



Change starts here

United Way of the Lower Mainland
Community Investment Report 2010/11



United Way
Lower Mainland

Change starts here.

uwlm.ca

Give. Volunteer. Act.

Foreword

We help people every day.

United Way has a role and a responsibility to address our community's key social issues by investing in prevention. Our role: to build a healthy, caring and inclusive community; a community that we are all proud to call home. Our responsibility: to do it with integrity and courage and to ensure sustainability and embrace diversity every step of the way.

For more than 80 years, United Way has helped the most vulnerable among us. Research and community consultation tells us that we need to address some key social issues in our region: issues like school readiness for young children; after-school support for children and help for our vulnerable seniors.

United Way of the Lower Mainland is the only charitable organization funding a regional network of about 160 organizations delivering more than 500 prevention-based programs and initiatives.

United Way donors support a network of agencies that provide vital social services to hundreds of thousands of people throughout the region. Our support for children, seniors, and their families and caregivers reaches across 23 municipalities.

This report will share some of the highlights from the 2010/11 fiscal year of how, together, we changed lives for the better, each and every day.



Michael McKnight
President & CEO
United Way of the Lower Mainland



Change starts here

United Way of the Lower Mainland brings together community leaders from all walks of life to identify local solutions and prevent social problems from becoming crises. This means tackling the root causes of our community's greatest challenges – poverty, homelessness, crime, and isolation – for a more hopeful tomorrow. Because they need our help the most, we focus on creating a better future for children and seniors.

Working with non-profits, government, educators, advocacy groups, unions, businesses, researchers, and community members, we act as a catalyst for change. We have a responsibility to ensure that social problems affecting children and seniors are dealt with. No other organization has the same depth, breadth, and reach to make this happen.



United Way leads social change by:

Getting to the heart of the matter by researching the underlying causes of social problems:

By investigating and focusing on the underlying causes to complex social challenges, we learn to not only improve situations for children, seniors, and their families, but to help prevent issues in the first place.

Investing in social services:

After nearly nine decades, our commitment continues. This strategy is at the core of much of what United Way achieves with its investments in building a stronger community. We fund organizations to strengthen their capacity to deliver quality programs that make a difference in the lives of children, seniors, and their families.

Multiplying the impact by working in partnership with others:

By engaging the community, United Way recognizes the power and potential of multiple and diverse partners working together for local solutions. We focus on linking, leading, and leveraging resources – knowledge, skills, money, social capital, and community spaces – to meet the needs of children, seniors, and their families.

Raising our voice to influence public attitudes, systems, and policy:

Policies, attitudes, and larger systems have the potential to either improve or limit people's quality of life and ability to succeed. By working in the advocacy arena, United Way champions positive change and asserts our commitment to children, seniors, and their families. Through this strategy, we influence critical decision-making that shapes public policy. We work to inform and shift public opinion and action.

Evaluating the performance of our investments and efforts:

Measurement and monitoring are essential to making good on our promise to create long-term social change. We build capacity with our partners to measure, monitor, and communicate results achieved through United Way funding and support. Accountability processes and standards are part of all our community investments. Our goal is to clearly report on where donations are invested and the difference those investments make.

Breaking new ground on public policy issues

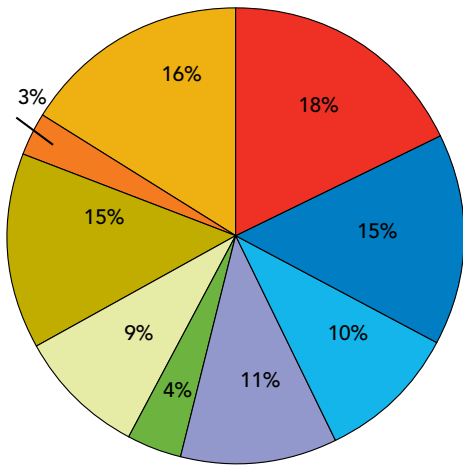
The first of its kind in British Columbia, United Way's Public Policy Institute brought together public policy experts to work with senior managers in social services and health-related agencies who want to better understand and influence the public policy process.

