



2009 Campaign: communications toolkit

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Supplemental communication tools:

- Campaign brochure
- Campaign posters (print and PDF)
- PowerPoint of story subject portraits
- Campaign video
- United Way website (full stories, Campaign video and video interviews)



1.0 2009 Campaign overview [tone; look/feel; concept]

- Concept of Campaign theme:
 1. not doom and gloom due to negative economy
 2. emphasize that we change lives and that provides hope during challenging times
 3. focus on an optimistic take on all that United Way stands for: responding to the crisis, changing lives, making a difference... and our community has the opportunity to make a difference through United Way.
 4. Positive and optimistic messaging could actually be a breath of fresh air and get strong attention/show confidence in a challenging economy.

More than ever...

- works in two ways:
 - speaks to the urgent need; but not in a desperate way
 - More than ever you can respond.
 - allows the reinforcement of United Way's work to improve and *change lives*
- optimistic
- confident
 - United Way is making a difference in people's lives and in our community
 - More than ever my life has changed.



2.0 2009 Campaign theme intro

The following paragraph can be used *universally* during the 2009 Campaign for all presentations.

United Way creates real, lasting change.

More than ever, the needs of our community are urgent.

And more than ever, we have the opportunity to respond.

We believe that together, we can do so much more than we can alone. By inspiring people to come together, we have the power to make a real difference.

United Way mobilizes the power of our community to create lasting change.

This helps to improve everyone's quality of life and helps individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities to reach their full potential.

We are changing lives ... and you make it possible.



3.0 Key messages using Campaign theme

a) Acknowledging the challenging economy/job losses/increases in poverty

- More than ever, the needs of our community are urgent.

b) Explaining that United Way is there to provide solutions to challenges (to challenging times in people's lives, to the outfall challenging economic situations)

- mission statement: We mobilize the power of our community to create lasting change.
- *describe Campaign story subjects* > overall all of them can say "More than ever, my life has changed."
- United Way is making a difference in people's lives and in our community.
- United Way is working to improve lives and to improve our community so that it is a better place for everyone to live.
- Everyone touched by support through United Way can say "More than ever, my life has changed."
- with support through United Way, lives have gone from challenge to success

c) Call to action

- More than ever, you can respond:
 - to the needs of our community
 - to help change lives
 - to make a difference
 - to help your friends and neighbours in London and Middlesex County



4.0 Campaign story summaries

Key notes about stories

- each story subject has a direct United Way-funded connection
 - Learning Disabilities Association
 - London Employment Help Centre advocacy program
 - Next Wave Youth Centre (a program of Youth Opportunities Unlimited)
- each also represents issues that United Way supports:
 - diversity
 - youth
 - poverty
 - literacy
- overall, each story reflects back on the key of the theme:
 - optimism; success; lives that have changed through United Way
- each story you can think about what would have happened if the support through United Way was not in place:
 - John would have been a depressed man without success; not advocating for others with learning disabilities.
 - Bernardine would have experienced poverty without employment stability, and the other host of issues that come with poverty.
 - Colton would have been dealing with lack of self-confidence with his goals gone and lack of education/employment.
- each is an individual story of success made possible because United Way changes lives



4.1 Campaign story: John

a) Story summary: for telling the story in your own words

John > “More than ever, I believe in myself.”

If you can't write, it's hard to find success in life.

John grew up going through the Children's Aid System as a ward of the state, with a learning disability that affected his success in growing up.

John accessed help through United Way-funded agency Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, London Region. The Learning Disabilities Association provides support to children, youth and adults with learning disabilities, and to their families. United Way funding supports a wide range of services including school and social skills development, one-to-one tutoring, PA Day Camps, transitioning to post secondary school and work support, advocacy and referral, group support, consultations, resource library and community awareness and education.

Through the Learning Disabilities Association, John was able to gain literacy and gain success in managing his learning disability. He is able to write and use a computer through training with adaptive technologies.

Through all this success, John gained incredible abilities and confidence, and has been employed for some time as a telephone banking specialist with TD Canada Trust. He has tremendous confidence and is very active in the community. He was inducted into the Learning Disabilities Association hall of fame for his advocacy and support of others with learning disabilities.

Now, John can say, “More than ever, I believe in myself.” John's life has changed.

Key points

- issue/population served: literacy
- Without the support John received through United Way: John would have been a depressed man without success; not advocating for others with learning disabilities.

