

YOUR LOCAL LOVE IN ACTION

2019-2020 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



United Way
Central & Northern
Vancouver Island

**YOU
HELPED
51,846
PEOPLE**

“You’re passionate about making positive change in your community, and it shows. Last year, you helped more than 51,000 people benefit from local United Way funded programs, right here, in your community on Vancouver Island.

Because of you, we partnered with effective local non-profits and frontline service agencies to serve your neighbours, friends and many you may never meet but who needed help last year from a local program. Because of you, we have the capacity to look beyond the immediate fix and support the long-term solutions through working with other funders and local agencies to tackle social issues in a deeper way.

The COVID-19 pandemic shifted everyone’s world, including ours at United Way. The needs of your community have increased and changed and we had to adapt. Your gift to United Way not only funded last year’s programs but will continue to help us make the greatest impact possible this year while we adjust to the new reality—thank you.

On behalf of all your local United Way board members, thank you. You are improving lives in Central and Northern Vancouver Island. Thank you for your commitment, your courage and your local love.”

Dot Neary

Board President

Because of you, David feels confident and joyful



Your commitment helped David cope and find light again. After experiencing a major loss, seven-year-old David struggled with anxiety. He was having a difficult time at school academically and socially. His mom registered him in a United Way funded community teen mentorship program.

“I wanted David to have a healthy relationship with a strong male role model to improve his life,” said his mom. Last fall, David was matched with 16-year-old Jared. The boys developed a special connection immediately.

Once a week, Jared traveled to David’s school to spend time with him. “Jared helped me learn new games,” said David. “We played basketball, soccer, hockey, lacrosse and spike ball.”

When the physical distancing of COVID-19 stopped the boys from meeting in person, they arranged to video chat once a week to keep this important relationship consistent in David’s life.

“Jared made me feel happy because he’s always there for me,” said David.

Since David has been spending time with Jared, “he’s had the best year of his life,” said David’s mom. “He’s able to better self-regulate, his self esteem has grown, he has made friends in class, he is joyful, calmer and his academics improved.”

Thanks to you, David continues to be inspired and empowered by this life-changing relationship. The United Way funded program that David relies on depends on your gift. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of connectedness and this concern has only increased. With your help we can continue to offer hope to David.



Your contributions helped us to improve lives in Central and Northern Vancouver Island

Because of you, we:

BROUGHT PEOPLE TOGETHER AND SHARED SUCCESSES

Learn more about what community development looked like in your community on our [website](#).

With your gift you increased the number of people helped in your community by bringing together coalitions, working groups and partnerships to drive solutions and effectively create change for your community.

BUILT SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL SOCIAL ISSUES

See how you helped the homeless on our [website](#).

Your contribution allowed us to use our extensive local knowledge and strong partnerships to address the root of your community's challenges. We were active right here, working at the grass-roots level to effectively impact change for long-term community development.

INVESTED IN LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS

See all of the local agencies you support on our [website](#).

Your donations made a direct impact in your community through strategic investments in local agencies and programs that offered vital services to the most vulnerable people.

SUPPORTED YOUR NEIGHBOURS WITH INFORMATION AND REFERRALS [bc211](#)

You helped us give access to information and referrals regarding community, government and social services in BC through ongoing support of bc211, a United Way funded helpline and online resource. Further support for vulnerable seniors impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic was established through United Way and bc211 initiative: Safe Seniors, Strong Communities program.

COVID-19 HIT YOUR COMMUNITY IN MARCH – Your Support of United Way Meant So Much

In March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, your United Way stepped up. We ensured your community knew what services were still open. We supported agencies and local governments to make plans to help the most vulnerable people. We began to invest in emergency and other services. This work, which began in March 2020 and continues through the pandemic and recovery period, is only possible because you cared and donated –THANK YOU.

As we collectively address the ever-changing situation on the ground, your United Way continues to work with frontline agencies mobilizing resources to best serve your communities and help to keep your neighbours safe and healthy. Your dedication and compassion for your community has enabled us to expand our work to help more vulnerable individuals in your neighbourhood.

YOU ARE IMPROVING LIVES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Helping kids be all they can be	17,738 Clients served	21 Agencies	23 Programs
Building strong and healthy communities	15,346 Clients served	31 Agencies	48 Programs
Moving people from poverty to possibility	18,762 Clients served	13 Agencies	18 Programs
TOTAL	51,846 Clients served	65 Agencies	89 Programs

FROM MARCH 2019 TO MARCH 2020

“United Way knows where the need is the greatest in my community. They have the systems and resources to allocate the money they raise to where it does the most good. I can give knowing my gift is going to make a maximum impact right where I live.”