Modeled after successful institutes offered by the Maytree Foundation in Ontario and the Max Bell Foundation in Alberta, United Way's Public Policy Institute reflects our commitment to building the strength and impact of the non-profit sector to address challenging social issues. Mike Harcourt, former premier of British Columbia, together with former provincial government and health services leaders – Elizabeth Cull, Brenda Eaton, Ida Goodreau, and Liz Whynot – brought rich perspectives to the Institute from a range of experiences.

Over 50 people applied for the 26 available seats in 2011 and based on the overwhelmingly positive response from agency staff and faculty, United Way is preparing for the start of the next Institute.

Where did United Way donors' dollars go?

2010/11 fiscal year community investments and expenditures – \$33.8 million



- Helping children age 0 to 6: \$6.1 Million, or 18%
- Helping children age 6 to 12: \$5.0 Million, or 15%
- Helping seniors: \$3.4 Million, or 10%
- Building Stronger Communities: \$3.8 Million, or 11%
- Success By 6 Provincial Partnership and Other Funds: \$1.3 Million, or 4%
- United Way Community Services: \$2.9 Million, or 9%
- Net Campaign Expenditures: \$4.8 Million, or 14%
- Campaign Expenditures funded by UWLM Endowment Fund income: \$0.9 Million, or 3%
- Donor Designations: \$5.6 Million, or 16%

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we were able to invest \$33.8 million to improve the lives of children and seniors and build stronger communities through these allocations:

- \$18.3 million helped children be the best they can be and helped seniors to live well. These funds also helped to prevent poverty, homelessness, hunger, and made information and referral services, crises lines, and volunteer centres available across the Lower Mainland.
- \$5.6 million was designated by donors to specific charities. Another \$1.3 million was directed to other initiatives such as our Success By 6 Provincial Partnership.
- \$2.9 million was invested in United Way's Community Services.
- \$0.9 million of income from our endowment fund allowed us to keep fundraising costs low. \$4.8 million was spent on raising funds – at 14%, one of the lowest fundraising costs in the country.

Change requires more than money

We know that simply administering grants in a traditional way is not enough to drive sustainable social change. Our stakeholders know this too. Communities across the region rely on United Way for more than funds. They look to our staff for support with social planning, community development, research, events, and advocacy and engagement. Every year our investments in Community Services make a difference as United Way staff:

- share research results and best practices at conferences and events
- participate in local and regional planning to learn and provide recommendations on community change strategies
- support post secondary education by presenting at classes for local colleges and universities
- collaborate with other funders to better coordinate and integrate funding efforts so that granting and accountability processes are more practical, efficient, and effective
- participate in the planning, design, and use of community-based research
- help local communities engage with key stakeholders and leaders on critical issues and solutions

We all want children to be their best

Children embody the future. We all succeed when our children are ready to reach their full potential. Healthy, happy and resilient children are the foundation for thriving communities.

It's a priority for United Way to help children to be their best. We mobilize other champions of children. We work with university researchers, local governments, and agencies, to create powerful partnerships. Together, we plan and take action on solutions that work for our children.

Raising awareness, advocating, and improving services for children

We continued funding 11 Early and Middle Childhood Champion Organizations through grants that help them raise awareness and advocate for children and families, and strengthen the early and middle childhood sectors. As a result, individuals and organizations that serve children and families became more informed about research and professional standards, more coordinated and connected, and better resourced and prepared to represent those they serve. Our commitment to this work will continue through a new Early/Middle Childhood Sector-Strengthening Grant that will focus on supporting organizations in addressing public policy issues.

Working together for local solutions

We continued to strengthen the early and middle childhood sectors and support local community change for

children and families by funding and participating in planning coalitions and partnerships that reach 23 municipalities across the Lower Mainland.

United Way Community Planning Partnership Grants helped stakeholders undertake activities that helped their communities to address local issues. For example, assessing community strengths, weaknesses, and priorities; facilitating local research; building public awareness; developing action plans; creating partnerships; leveraging funding to increase resources; and coordinating stakeholders who serve children and families. Their work also plays an important role in informing funders' investment strategies, such as United Way's.