Investment proof point

- An investment of \$1 per pay (\$26 per year) enables an adult with a learning disability to attend support groups for one year.

Impact bites about literacy

Thanks to contributions to United Way, programs and services at Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario help children and adults with learning disabilities overcome their challenges. At counselling sessions, individuals with learning disabilities learn success strategies, how to use the tools that can help them overcome their disability, and receive support from others who have achieved success in their lives.

With the right skills, children can reach their full potential and have bright futures. Thanks to contributions to United Way, more than 3,000 children will develop literacy and social skills through London Y's Community Schools program, which reaches out to low-income and immigrant families with activities before, during and after school.

b) Stories for print: short and full stories

- **Short/third-person**

If you can't write, it's hard to find success in life. John grew up with an undiagnosed learning disability that prevented him from getting his thoughts in writing. When he was connected to the help and support he needed, he found the way to communicate his abilities. Today, John has a successful career and, more than ever, he believes in himself. [61 words]

- **Short quote/first-person**

When you can't write, it's hard to be successful. "I grew up with an undiagnosed learning disability that made it hard to get my thoughts in writing. When I was connected to the support I needed, I found the way to communicate my abilities. Now, more than ever, I believe in myself." [52 words]

- **John's story – full**

John is on a mission to make the invisible, visible. He lived with an undiagnosed learning disability for more than two decades. And, for the most part he struggled alone.

John was left in the care of the Children's Aid Society at the age of five. He moved from home to home and school to school. "It felt like I didn't belong anywhere. I was alone and scared growing up." John's learning disability made matters worse.

Although thoughts are clear in his head, John cannot translate those thoughts to paper. "It's like there's a short circuit from my mind to my hand," he says. "Everything that I try to put down on paper is a scrambled mess. In today's society, if you can't write it's a huge setback."

Pegged as simply not as smart as the other kids, John grew up feeling ashamed and insecure. "I knew I had more abilities but I just couldn't get them out properly," he says. "A learning disability is like having a wheelchair with square wheels. And I call it an invisible disability because the barriers I face aren't obvious."

For most of his twenties, he did manual labour and eventually became custodian at a church. That's when John's life started to change. A parishioner introduced John to psychologist Jessica Colson, who diagnosed him as having a Nonverbal Learning Disorder. John came to understand that his challenge had nothing to do with his intelligence — he just learned differently and there were resources to help.

John enrolled at Fanshawe College. His first attempt was frustrating: he got discouraged and was talking about giving up. Then, tragedy struck. Jessica, who had given him much hope, died in a car accident. Not wanting her contribution to be lost, John found the strength to return to Fanshawe — this time with the support of adaptive software called *Dragon Naturally Speaking*. "The software removes the challenge of writing my thoughts," says John. "I think and it writes. The barrier to my success was lifted." John earned his arts and sciences diploma.

One of the places John turned to for support was the Learning Disabilities Association of London and Region, a United Way-funded organization. Beginning to realize the potential he knew he always had, John started to serve as a role model for others. John speaks to individuals and groups about learning disabilities, and he was inducted into the Learning Disabilities Association Hall of Fame. John even started a Facebook page – *I Can Do That* – for people to learn, support and advocate.

John's success is extending into his career, as well: he is now a telephone banking specialist with TD Canada Trust. "I'm still getting better every day," he says. "When I started, I had a support assistant with me almost full-time. Now, I meet with someone once or twice a week for about 30 minutes. I'm really proud of that." John was recognized by his workplace for inspiring a customer who was worried about how her son's learning disability might affect his future.

John has come a long way from the scared boy who felt trapped by his learning disability. More than ever, John is the picture of a successful man who believes in himself.

[531 WORDS]



4.2 Campaign story: Bernardine

a) Story summary: for telling the story in your own words

Bernardine > “More than ever, I have stability as a proud Canadian.”

The transition to life in a new country isn't easy.

Bernardine and her husband Jerome are from India and spent 20 years building a good life in Dubai. Bernardine was head mistress of a prestigious school and Jerome was a guidance counselor. Their hard work provided the opportunity for their two children to attend university in Canada. The couple decided to move to Canada to be with their children, and settled in London. With their skills and energy, they were ready to hit the ground running in Canada. Bernardine took training courses to update her skills, volunteered in her neighbourhood and connected with everyone she could. Soon, she found a job.