- Donor from Central Vancouver Island

YOUR UNITED WAY FAMILY

You know local solutions work best. We call this Local Love. Thank you to our:

1. Wonderful workplaces donors. Employees donate a small amount directly from their paycheck or become Leader Donors giving over \$1,200 a year
2. Loyal individual donors who give online or through direct mail campaigns
3. Committed labour organizations who collaborate and support community based solutions

4. Generous local business and corporate partners who see the need and give
5. All levels of government who collaborate and share knowledge and co-fund solutions
6. Incredible volunteers who sit on local impact councils, our hardworking board members and other community volunteers

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOCAL LOVE.

Your donations fuel innovation when new needs are identified

Your local United Way has proven to be a trusted partner of the federal and provincial governments by identifying solutions on the ground and the best way to invest in effective local programs. We are grateful to work with them and invest funding to help your vulnerable neighbours. But to ensure we help as many in need in your community we also rely on your generosity. Your local love will make sure that those not covered by government projects will get the help they need. It also fuels innovation when new needs are identified and United Way can fund a pilot project to help in new ways.

Because you care in Cowichan

You helped

17,184 people access **20** high-impact programs through **14** agencies addressing poverty, food security and mental health

You and United Way will continue to address these issues in your community

25%

of children were living in poverty



Because of you

860 youth accessed programs to reach their full potential

12,571 people had access to nutritious food to help them thrive

194 parents received support and education to improve their family's life

6,165 free bus tickets were distributed to those in need through a partnership with CVRD and 10 local agencies



14%

of people were without access to enough affordable, nutritious food

44%

of renters in Cowichan spent more than **30%** of their income on housing, **2%** higher than the BC average



The prevalence of **mood and anxiety disorders and depression** was higher in Cowichan Valley South than BC and Island Health overall

*statistic sources can be found on: uwcncvi.ca

"We like to keep our donation dollars local."

- Donor in Cowichan

Your local love provides food and housing to those in need

Your commitment to your community helped provide much needed safe, affordable housing for women and women with children experiencing violence. Secure and stable housing is a main determinant of health, and also benefits individuals, families and the entire community.

We were able to provide food to the vulnerable population through granting to food security organizations. Many of these services shut down in light of COVID-19, which meant we needed to find another way to support food distribution. We began gathering information about which organizations were open and which had closed. We shared this list with our many partners and this allowed for a community-based, streamlined assessment approach to help those who needed it most.

You changed lives in the **Central Island**

You helped

10,267 people access
40 high-impact programs through
31 agencies addressing poverty,
food security and mental health

Because of you

1,227 people created important social connections. Families were supported through intergenerational programs and life skills development

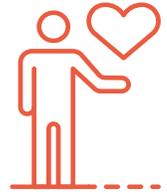
2,044 children and youth were supported through youth groups, therapy, mentoring, skill development and fostering positive relationships

450 children were fed nutritious meals at school. Parents were taught skills in food preparation, budgeting and nutrition

We know that these issues are still a concern in your community, that's why we need your help

444

households were waitlisted for social housing in Nanaimo



Two-Thirds

of children living in single parent families were living in poverty in Oceanside

Mood and anxiety disorders and depression

are the top two most common chronic diseases in Nanaimo

21%

of residents were living in poverty in Alberni-Clayoquot



69% vs. 76%

Indigenous students graduated high school

non-Indigenous students graduated high school

*statistic sources can be found on: uwcncvi.ca

"I always give to United Way to help those who need it."

- Donor in Nanaimo

Your local love drives research and solutions

You know that funding effective programs is crucial for people to thrive where you live. You also know that collecting data is essential to drive solutions. In Central Island, you helped us fund the Nanaimo Vital Signs report to help shape and support better community solutions.

Through the COVID-19 crisis this spring, your United Way worked with municipalities, community foundations and provincial/federal ministries to use data and feedback from funded agencies to target funds locally to help the most vulnerable in your community. You should be proud of how your gift keeps giving all year.