Through our Community Planning Partnership Grants we enabled over 40 research projects and 90 community events and forums, and supported multiple community planning efforts – all to advance knowledge and inspire action on local issues affecting children and their families. Here are a few examples:

- The Surrey Middle Childhood Matters planning table co-sponsored the 4th annual Kids Conference which was hosted and organized by the City of Surrey and drew over 200 kids to learn about community resources and activities available to them, as well as specific topics like science and art.
- The South Asian Early Childhood



Development (ECD) Task Force held a forum for 130 political and business leaders, media representatives, health, education, and social services professionals, and parents and grandparents. The focus was to raise awareness and inspire ECD champions – including parents themselves – within the South Asian community.

- The Tri-Cities ECD Committee hosted the second-annual Tri-Cities Champion for Children Awards of Excellence event, presenting individual, group, and business awards for support of Early Childhood work across the community.
- The New Westminster ECD partners launched a business engagement strategy and developed a DVD demonstrating the commitment to ECD among funding and service partners in their community. Also in New Westminster, the Middle Childhood Matters planning table hosted the Growing Up Great forum for dozens of service providers and parents.

Children age 0 - 6

Across the Lower Mainland, 30 per cent of children entering kindergarten are considered developmentally vulnerable. This means almost one-third of our children are not ready for the learning that school provides. If left unsupported, these children face risks throughout their lives – an inability to graduate, find quality employment, or build a stable future for themselves as adults or the children they may have.

United Way supports young children and their families as part of our Success By 6 initiative. Our goal is school readiness for young children. By helping children start school with the skills they need to succeed, we enable them to reach their full potential.

Do you know about Smart Family Policy?

We believe that knowledge and understanding about effective practices and relevant policies can help improve the future for our community's children. Smart Family Policy evolved out of a report called 15 by 15: A Comprehensive Policy Framework for Early Human Capital Investment in BC. It quantifies the costs and benefits of addressing early childhood vulnerability in BC and provides policy recommendations to reduce this to 15 per cent by 2015.

Smart Family Policy and the 15 x 15 report have been driven by the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) with support from

United Way and others. In 2010/11 we supported HELP to inform British Columbians in general, and the business community in particular, about early childhood vulnerability and Smart Family Policy. To raise awareness and inspire action on these critical issues HELP distributed about 1,000 information folders while United Way staff presented to dozens of government officials and business leaders about the troublesome cost of doing nothing to alleviate early childhood vulnerability in our region.

Early Years Data Day

This was a professional development event organized by United Way for 30 local Early and Middle Childhood stakeholders. Hosted by UBC's HELP, participants learned about accessing, using, and connecting data sources from the health and education sectors, local government, Statistics Canada, and HELP to inform and strengthen their local planning. Additional professional development needs were explored and results of the training were shared throughout the province.



early childhood community development efforts and parent support programs

We continued to participate on the Provincial ECD Evaluation Project Steering Committee. The project, now having completed five successful years, rolled out evaluation activities focused on community capacity building efforts in 82 communities across BC. Results showed that Success by 6 and Children First initiatives are improving coordination, public awareness, and service delivery within the ECD sector. The project team also continued to work towards a sustainable model for evaluating parent education and support programs through a new technology platform. This project is helping to shed light on the impact of community development efforts as well as programs for children and families, while also informing funders, such as United Way, on their own investing and monitoring activities related to ECD.

Ensuring help is available when and where it is needed most

For families with young children help is not always available where or when it is needed most. United Way continued to build a strong network of social services and programs to change this. Our investments in 100 organizations and over 200 programs included outreach for isolated families, family support centres, programs that promote positive parenting skills, early learning and care programs, and programs to help

immigrant and newcomer children and families adjust to life in Canada. With our support, these organizations made a difference in the lives of young children and their families and caregivers by:

- providing nearly 36,000 young children, over 35,000 of their caregivers, and over 26,000 families with access to much needed supports and services that were used nearly 700,000 times
- delivering over 100,000 nutritious meals and snacks to young children in early childhood development and child care programs
- providing over 1,700 workshops to parents/caregivers of young children on topics such as child development, effective parenting/care giving strategies, healthy nutrition, and about accessing community resources
- engaging approximately 1,400 volunteers at family resource centres
- producing more than 100,000 information packages filled with early childhood resource and referral information, literature on positive parenting skills, and information to raise awareness about the importance of ECD
- providing approximately 5,600 counselling sessions to help parents of young children build their confidence as new parents and cope with serious issues like domestic violence



Helping refugee families with young children

Our support for the Early Years Refugee Pilot Project – at six sites in Surrey, Burnaby, Coquitlam, Richmond, Langley, and Vancouver – continued to help high-need refugee families with young children adjust to their new lives in Canada. Almost 700 refugee children and their parents/caregivers received support to build connections in their new communities and to access resources and services.

We also addressed two key issues. Through increased United Way funding, services were made accessible to additional refugee family members, especially older siblings. And together with BC's Immigrant Integration Branch and the project's Regional Advisory Committee a special training workshop was held for the project's staff that focused on ways to strengthen services and further improve supports for refugee children and their families.

- securing housing for nearly 800 mothers of young children living in abusive relationships or struggling with substance abuse issues

Supporting aboriginal children to reach their potential

We continued to support Aboriginal engagement on ECD issues and planning for the well-being and healthy development of Aboriginal children. Stakeholders involved in the Fraser Region's Aboriginal ECD Network and the Vancouver Coastal Aboriginal Early Years Regional Coordination are working to increase knowledge of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ECD services and initiatives in their regions, improve access to resources that reflect diverse Ab-

original identities, and increase collaboration and coordination. United Way's support during 2010/11 focused on the creation of culturally-responsive ECD resources and regional training opportunities, and on gathering stakeholders and building relationships to further these important efforts for Aboriginal children and their families.

Seeding innovation

United Way's Community Innovation Grants supported innovative social programs across the region with a focus on marginalized populations, including immigrants, Aboriginals, and those living in poverty. Several funded projects focused on helping young children and their families to overcome cultural isolation and stay connected with their communities through mentorship, family supports, and neighbourhood-based programs.

For example United Way supported a unique outreach and training program for single fathers of immigrant and refugee children living in Burnaby, Richmond, and Vancouver who face a number of challenges related to language, cultural differences, and poverty. The fathers developed their parenting skills, gained access to resources and information, and received social and emotional support through peer coaching. As the fathers progressed through the program they played a greater mentorship role for newer fathers to the program, thus creating a strong network of positive support for single fathers of immigrant and refugee children in those communities.



Children age 6 - 12

Children ages 6 to 12 are experiencing increased isolation and disconnection. United Way-funded research reports that almost 50% of children in Grade 7 say they are unhappy with their lives. If nothing is done, these children are at risk during their teen years of finding their sense of identity and worth in ways that can lead to harm.

At United Way, our goal is health, happiness and resiliency for school-age children. By providing children in their middle years with the support they need, we set them on the path to success – away from school drop-out, crime, and poverty. Reaching children at risk before they make the wrong choices is critical to preventing issues like bullying, racism, gangs, and violence.

How are school-age children doing?

We continued support for the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI), a measurement tool used to assess children's abilities and vulnerabilities. The first MDI survey was administered in early 2010 to over 3,000 Grade four students in Vancouver schools. United Way then hosted the Vancouver MDI Forum to profile the results and engage over 200 stakeholders in talking about local solutions. In early 2011, the MDI was administered in Coquitlam schools to almost 2,000 Grade 4 students – an impressive 88 per cent participation rate for this voluntary survey. We also supported the creation of the MDI Toolkit,

which helps parents, educators, and community organizations to make sense of MDI data and consider how they can respond and make a difference.