Then, Jerome became ill and needed surgery. Bernardine had to leave her job in order to take care of her husband. For the first time, her confidence was shattered. She had a lot of skills and confidence in coming to Canada, and was working hard at settling in... but, she didn't realize how stressful it was to get her family transitioning successfully to Canada.

With neither of them working, Bernardine sought the help of the London Employment Help Centre. They explained the Employment Insurance process and the centre's United Way-funded advocacy program helped her to successfully qualify for it. She was eligible for a government Job Creation Program position as an Employment Support Worker at WIL Employment Connection. She applied and got the job.

Now Bernardine has a job, and Jerome is well and is working towards his ESL teaching certification. They have stability and are getting very involved in their community as proud Canadians.

Now, Bernardine can say, “More than ever, I have stability as a proud Canadian.” Bernardine's life has changed.

Key points

- issue/population served: diversity, newcomers
- Without the support Bernardine received through United Way: Bernardine would have experienced poverty without employment stability, and the other host of issues that come with poverty.

Investment proof point

- An investment of \$500 will provide more than 10 hours of support and advocacy to someone who is seeking work.

Impact bites about newcomers

Supporting and welcoming newcomers to Canada is vital to the future prosperity of London and Middlesex County. In addition to investing in programs that help newcomers settle and thrive, United Way co-chairs London's Welcoming Cultural Diversity initiative, which brings together our community to research, advocate and develop local solutions to the needs of newcomers.

Of the 80,000 immigrants that live in London, more than 25 per cent are refugees – many facing intimidating hurdles to becoming settled in their new community. Thanks to contributions to United Way, Across Languages provided interpretation in 35 different languages and dialects to more than 400 people in 2008, such as one refugee family who was able to get proper medical attention for their two young children so that they can get settled in their new school.

Impact bite about employment

Job loss and economic downturn can take a serious toll on families and our community. That's why United Way labour community services provides help with job-searching; vocational, educational and financial counselling; information on starting a business; and personal support in dealing with the stress of job loss. When individuals and families are self-reliant, our entire community benefits.

b) Stories for print: short and full stories

- **Short/third-person**

The transition to life in a new country isn't easy. Bernardine and her husband left Dubai to be with their children in Canada. Despite their impressive skills and confidence, there were hurdles in settling as newcomers. When Bernardine was connected with guidance and resources, she found a job. Today, she is very active in her community and, more than ever, she has stability as a proud Canadian. [66 words]

- **Short quote/first-person**

The transition to life in a new country isn't easy. "My husband and I came here ready to be active citizens, but the hurdles were overwhelming. When I was connected with guidance and resources, I found a job. Now, more than ever, we have stability as proud Canadians." [48 words]

- **Bernardine's story – full**

When you ask Bernardine what it means to be Canadian, she flashes a proud smile. After two years in London, she and her husband Jerome are achieving the stability they dreamed of and are becoming active in their community.

Originally from India, the couple moved to Dubai and spent 20 years building a successful life. Bernardine became the head mistress of a prestigious Primary School, while Jerome worked as a guidance counselor. Their hard work provided the opportunity for their two children to attend university overseas, and both chose to study in Canada.

After the first visit to see their children in university, Bernardine was hooked. "I longed to be with my children," she says, "but I was starting to fall in love with Canada, too. There was a warmth and openness in everyone we met and the feeling that you could pursue your ambitions. Jerome and I started thinking that Canada was where we belonged."

After university, their son Sean settled in Montreal and daughter Siana in London. The couple decided to follow. Leaving their careers and wonderful life in Dubai was a difficult decision, but they were excited to find success in their new country. Bernardine hit the ground running as a new Londoner. She took training courses to update her skills, volunteered in her neighbourhood and connected with everyone she could. Soon, she found a job.

Then, Jerome became ill and needed surgery. Bernardine had to leave her job in order to take care of her husband. For the first time, her confidence was shattered. "I was so determined to succeed in our new life but I found out it wasn't as easy as I hoped," she says. "I got overwhelmed."

With neither of them working, Bernardine sought the help of the London Employment Help Centre. They explained the Employment Insurance process and the centre's United Way-funded advocacy program helped her to successfully qualify for it. Through EI, she was eligible for a government Job Creation Program position as an Employment Support Worker at WIL Employment Connection. She applied and got the job. "My new role has been a boost to my confidence and I call it my 'real' Canadian work experience," she says. "I am a people person and I love helping others."