Because you care in **Comox Valley**

You helped

23,126 people access
18 high-impact programs
through **11** agencies addressing
poverty, homelessness, food
security and seniors' issues

Because of you

14,280 students were given healthy meals at school, allowing them to focus on learning and reaching their full potential

350 seniors felt connected to our community through a friendly visitors program

3,300 vulnerable people were given access to community agencies, food, housing and living supports

With your help we're tackling these community concerns

45.4%

of renter households spent 30% or more of their income on housing



390

seniors in Comox and Courtenay were living in poverty

18%

of children were living in poverty



117

people in the Comox Valley were experiencing homelessness

30%

of food bank users in the Comox Valley were children



*statistic sources can be found on: uwcncv.ca

“United Way strengthens and empowers communities.” - Donor in Courtenay

Your local love supports those affected by the opioid crisis

You helped secure funding for the Comox Valley Community Action Team to hire an outreach coordinator to engage with peers and stakeholders to help address the opioid crisis. Because of you, those impacted by substance use issues are getting help.

You supported a food security event where federal campaign leaders (Courtenay-Alberni and North Island-Powell River ridings) presented. Attendees learned about party platforms regarding sustainability, localization of food sources and food security measures for people living in poverty. Because of you, people were able to make educated decisions at the polls and positively impact those living in poverty.

Because of you, Sherry feels connected to her community



Sherry is a senior who is living with dementia and depression. Through a United Way funded seniors visiting program, she met Cheryl, a volunteer who spends time with Sherry once a week and is helping her feel more connected to her community.

The seniors visiting program supports their volunteers with training, skill development and resources. This support ensures the volunteers enrich the lives of the seniors they visit.

“I don’t know where I’d be without her,” said Sherry.

In the past, Sherry was passionate about quilting, but life circumstances meant she hadn’t sewed for many years. With Cheryl’s help, she re-ignited her passion, joined a quilting club and built a beautiful friendship. Together they travel to group quilting sessions, socialize, have lunch, chat over coffee or shop.

“I can tell when I pick-up Sherry that she’s really upbeat, it’s making her happy. I really enjoy spending time with her too,” said Cheryl.

Over one-and-a-half years of their friendship, Sherry’s mental health has significantly improved. She has made friends, feels like part of the community and has a renewed sense of purpose.

“Cheryl opened up and welcomed me. She took me on with no conditions at all. She’s perfect. I don’t feel so sheltered, so isolated,” said Sherry.

Because of you, Sherry has gained happiness and friendship. The COVID-19 crisis has proven that senior isolation is detrimental to health and wellbeing; but together you and your United Way can continue to provide programs that bring light and wellness to your community.



Because you care in Campbell River and North Island

You helped

1,269 people access
11 high-impact programs
through **9** agencies addressing
community connection, outreach
and poverty reduction

When you give you make a
difference on these local issues

25%

of children were living in
poverty in the Strathcona
region. That's **1 in 4** children



Because of you

91 children were connected with adult
mentors to foster life skills and positive
relationships

70 seniors accessed resources and felt more
connected to their community

600 women were supported with housing,
food and parenting as they struggled
with trauma



1 in 4 seniors
lived alone

Seniors living alone are more
than three times as likely to
experience poverty than seniors
in couple families

Almost 1 in 5

BC seniors were living in
unaffordable housing



*statistic sources can be found on: uwcncvi.ca

Your impact in your community

You helped seniors get reliable resources and information for their health, wellbeing and joy. Because of you, United Way collaborated with the community to identify and address the needs of diverse seniors in the region to establish a local seniors' information hub.

You helped families and individuals find homes and stay housed. Because of you, United Way participated on the Campbell River & District Coalition to End Homelessness Leadership Team and worked on addressing housing insecurity in the area.



You helped to prevent and end homelessness

Across our region, homelessness continues to be a pressing concern. The number of people experiencing homelessness keeps rising while the cost of living steadily increases. Whether in a larger city or a remote town on Vancouver Island, families and individuals find themselves unsheltered, but you made an impact. Because of you, we worked closely with the local, on-the-ground service agencies to thoroughly understand the needs, and collaborate with all levels of governments to build plans to prevent and end homelessness and advocate for resources to help more people.

We continue to invest the federal funds from Reaching Home: Canada's Homeless Strategy; Designated and Indigenous in Nanaimo and Indigenous in Duncan. We lead tables of local service providers and government agencies to drive strategies to help more of our vulnerable community members. This work resulted in new Reaching Home COVID-19 Emergency Funding to support those experiencing homelessness. With knowledge from Reaching Home funded work, we are better able to invest your local dollars in other effective programs.

YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS:

SUPPORTED INDIVIDUALS LIVING IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING by working closely with the Campbell River and District Coalition to End Homelessness' leadership team to create a collective community plan in response to homelessness.

SUPPORTED A NEW COMMUNITY SERVICE KEEPING PEOPLE WARM & DRY The Connect Warming Centre, in partnership with the Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness, offered a warm, dry, safe place for people facing or experiencing homelessness in the Comox Valley throughout the winter months.

