

With you...

Nobody should be disadvantaged by where they live. Yet that is the reality for many people, particularly in Toronto's inner suburbs. This philosophy drove our work in 2005. We focused on strengthening people and neighbourhoods, on developing partnerships with government, the private, education and community sectors to create sustainable change across the city. The following pages tell our story.

In 2005, we analyzed the patterns of access to the neighbourhood-based services that support families, welcome immigrants, engage youth, and bring communities together.

As gun violence demanded more and more of our attention in 2005, a familiar pattern took shape: residents in high-needs, poorly served suburban neighbourhoods are increasingly vulnerable to violence. The empirical work tells us where to focus our neighbourhood work. The violence demonstrates the urgent need to move quickly, but comprehensively.

That is why United Way has worked closely with the City of Toronto, other governments, foundations and individual donors to invest in high-needs areas beginning with 13 priority neighbourhoods in most urgent need. In one Scarborough neighbourhood, we are using a community development approach as a catalyst for community change. We are funding new services in neighbourhoods where local programs are inadequate, prioritizing programs for young people and immigrants.

We continue to fund a broad range of community-based health and social service agencies. These agencies deliver services to every age group, every neighbourhood and every community. This is a key contribution by United Way to a stronger Toronto, along with our research, partnerships and advocacy. Our ability to support these initiatives depends on the generosity of our donors, and we were pleased to see our 2005 campaign total reach a record \$96.1 million.

It is an honour to connect the generosity of Torontonians with the inspiring work of people and agencies on the frontlines of meeting social need. It is also gratifying to know that this work will help to build a city where every neighbourhood can be vibrant, compassionate, resilient, and safe.

And our work can only make a difference when donors, volunteers, and community agencies work together. It only happens...with you.



Frances Lankin
President and Chief Executive Officer,
United Way of Greater Toronto

Richard Venn
Chair, Board of Trustees

Senior Executive Vice-President, Corporate Development, CIBC
Managing Director and Deputy Chairman, CIBC World Markets Inc.

...we create positive change in our community.

2005 was a year of partnerships and innovative approaches to achieve community impact. We focused on our key priority areas: strengthening neighbourhoods, setting youth on pathways to success and supporting newcomers to make a better life for their families. Some highlights:

- **Campaign** – A fundraising achievement of \$96.1 million, 6.8% more than in 2004, thanks to the leadership of Barb Stymiest, Chief Operating Officer at RBC, her hardworking campaign cabinet and thousands of volunteers and donors. This tremendous achievement makes our work possible. These funds will be distributed in 2006.
- **New member agencies** – United Way selected two new agencies that provide innovative programs for youth in underserved neighbourhoods: For Youth Initiative in the former City of York and East Metro Youth Services in the former municipality of Scarborough. Read more about these new agencies on page 10.
- **Sustained support for inner suburban projects** – In 2005, United Way announced that pilot projects initiated through our Multi-Agency Partnership Program – to improve services, especially for youth and seniors, in poorly serviced suburban neighbourhoods – would receive ongoing annual funding of \$514,000. Thanks to United Way, youth can participate in homework help programs; job search workshops; music, art, video and filmmaking classes; summer camps, mentoring and tutoring activities. Seniors will benefit from recreation programs such as art and music, health check-ups and social interaction through congregating dining.
- **Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy** – In June, United Way and the City of Toronto jointly released the final report of the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force. Building on research from *Decade of Decline to Poverty by Postal Code*, the report recommends a Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy that targets high-need Toronto neighbourhoods where access to local services is inadequate. United Way and the City have identified 13 high needs priority neighbourhoods in the inner suburbs for immediate attention. The City (as part of the Mayor's Community Safety Plan) subsequently targeted increased funds for after school child care and recreation programs to these priority neighbourhoods.
- **Government of Ontario response** – The Ontario Legislature unanimously endorsed the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy in October. Weeks later, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced a major expansion of the network of community health centres, which will result in a community health centre or satellite site in each of the neighbourhoods identified by the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force. This means people in these neighbourhoods, particularly newcomers, will have better access to health care – including doctors, nurse practitioners, health promotion and community workers.
- **Action for Neighbourhood Change** – With funding from the Government of Canada, United Way launched a comprehensive community development program called Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) in one of the 13 neighbourhoods, Scarborough Village (Markham and Kingston Road area). This funding has been catalytic – enabling residents and local leaders to create a vision and an action plan for their neighbourhood. United Way donors also support the neighbourhood through special gifts that increase opportunities and access to services particularly for youth. See page 6 for more details.
- **Community funding** – United Way allocated over \$55 million in funding to community-based health and social service agencies in Toronto. This includes significant new ongoing funding of \$1,055,000 for programs targeting youth and newcomers in inner suburban neighbourhoods.
- **Support to newcomer agencies** – In 2005, emerging agencies serving immigrants and refugees, many in inner suburban neighbourhoods, received funding through our Building Agency Capacity program. This is a partnership between United Way, The Ontario Trillium Foundation and The Maytree Foundation to support the organizational development of agencies. Seven agencies received grants to help with board development, human resources, marketing and communications, fundraising and strategic planning.
- **Strengthening agencies** – United Way has increased investments to strengthen Toronto's community-based social service agencies and their leadership development. The *Emerging Leaders* program, in partnership with York University's Schulich School of Business and the Metcalfe Foundation was launched in 2005. The program is designed to develop strong future leaders for the sector and help make it more reflective of Toronto's rich cultural diversity. A similar program, *Leaders of Today*, provides leadership skills training for executive directors to help build agencies' effectiveness and capacity.

