

All Children & Youth Reach Their Potential



Children and youth deserve to live, learn and grow in a stable, caring environment where their basic needs are met. Supporting the healthy growth and development of our children and youth is an important goal of this community. By targeting the source of potential challenges, we as a community will help children and youth reach their potential.

the facts: eliminating barriers to potential

United Way has identified three long term outcomes within this priority: children and youth are free from abuse and neglect, children and youth are healthy, and children and youth succeed in school. Through a combination of funds, research, and skilled staff and volunteers, United Way supports local programs and initiatives that help eliminate the barriers that prevent children and youth from developing to their fullest potential.

Children and youth are free from abuse and neglect

Violence and bullying can have a negative impact on growing minds and bodies. In Waterloo Region, 67% of students report having been bullied at school, often in front of others. Additionally, young people aged 15-24 years are more likely to be victims of crime compared to all other age groups. United Way invests in a number of complementary strategies that free children from abuse and neglect, including: prevention programs, educational instruction, one-to-one support, court support services and counselling. The aim is not only to eliminate all forms of

discrimination, but to prevent victimized youth from feeling isolated while helping offenders make better choices.

Children and youth are healthy

Promoting the physical and emotional wellbeing of children and youth is a key priority for United Way's work in the community. Nationally, obesity and inactivity rates in children have doubled in the last 25 years. Locally, 9.1% of youth in Waterloo Region score low on the Early Development Instrument for physical health and wellbeing and 11.6% score low on emotional health and maturity. United Way invests in programs that improve the social and psychological health of children and youth by supporting positive identity and social development in areas such as self-esteem, social skills, and mechanisms for coping with stress. Such skill can aid in the development of healthy relationships and life skills.

Children and youth succeed in school

Success in school often leads to success in life. In Waterloo Region, 1 in 5 young children are at risk for developmental difficulties that could hinder their performance at school. United Way supports a variety of innovative programs and services that improve their chances for success. Initiatives that help children improve academic performance, including mentoring and counselling supports, can lead to greater achievement in school.

be change
make change
see change



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