Ensuring help is available when and where it is needed most

For school-age children and their families help is not always available where or when it is needed most. United Way continued to build a strong network of social services and programs to change this. Our investments in 71 organizations and over 120 programs included after-school programs, mentoring and tutoring services, homework clubs,

drop-in programs, advocacy initiatives, and programs to help immigrant and newcomer children and families adjust to life in Canada. With our support these organizations made an important difference in the lives of school-age children and their families by:

- providing more than 53,000 school-age children and over 7,000 families much needed supports and services that were accessed over one million times
- delivering approximately 45,000 nutritious meals to children in social and recreation programs during non-school hours



- providing nearly 800 workshops to children and parents on topics such as violence prevention, self esteem and leadership development, personal responsibility, and relationship building
- engaging nearly 1,500 mentors and tutors to help children improve their academic abilities, build self esteem, and learn positive social behaviours, including culturally appropriate tutoring support for immigrants and refugees
- engaging over 5,000 volunteers to assist with youth programs and provide mentorship during activities outside of school hours
- producing over 43,000 information packages and resource materials to help increase awareness of healthy child development and available community supports, and to engage newcomer youth
- providing over 7,500 counselling sessions to help children cope with issues such as domestic violence or the loss of a loved one
- supporting over 5,300 parents and caregivers by fostering parent/child relationships through family counselling and support

The heart of a neighbourhood: community schools

Imagine – schools as the safe and caring centre of a community, not just during class hours, but during evenings, weekends, and holidays as



well. Thanks to United Way and others, this has become a reality. Our investments in community schools involve significant partnerships with the Surrey School District and Vancouver School Board. Through support of staffing, we continued to help coordinate the use of facilities and programs in some of Surrey's most vulnerable neighbourhoods such as Guildford and Whalley, while enabling expansion of community schools in Surrey to 25. In Vancouver, more than 50 per cent of that district's after-school programs at 12 different hubs are now supported by United Way. Our funds continued to allow community school teams to work with local residents to expand schools and services, particularly in low-income areas, such as Mount Pleasant, Collingwood and Strathcona.

Quality measurement and monitoring helps make a difference

Quality measurement and monitoring helps non-profit agencies improve programs for those they serve and communicate about impact. Together with the Vancouver Coastal Health SMART Fund and the City of Vancouver Community Services Grants we offered workshops to our funded non-profits on program outcome measurement and monitoring. Over 100 of their staff attended workshops - responses to surveys showed that as a result:

- over 95% increased their knowledge about program planning, including their understanding about program outcomes
- over 80% increased their knowledge about how to measure outcomes for their programs
- after completing two levels of training, over 75% were interested in continuing to learn more about implementing outcome measurement and monitoring for their programs

Community school programs and services keep thousands of children safe every year, helping them to make friends, and to increase their academic achievement, social and emotional development, and connection to their school and commu-

nity. The success of these community-schools has led other districts like Burnaby and New Westminster to seek United Way's help in 2011 to adopt the model to their local needs.

Community collaboration for kids

We continued to support The University of British Columbia Learning Exchange's Engaging Neighbourhoods Project. This collaborative pilot involving UBC's Learning Exchange, United Way, the Vancouver Board of Education, the City of Vancouver, and local organizations in the Victoria-Fraserview and Renfrew-Collingwood neighbourhoods focused on community-building work that benefits children in the middle years. University students

living in those neighbourhoods provided leadership and guidance to high school students to create community engagement activities for children ages 6 to 12 and their families.



Friends of Simon

We continued to ensure that immigrant and refugee children have tutoring support outside of school hours through Friends of Simon, a program led by Simon Fraser University in partnership with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (WelcomeBC), and supported by United Way. At 14 sites in Surrey, Burnaby, and Coquitlam an average of 183 children from 30 different countries were tutored weekly during the school term by 53 tutors who provided over 59 hours of services weekly.



We all want seniors to live well

An estimated 30,000 seniors across the Lower Mainland are socially isolated, and almost one in five seniors lives in poverty. Metro Vancouver's seniors (65-plus) population was 316,972 in 2010. According to BC Stats population projections, Metro Vancouver's seniors (65-plus) population will double in 2029 to reach 633,944.