Bernardine's confidence isn't all that's back in full-force: Jerome is well and is working towards his ESL teaching certification.

"I feel empowered," says Bernardine. "Without the support I received I would never have been able to have the stability I have with my family now. It's been a bumpy road but my motto is stay focused, motivated and be persistent in your attempts. Canada has been great to us and I'm proud that now I can give back to my community as well."

[459 WORDS]



4.3 Campaign story: Colton

a) Story summary: for telling the story in your own words

Colton > “More than ever, I’m excited about my future.”

The challenges youth face are hard to deal with alone.

Colton was doing well in high school, but halfway through grade 11, he started experiencing the stress of cyber bullying. The stress caused him to drop out of school.

But, he was determined to do something while he was figuring out what to do next, so he started looking for a part-time job. He was walking down Front Street in downtown Strathroy and went into the Next Wave Youth Centre to check out their hours.

Next Wave Youth Centre is a program of Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a United Way-funded organization. United Way and Youth Opportunities Unlimited worked to mobilize community partners and address Strathroy’s need for a friendly, conveniently-located centre where young people could access employment services, educational resources, affordable housing and supports for the challenges they face.

As soon as Colton walked in, staff member Sonya Gill worked with him. She helped him enroll in an alternative education program to complete his grade 11 credits and build a resume. Colton interviewed for a job placement at Next Wave’s café and got a job.

Through the support and programs at Next Weave, Colton has gained a lot of confidence.

This September, he is returning confidently to high school to complete grade 12. He’s really excited about his future.

Now, Colton can say, “More than ever, I’m excited about my future.” Colton’s life has changed.

Key points

- issue/population served: youth
- Without the support Colton received through United Way: Colton would have been dealing with lack of self-confidence with his goals gone and lack of education/employment.

Investment proof points

- An investment of \$1,000 per year contributes to the support of two youth workers who offer Strathroy and area youth like Colton alternative education and job skills development.
- An investment of \$1 per day (\$365 per year) provides 25 homeless or at-risk youth with essential hygiene supplies.

Impact bites about children and youth

Next Wave Youth Centre in Strathroy celebrated two years of bringing new job opportunities, training programs, social enterprise, alternative education and support programs to local youth in Strathroy and area. Next Wave is a positive place for youth to go to build their skills, self-esteem and their futures. United Way is dedicated to helping prepare children and youth for future success. With many other community partners, supporting Next Wave is just one way we're doing this.

United Way helps develop future leaders and encourages young people to play an active role in the development of a strong and caring community through its London Life Youth Leadership Programs. A recently completed long-term study shows that 70% of the young people who were in the programs – some as long as 10 years ago – are presently serving their community through volunteering.

For children who've had to flee an abusive home, the nightmares don't end once they've reached the safety of the Women's Rural Resource Centre of Strathroy & Area. That's why United Way helps to fund a specialized staff person at the centre to help children cope with the trauma they've faced.

Part of Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre's Youth Services, the Girls' Club in two local schools is giving young women the opportunity to learn about self-esteem, healthy relationships, diversity and inclusivity, healthy body image, values and more. while enjoying recreational and leisure activities after school. And, it's proving to be working. In 2007, 100% of the participants reported they: feel better about themselves and their relationships; have some increase in confidence level; are making new friends since attending; have learned better ways to get along with people.

b) Stories for print: short and full stories

- **Short/third-person**

The challenges youth face are hard to deal with alone. Colton was doing well in high school; but halfway through grade 11, stress from cyber bullying caused Colton to drop out. When Next Wave Youth Centre in Strathroy (a program of Youth Opportunities Unlimited) helped Colton deal positively with the challenges he was facing, his goals returned. Today, Colton is completing grade 12 and, more than ever, he's excited about his future. [72 words]

- **Short quote/first-person**

The challenges youth face are hard to deal with alone. "I experienced cyber bullying that caused me to drop out of school. When Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Next Wave Centre in Strathroy helped me with everything I was facing, I put my goals back in motion. I'm finishing grade 12. Now, more than ever, I'm excited about my future." [58 words]

- **Colton's story – full**

When you're a teenager, you need a place where you can be yourself and find what you need to prepare for your future. Next Wave Youth Centre is that place for youth in the Middlesex County town of Strathroy, and it's the place where Colton went to put his goals back in motion.