SHELTERED 250 WOMEN IN COWICHAN by helping the Cowichan Women Against Violence Society with administrative support and guidance to keep the Cold Weather Shelter for Women open. In 2018, we were a key driver in opening the much-needed warming center and continue to support this important shelter.

SUPPORTED 11 WOMEN TO KEEP THEIR HOMES through the Cowichan Women Against Violence Society's Prevention Program.

SECURED FOUR YEARS OF DESIGNATED FEDERAL FUNDING from Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy in Cowichan and are working closely with the Tze Tza Watul Community Advisory Board to invest these dollars in the community.

SUPPORTED THE AWARENESS OF HOMELESSNESS ISSUES THROUGH COMMUNICATIONS WORK and helped the community understand the homelessness situation through the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition.

COLLABORATED AND SUPPORTED THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPEMENT

phase of a Coordinated Access System for Nanaimo to understand what has worked in other communities and researching the best solutions that will help the more than 400 people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo.

COLLECTED DATA THROUGH POINT-IN-TIME HOMELESS COUNTS IN NANAIMO AND COWICHAN

to inform United Way grants, other local non-profits and policymakers and drive solutions to support local people experiencing homelessness.

As our world continues to change in unprecedented ways, your community needs your local love. Your commitment and generosity are what gives your community the chance to thrive.



YOUR UNITED WAY FUNDED AGENCIES

Because of your gift, these community partner agencies supported our region last year:

ACE Club at Errington Elementary School
Alberni Valley Community School Society
AVI Health & Community Services Society
BC SPCA (Nanaimo and District)
Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Central Vancouver Island
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Cowichan Valley
Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Vancouver Island
Campbell River and North Island Transition Society
Campbell River Beacon Club
Campbell River Volunteer Society
Canadian Paraplegic Association (B.C.)
Clements Centre Society
Comox Bay Care Society
Comox Valley Community Adult Literacy and Learning Society
Comox Valley Head Injury Society
Comox Valley Hospice Society
Comox Valley Senior Support Society
Comox Valley Transition Society
Cowichan Family Caregivers Support Society
Cowichan Housing Association
Cowichan Lake Community Services Society
Cowichan Neighbourhood House Association
Cowichan Valley Basket Society
Cowichan Valley Hospice Society
Cowichan Valley Youth Services Society
Cowichan Women Against Violence Society
Campbell River Beacon Club
ETRA Therapeutic Riding Association
Eureka Support Society
Forward House Community Society
Greater Victoria Métis Association
Habitat for Humanity Mid-Vancouver Island Society
Haven Society: Promoting the Safety of Women, Children, Youth and Families
Hiie'Yu Lelum
Island Crisis Care Society
Kwakiutl District Council Health Office
Ladysmith Family and Friends Society
Ladysmith Resources Centre Association
Literacy Now Cowichan Society
Lush Valley Food Action Society
Mount Waddington Family Literacy Society
Nanaimo Brain Injury Society
Nanaimo Child Development Centre
Nanaimo Community Hospice Society
Nanaimo Community Kitchens Society
Nanaimo Family Life Association
Nanaimo Homeless Coalition
Nanaimo Literacy Association
Nanaimo Men's Resource Centre
Nanaimo Region John Howard Society
Nanaimo-Ladysmith Schools Foundation
Oceanside Building Learning Together Society
Oceanside Hospice Society
Pacifica Housing Advisory Association
Parent Support Services Society of BC
RM Society- Supporting Grieving Youth Through Rainbows
Snuneymuxw First Nation Health Centre
Society For Equity, Inclusion and Advocacy
The Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society
The John Howard Society North Island
The North Island Survivors' Healing Society
Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Society
Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre
Upper Island Women of Native Ancestry Society
Vancouver Island Mental Health Society

Because of you, Natalie and her two children have a safe home



Natalie was committed to improving her family's life and with your help she made that change. She was struggling with substance use issues, but managed to complete treatment. Then she moved into a United Way funded transition house for young mothers.