This dramatic increase in the number of older adults in our communities raises significant issues for all of us - as seniors, relatives, caregivers, neighbours, and citizens. Ignoring the needs of our seniors today means tough challenges tomorrow, as the impact of demographic change quickens and the implications of an aging society is felt by all of us.

United Way is helping seniors to age well – in their own homes and communities, surrounded by friends, families and caregivers. Our goal is independent and engaged seniors who contribute fully to society. By providing seniors with the support they need, United Way prevents isolation, loneliness, and related health problems and costs to the health system.

Helping seniors stay independent and active

This remains a top priority for United Way and the provincial government's Seniors Healthy Living Secretariat. Together we continued to pilot a new model of providing services – such as transportation, housekeeping, home repair, yard work, and grocery shopping – to help seniors live longer in their own homes.

Since launching the Community Action for Seniors Independence (CASI) project more than 700 seniors have registered for services at five sites across the province: Maple Ridge, Newton area in Surrey, Renfrew Collingwood neighbourhood in Vancouver, Dawson Creek, and Osoyoos. Aging at home and in one's community lowers the human costs of giving up familiar faces, places, and supports of home and neighbourhood, and postpones the high costs of institutional care. In a rapidly aging society, we need to work together to help frail seniors age in place at home and live independently as long as possible. CASI is testing a community development approach to doing just that.

What is the number one challenge for seniors?

Seniors themselves tell us it is transportation. This is why we continued to bring together key players like the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation, the provincial government's Seniors' Secretariat, and Translink, to address this issue and advocate for legislative change. Key activities included launching a project that will review the state of affairs for seniors' transportation services and develop a catalogue of transportation alternatives in the Lower Mainland which will set the stage for the creation of a better integrated network of transportation options for seniors.





How are Lower Mainland seniors doing?

United Way hosted a symposium to determine the value and feasibility of creating a measurement approach to gauge seniors' quality of life. United Way's history in working with researchers and others to develop similar approaches for children in our region has proven how powerful these tools can be for planning and mobilizing action to address critical social issues. Over 30 symposium participants – including seniors, academics, and community and agency leaders – spent a full day together learning, debating, and ultimately showing support for this project. Our next step is to secure funding and research partners to advance this valuable work.

Planning for seniors' well-being

The number of people over age 65 is growing extremely rapidly and little information exists about this

population in the Lower Mainland. Where do these seniors live? Where do the oldest of them live? How many live alone, or in poverty? To help United Way and the community at large better understand these issues and plan for the well-being of seniors we launched a comprehensive scan of seniors and their social environments in the region. Our seniors environmental scan highlights factors affecting seniors' lives, such as density and age of seniors' populations, access to transportation, income levels, social isolation, and languages spoken. The United Way Seniors Vulnerability Report identifies concentrated populations of vulnerable seniors in acute need throughout the region.

The report examines regional communities and describes their social and built environment and includes discussion papers on 'vulnerability'. The report calls for action on research, services and policy changes

Helping homeless seniors find places to live

We provided another year of funding for the Temporary Housing Program operated by the Seniors Services Society of BC so they could continue to help seniors – including those already homeless or at risk of being homeless to secure temporary housing in New Westminster, Burnaby, and Surrey. Since its start, the program has helped 61 seniors 55 years or older (39 in the past year alone). The majority of these seniors were homeless when they came to the program and all but four have now moved to permanent housing.

Working with the society, we also undertook a program review and supported the creation of a three-year business plan. At the same time, the society developed a partnership with BC Housing to secure housing stock, allowing United Way's funds to focus on providing support to seniors in the program.

to improve seniors' quality of life throughout the Lower Mainland. Results were discussed in the media and considered at United Way's second Seniors Forum in November 2011.