Everything was going fine for Colton. He was doing well in high school, was well-liked and had good friends. But halfway through grade 11, the bullying started. "I wasn't used to that. It was overwhelming," says Colton. "It was Internet and text-messaging harassment all the time. I was stubborn then and I didn't want to talk to my friends and family about it. I felt alone in making decisions and problem solving." The stress became too much and Colton dropped out of school.

Still, Colton had no intention of putting his life on hold. "I was walking down Front Street [in downtown Strathroy] one day looking for a job," Colton recalls. "I noticed Next Wave and went to check out their hours. As soon as I walked in, I started getting the help I wanted. I came back every day and got support with job searching and other life skills."

Next Wave Youth Centre is a program of Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a United Way-funded organization. United Way and Youth Opportunities Unlimited worked to mobilize community partners and address Strathroy's need for a friendly, conveniently-located centre where young people could access employment services, educational resources, affordable housing and supports for the challenges they face.

And support is exactly what Colton received. Staff member Sonya Gill worked with Colton from the moment he first walked in the door. She helped him enroll in an alternative education program to complete his grade 11 credits and build a resume. Colton interviewed for a job placement at Next Wave's café. "I got the job," he beams, "probably because I have an amazing oatmeal cookie recipe."

“Colton might not see this in himself, but his self-esteem has really blossomed,” Sonya says. “He’s a different, happier young man than the Colton who came here after he dropped out. He’s going to do well.”

This September, Colton confidently returned to high school for grade 12. “Next Wave changed me and gave me opportunities to be a better person,” he says. Colton has also found a new passion. He began teaching guitar lessons at Next Wave and is serious about his band *Igneous*. Colton is the band’s songwriter and lead vocalist.

Looking back on the past year, Colton admits he didn’t expect all the success he’s found. “I was just looking for a job, but without everything they helped me with I don’t know where I’d be. Now, I’m really excited about my future.”

[459 WORDS]



5.0 Investment proof points

John (literacy)

- An investment of \$1 per pay (\$26 per year) enables an adult with a learning disability to attend support groups for one year.

Bernardine (newcomers and employment)

- An investment of \$500 will provide more than 10 hours of support and advocacy to someone who is seeking work.

Colton (children and youth)

- An investment of \$1,000 per year contributes to the support of two youth workers who offer Strathroy and area youth like Colton alternative education and job skills development.
- An investment of \$1 per day (\$365 per year) provides 25 homeless or at-risk youth with essential hygiene supplies.



6.0 2009/10 community investment; priority areas; impact examples

Investing in real change

Our community's generosity through the 2008 Campaign enabled United Way of London & Middlesex to make a record investment of \$6.3 million for 2009/10. This investment helps individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities to reach their full potential through a focus on:

- strengthening families who are struggling with poverty, violence and/or mental health issues
- preparing children and youth for future success
- building the capacity of neighbourhoods and local communities, including Middlesex County communities
- enabling Aboriginal people and newcomers to be successful participants in community life

2009/10 community investment

- **United Way funded agency allocations:** United Way invests in programs and services at 37 agencies that provide proven results for our community.
- **Community building:** United Way is a leader in understanding the root causes of social issues and bringing together the people and resources to find lasting solutions. We mobilize our community's resources of time, money, expertise and influence to achieve maximum impact for positive, lasting change. Examples of United Way's community building initiatives include Family Networks and Literacy in London and Middlesex.
- **Strategic initiatives funding:** Working to respond to the ever-changing needs of our community, United Way provides short-term strategic funding to projects that address new and emerging issues.

Across Languages
Big Brothers Big Sisters*
Boys' & Girls' Club
Canadian Hearing Society*
Canadian Mental Health Association*
Changing Ways*
CNIB*
Community Living London
Community Schools Program/YMCA of Western Ontario
Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre
Daya Counselling Centre*
Epilepsy Support Centre*
Family Networks
Family Service Thames Valley*
Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre
Horton Street Seniors Centre
Hospice of London*
John Howard Society*
Labour Adjustment
Learning Disabilities Association*
Literacy in London and Middlesex
London and District Distress Centre*
London Coffee House Program
London Employment Help Centre*
London InterCommunity Health Centre
London Life Youth Leadership Programs (Youth in Action, Young Leaders of Tomorrow) London
Occupational Safety & Health*
LUSO Community Services
Meals on Wheels
Muslim Family Support Service/Family Service Thames Valley
Mutual Aid Parenting Programs*/Children's Aid Society
My Sister's Place - WOTCH
N'Amerind Friendship Centre
Next Wave Strathroy Youth Centre*/YOU
Ontario March of Dimes*
Outcome Evaluation Initiative
SARI Therapeutic Riding*
Scouts Canada*
Sexual Assault Centre*
South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre
Stevenson Children's Camp*
Welcoming Cultural Diversity
Women's Rural Resource Centre Strathroy & Area*
Youth Action Centre/YOU