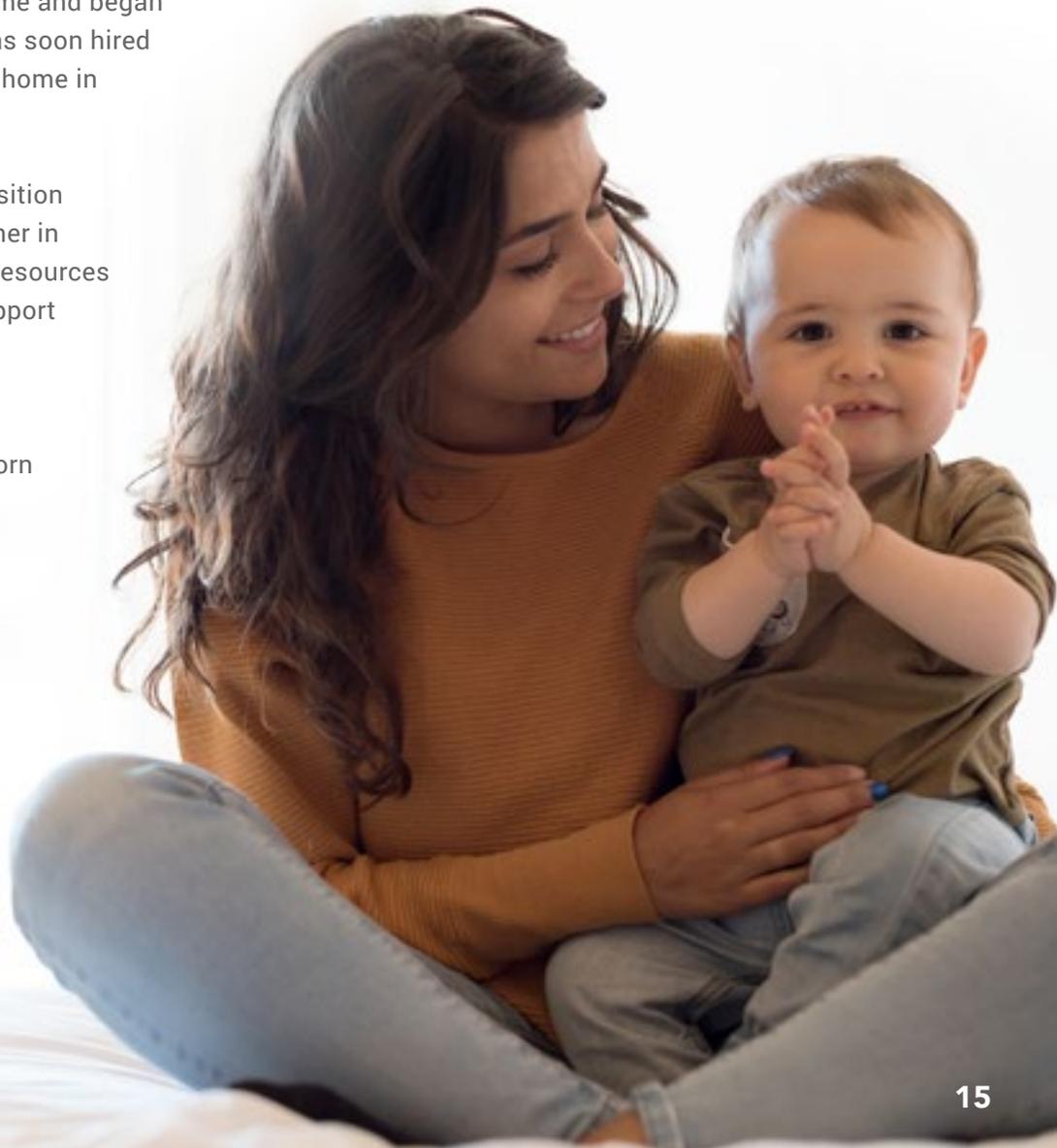
She took advantage of all the supports she was offered while living at the transition house. She attended weekly counselling sessions, support groups and parenting groups. She learned how to budget, cook and complete household activities. She also enrolled her young son in a program for children.

During her three-month stay, Natalie worked with program leaders to create a resume and began applying for employment. She was soon hired for a part-time job and secured a home in subsidized housing.

Staff supported her with her transition to independent housing and put her in touch with all of the community resources she needed. They continue to support this young woman through their outreach program.

Natalie, her young son and newborn daughter are all doing very well. Natalie has maintained her independent housing for a year now.

Your support not only changed Natalie's life but also gave her son and newborn daughter a path to a bright future.



SHOW YOUR LOCAL LOVE

You can change lives every day,
right here in your community,
by giving to the United Way.

Show your local love.
DONATE TODAY



United Way
Central & Northern
Vancouver Island

DONATE. VOLUNTEER. ADVOCATE.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

Central Island	250-591-8731
Cowichan	250-748-1312
Comox Valley	250-338-1151
Campbell River	250-287-3213

www.uwcnavi.ca



Follow us @UWCNVI to stay connected to resources,
research, and events in your local community!