Ensuring help is available when and where it is needed most

For seniors and their families or other caregivers help is not always available where or when it is needed most. United Way continued to build a strong network of social services and programs to change this. Our investments in 63 organizations and 108 programs included outreach to isolated and immigrant seniors, resource/activity centres for seniors, housing initiatives, transportation programs, non-medical home support services, companionship programs, and caregiver support programs. With our support, these organizations made a difference in the lives of seniors, and their families and other caregivers by:

- providing nearly 22,000 seniors with much needed supports that were accessed nearly 300,000 times
- providing approximately 750 seniors' caregivers with counselling, respite, and support
- producing over 95,000 information packages and resource materials to support seniors with assisted living, housing searches, and other seniors-focused outreach activities
- providing over 15,000 counselling sessions to help seniors cope with social isolation, domestic violence, and personal health issues
- delivering over 100,000 healthy



meals to vulnerable and isolated seniors

- providing over 1,300 workshops on topics such as community engagement, independent living, and to help with learning English as a second language for newcomer seniors
- engaging over 1,700 volunteers in reaching out to isolated seniors to provide support and help them re-engage with their communities
- helping over 200 homeless seniors, or seniors at risk of homeless, find safe, supportive places to live

Seniors need services where they live

This is essential to supporting seniors' independence, especially for those who are isolated and vulnerable. Along with the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Foundation, and Vancouver Coastal Health, we began support for a seniors' 'service hub' at the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House. The hub builds on our sustainability study of 2008 and on the neighbourhood house approach to social service delivery.

Driven by seniors' needs and interests, the hub will offer programs and services such as walking clubs, cooking clubs, and outreach to isolated seniors – from one place, in their local community. The hub will also support seniors to overcome cultural and language barriers to inclusion so that more seniors can actively participate in their community. Through the project's evaluation, we will learn about effective and sustainable ways to offer service hubs for seniors in local communities.

Working together for local solutions

We continued to strengthen the Seniors sector and support local community change for seniors and their caregivers by funding and partici-

pating in planning tables that reach 14 municipalities across the Lower Mainland. We also helped create a regional planning table and with a small investment enabled representatives to gather together to plan for seniors at the regional level.

United Way strongly supports the idea of seniors planning for seniors. Our Community Planning Partnership Grants support tables that are seniors-led, volunteer-based, and include a range of community leaders and stakeholders. Our funding enables them to undertake activities that allow their communities to address local issues affecting seniors and their caregivers. This includes assessing community strengths, weaknesses, and priorities; facilitating local research; building public awareness; developing action plans; creating partnerships; leveraging funding to increase resources; and coordinating stakeholders who serve seniors and their caregivers. Their work also plays an important role in informing funders' investment strategies, such as United Way's.

Through our Community Planning Partnership Grants we enabled 13 research projects and 65 community events and forums, and supported multiple community planning efforts – all to advance knowledge and inspire action on local issues affecting seniors, and their families and caregivers. Here are a few examples:

- The Delta Seniors Community Planning Table hosted an Age-Friendly community forum. Its

three action teams – on seniors' services, housing, and transportation – also conducted surveys with hundreds of seniors and senior-serving agencies. The resulting report – The Aging in Place Seniors Project – was subsequently presented to Delta's municipal council and as a result consideration is being given to a seniors' advisory committee to council. The Delta table continues to meet with provincial and federal politicians to successfully raise awareness around seniors' issues.

- The Langley Seniors Community Planning Table held its inaugural meeting in 2010 with the mayors of both Langley City and Township in attendance. An offshoot of the seniors' task force of the Langley Healthier Communities Partnership, the table now has 25 members at monthly meetings that are held throughout the community. Guided by a recent age-friendly communities report prepared by City of Langley social planners, the group is focusing on seniors'

"It's rare, invaluable, and makes a huge difference"

Non-profits tell us this about the funding we provide to help them with core operations. Unlike most available funding which supports direct service delivery only, United Way is unique from many other funders because we also help agencies with costs for the essentials – like salaries, staff or board development, strategic planning, communications, evaluation, or simply keeping the lights on and paying the rent. In 2010/11 thanks to our donors, we were able to provide more than 50 agencies that support children and seniors with what they call "invaluable and extremely rare funding".

issues in the areas of health and wellbeing, housing, and transportation. It is also developing a seniors resource guide for the Langleys.



Changing the future

Every year, United Way of the Lower Mainland inspires a community to give generously. Together with our donors and partners, our goal is a simple one: to positively change the future for children and seniors who are most at risk.

