

As a small team, fundraising can be challenging throughout the year. There are individuals, businesses, and organizations who have gone above and beyond for us this year by fundraising on our behalf. **Thank you!** Your time, energy and passion are what fuel us to keep working hard for our community.

Angel Ornaments
Pommier Jewellers

BGC Kids Night Out
BGC Cornwall/SDG

Point of Sale Campaign
LCBO

Second Annual Hockey Tournament
Cornwall Electric

Ice Cream Fundraiser
Seguin Petate

The Women of SDG & Akwesasne Book Sales
Ginette Guy Mayer

Carwash
St. Lawrence College

Pancake Breakfast
St. Lawrence College

50/50 Campus Raffle
St. Lawrence College

In 2024, we took building community to new heights again with the second annual Go Over The Edge for United Way SDG.

Over 40 people rappelled down one of Cornwall's tallest buildings, St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, and collectively raised nearly $38k by pushing their own personal limits.

To rappel, participants had to raise a minimum of $1000 for the United Way. Thank you to all of our Over The Edge participants who showed us what's possible when we come together to raise funds and have fun.

In the Photo: Stephen McCoy
Photo: Jason Setnyk

The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation
Corporation de Gestion de la Voie Maritime du Saint-Laurent

MacEWEN
over the EDGE
yourTV

The Holiday Gala, presented by Pommier Jewellers, celebrated its 12th and final year with $80,000 raised.

We thank all our sponsors, auction donors and guests who helped make this fundraising goal possible with their monetary support. And we thank our volunteer committee who, once again, worked tirelessly to bring this event to life. It would not have been possible without their dedication and expertise to manage such a large event for over a decade.

In the Photo: Darryl Adams & Cairo McDonell
Photo: Jason Setnyk

We don't work alone

Community Champions

Board of Directors

Executive Members

Gerard McDonald - Chair
Chantal Gilmour – Vice Chair
Wendy McDonald – Treasurer
Kris McCarthy – Secretary

Directors

Craig Fuller – Past Chair
Binal Bhavsar
Shannon Ferguson
Heather McGill (Labour Rep)
Mel Merpaw
Scott Szabadka

Youth Officers

Jacob Pilon
Olivia Soares
Leland Selwood

Staff

Juliette Labossière – Executive Director
Susan Currier – Data, Finance & Governance
Jan Vesna – Community Investment
Stephanie Lapointe – Marketing & Communications
Olivia Leroux – Housing Projects
Ayesha Khan – Community Mobilisation
Melanie Boileau - LEAP & OESP
Srdz Abelada – Fundraising Support

2024 Gala Committee

Karen Brunet
Ray Brunet
Bobbi Latour

Community Impact Committee

Chantal Gilmour
Gerard McDonald
Bobbi Latour
Gabriel Riviere-Reid
Susan Currier
Jan Vesna

Youth Impact Committee

Chantal Gilmour
Jacob Pilon
Olivia Soares
Leland Selwood
Jan Vesna

2024 Over The Edge Rappellers

Aidan Boer
Alexie Lariviere
Alex McPhee
Angela Pilon
April Bertrand
Ashlynn Boer
Cairo McDonell
Charles Descheneaux
Danica Plourde
Darwin Unrau
Felix Descheneaux
Gerard McDonald
Helen McEwen
Jacob Pilon
Jennifer Lauzon
John Bakker
Josée L'Hérault
John Towndrow
Karen Wattie
Kassandra Andre
Ken Tessier
Kiersten Sanchez
Kris McCarthy
Leo Gatien
Lori Kimball
Luc Boisclair
Marije Harbers
Michael Galvin
Melanie Boileau
Pauline LeBlanc
Scott Beck
Shannon Carson
Sonia Behilil
Stephen McCoy
Steven O'Neil
Wendy McDonald

Photo: Jason Setnyk

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www.unitedwaysdg.com