(*provide direct services to Middlesex County residents)

Impact bites by priority area

- **strengthening families who are struggling with poverty, violence and/or mental health issues**

Taking the right path The John Howard Society helps young people who've been or are identified as being at risk of becoming involved with the law. Thanks to United Way funding, youth are connected to programs, including one-to-one counselling and peer support groups, to help them cope with their problems in a positive way so they can take the right path in life.

Keeping families together, safely Unique in Ontario, Family Networks provides access to professional and other community services necessary to keep families together safely and reduce the number of children in the care of the Children's Aid Society. Family Networks is exceeding its first year targets and is doing what it was intended to do, for the people who need it most. 93% of families rated the overall service as excellent or good and 100% felt they would be better able to cope with similar problems in the future because of Family Networks.

Families strengthening families Raising a family can be challenging enough, but to feel you're doing it alone is even harder. Through the Mutual Aid Program for Parents (MAPP), parents get together to overcome the barriers of low income and isolation and support each other's emotional, social and practical needs to build stronger families. MAPP meets in Strathroy and Glencoe and is open to all Middlesex County residents, as is the Spanish-speaking MAPP that meets in London.

Helping children cope For children who've had to flee an abusive home, the nightmares don't end once they've reached the safety of the Women's Rural Resource Centre of Strathroy & Area. United Way helps to fund a specialized staff person to help children cope with the trauma they've faced.

Lifeline for many county residents Northwest Middlesex Multi-service Centre in Parkhill is a lifeline for many county residents. They come for a wide variety of services including support for hearing impairment, learning disabilities, mental health, employment assistance and much more.

Keeping seniors connected Lack of transportation and living on fixed incomes can leave seniors isolated in their homes, which can lead to deteriorating mental and physical health. With United Way's help last year, more than 1,000 seniors participated in programs at Horton Street Seniors' Centre and Meals on Wheels provided 9,000 rides to doctors' appointments and grocery shopping, keeping seniors connected to their community and avoiding loneliness and isolation.

Strengthening families to stay together

At United Way, we know that with the right supports, we can prevent crises and reduce stress for families. Through our investments in prevention programs and counselling services, families can access the help they need to stay together safely and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. (From 2008 case for support)

- **preparing children and youth for future success**

Developing leaders, volunteers

United Way helps develop future leaders and encourages young people to play an active role in the development of a strong and caring community through its London Life Youth Leadership Programs. A recently completed long-term study shows that 70% of the young people who were in the programs – some as long as 10 years ago – are presently serving their community through volunteering.

Being a part of successful futures

Next Wave Youth Centre in Strathroy celebrated two years of bringing new job opportunities, training programs, social enterprise, alternative education and support programs to local youth in Strathroy and area. Next Wave is a positive place for youth to go to build their skills, self-esteem and their futures. United Way is dedicated to helping prepare children and youth for future success. With many other community partners, supporting Next Wave is just one way we're doing this.

Helping all children reach their potential

With the right skills, children can reach their full potential and have bright futures. Thanks to contributions to United Way, more than 3,000 children will develop literacy and social skills through London Y's Community Schools program, which reaches out to low-income and immigrant families with activities before, during and after school. (From 2007 Campaign brochure)

Helping girls develop self-esteem, healthier relationships

Part of Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre's Youth Services, the Girls' Club in two local schools is giving young women the opportunity to learn about self-esteem, healthy relationships, diversity and inclusivity, healthy body image, values and more. while enjoying recreational and leisure activities after school. And, it's proving to be working. In 2007, 100% of the participants reported they: feel better about themselves and their relationships; have some increase in confidence level; are making new friends since attending; have learned better ways to get along with people.