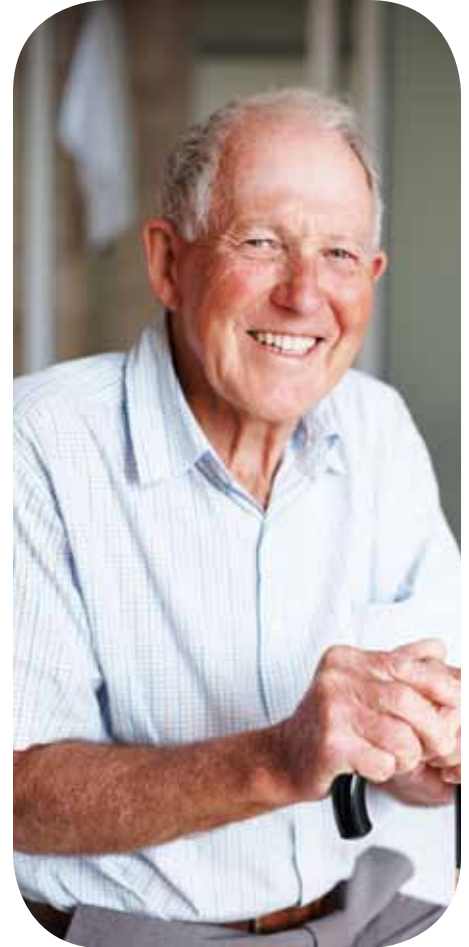
This report tells the story of how this is happening. Equally, it shows that a simple goal takes many complex steps, multiple players, and consistent actions. In mobilizing a community to ensure that children can be their best and seniors live well, United Way is proud to work closely with leaders from business, labour, non-profits, education, policy and research, and government at all levels.

Together, we are realizing social change. In a tough economic environment, we have increased our overall investments in community – even when we have fallen short of our fundraising goals. In those cases where we have had to defer plans or cut back on specific funding activities, this has neither changed our commitment nor responsibility to achieve impact.

In the coming year, we will continue to invest wisely, focus on outcomes, strengthen the capacity of non-profits, and work collaboratively with our partners for a healthy, caring and inclusive community. Change not only starts here, it continues to happen each day.



Deborah Irvine
Chief Operating Officer
United Way of the Lower Mainland



About United Way

United Way supports vulnerable people and works to prevent social problems. Together with people like you, we are focused on helping children and seniors. United Way of the Lower Mainland is the only organization funding about 160 social service agencies to deliver more than 500 prevention-based programs and initiatives throughout the region. But we are more than just a funder, United Way advances social change by engaging the community, advocating for change, acting on the root causes of our community's greatest challenges, and strengthening non-profits.

Our support for children, seniors, and their families and caregivers reaches across these 23 municipalities:

Anmore	Maple Ridge	Squamish
Belcarra	New Westminster	Sunshine Coast
Bowen Island	North Vancouver	Surrey
Burnaby	Pemberton	Vancouver
Coquitlam	Pitt Meadows	West Vancouver
Delta	Port Coquitlam	Whistler
Langley	Port Moody	White Rock
Lions Bay	Richmond	

For more information contact United Way of the Lower Mainland at info@uwlm.ca

Just dial 211!

BC211 is an easy-to-remember, three-digit telephone number (211) that provides free, confidential, multilingual information and referral to a full range of community, social, and government services accessible to 2.6 million residents in the Metro Vancouver, Fraser Valley, and Squamish-Lillooet Regional Districts. United Way provided over 80 per cent of BC211's budget and participated in the organization's planning and governance.

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, Information and Referral Specialists link callers to the help they need. BC211 also hosts an online service directory called the Red Book. BC211 answered over 38,000 calls, made over 18,000 referrals, and directly transferred more than 430 callers to services during 2010/11. The Red Book received about 2.5 million online hits.

Thanks to BC211, United Way and others are learning more about the state of community resources across our region. For example, of the 926 unmet needs recorded by BC211 during 2010/11 almost 900 were related to lack of available shelter.



United Way
Lower Mainland

Change starts here.

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