- **building the capacity of neighbourhoods and local communities, including Middlesex County communities**

Help when and where needed

Strong neighbourhoods aren't just a place for people to live. They provide opportunities to share and learn from our neighbours, safe places for our children to play and a space where all residents feel included. United Way's investments in five neighbourhood resource centres offer residents access to what they need most at that time in their life, such as food and clothing banks, parenting groups, language help and learning and recreation opportunities. (From 2008 case for support)

- **enabling Aboriginal people and newcomers to be successful participants in community life**

Helping newcomers thrive

Supporting and welcoming newcomers to Canada is vital to the future prosperity of London and Middlesex County. In addition to investing in programs that help newcomers settle and thrive, United Way co-chairs London's Welcoming Cultural Diversity initiative, which brings together our community to research, advocate and develop local solutions to the needs of newcomers.

Across Languages – providing interpretation for newcomers

Of the 80,000 immigrants that live in London, more than 25 per cent are refugees – many facing intimidating hurdles to becoming settled in their new community. Thanks to contributions to United Way, Across Languages provided interpretation in 35 different languages and dialects to more than 400 people in 2008, such as one refugee family who was able to get proper medical attention for their two young children so that they can get settled in their new school.

Employment/job loss

Supporting workers to self-reliance

Job loss and economic downturn can take a serious toll on families and our community. That's why United Way labour community services provides help with job-searching; vocational, educational and financial counselling; information on starting a business; and personal support in dealing with the stress of job loss. When individuals and families are self-reliant, our entire community benefits. (From 2008 case for support)



7.0 Economic downturn stats for London & Middlesex

- In April the jobless rate reached its highest point in 13 years (9.5 per cent compared to an 8.7 per cent average in Ontario).
- The number of food bank users has risen from 2,500 families to 3,000 – the food bank’s highest monthly load ever.
- The London Abused Women’s Centre has been experiencing a pattern of increased service demands since January. They reported an overall increase of 50.45 per cent for services provided over the same period in 2008. This has been partially attributed to the economic downturn.
- Out of the 96,905 families living in London in 2006, 15.5 per cent live below the Low Income Cut Off.
- Demand for the Credit Counseling program at Family Service Thames Valley has climbed 24 per cent in the first few months of 2009.

Diverse communities:

- London is known as a diverse and welcoming community. The most recent census data shows that in 2006, 14 per cent of London's population was comprised of visible minorities, up from 10.9 per cent in 2001.
- In 2002, the London CMA had a higher proportion of refugees (27 per cent) than the provincial average (9 per cent). According to the London Cross Cultural Learner Centre, in the past four to five years, our community has seen refugee arrival numbers more than double.
- [Stats from London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council]:
 - 21.7% of Londoners are, or have been, an immigrant to Canada ~ 1 in 5 (75,620) Londoners.
 - 10.4% of London’s population (35,780 individuals), age 15 and older, speak a non-official language most often at home.
 - Visible minorities comprise 13.8% of London’s population ~ 47,955 individuals ~ and 16.2% of Canada’s total population ~ 5,068,100 individuals.
 - Between 2001 and 2006, London’s visible minority population grew at a rate (31.6%) exceeding the national average (27.2%).

Other stats:

- 17 per cent of families live below the poverty line.
- 46 per cent of those are lone-parent families and 51 per cent are immigrants.
- Between 1995 and 2001, there was a 70 per cent increase in the number of children in care at the Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex.
- Almost 41 per cent of London Food Bank clients are children and youth.
- 17 per cent of adults have less than a grade 9 education and 1 in 5 are functioning at the lowest level of literacy.
- Incomes for Aboriginal households in London dropped 12.5 per cent between 1991 and 2001.
- The trend of homelessness is worsening in London. The estimated average number of homeless people on London streets is 1,500, the number of available shelter beds is 360 and the percentage of shelter users coping with addiction and mental illness is 40 per cent.

Stats about the challenges newcomers, Aboriginals and lone parent families face: (stats from the Child and Youth Network's agenda)

- In London, 17 per cent of all individuals (55,785) and half (51 per cent) of our recently arriving immigrant population, between 1996 and 2001 live with low-income.
- Almost half (41 per cent) of the growing Aboriginal population live with low-income.
- 13 per cent of all families (11,685 families) and one out of five children, live at or below the low-income cutoff (LICO).
- Of the 11,685 families living with low-income, 38 per cent are lone parent families.