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Perhaps the most significant endorsement came in early November when the Government of Ontario announced an expansion of the province's community health centres into each of the neighbourhoods identified by the Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy.

Nobody in Toronto should be disadvantaged by where they live. This is the foundation of the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, a joint City of Toronto-United Way action plan to strengthen neighbourhoods across Toronto. As a first step, the plan identified high-needs neighbourhoods in the inner suburbs where community investments are most urgently needed.

The strategy was the final outcome of the year-long Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force that began in 2004 and reported in mid-2005.

Investing in solutions. Following the release of the strategy, United Way announced additional neighbourhood investments of more than \$9.5 million over the next several years. Approximately \$6.7 million is earmarked for inner suburban neighbourhoods with an emphasis on services for newcomers and youth. About \$1.8 million of ongoing funding will extend the reach of community agencies into underserved neighbourhoods. And a \$1 million community development fund will support local partnerships where residents, businesses and others will develop action plans for improving their neighbourhoods.

Government response was significant and positive. In the fall, Toronto City Council endorsed the Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy and 13 priority neighbourhood areas for community investment. And the Ontario Legislature passed a resolution endorsing the Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, with all three parties supporting the resolution. Perhaps the most significant endorsement came in early November when the Government of Ontario announced an expansion of the province's community health centres into each of the neighbourhoods identified by the Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy.

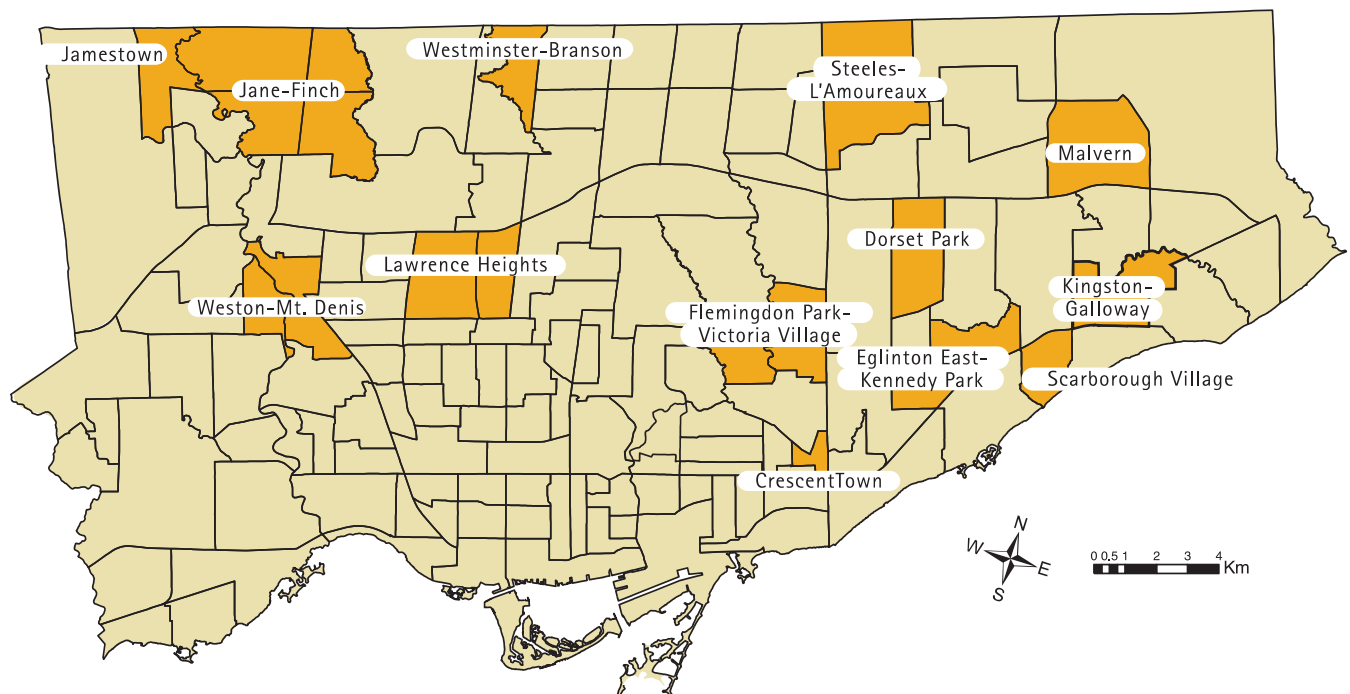
This endorsement from our governments is good news. United Way's role as a convener, bringing key players to the table is helping to create sustainable change and lasting impact in our city.

...we're building stronger neighbourhoods.



Priority Neighbourhoods

United Way and the City identified the following neighbourhoods as initial areas where community involvement is most urgently need:



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Action for Neighbourhood Change

It's working from the ground up with local residents, businesses, schools and others – people who know what's best for their neighbourhoods – to change their neighbourhood.

Neighbours, business owners, schools, faith communities, institutions and social service agencies – all are working together to find new ways to build the health of their neighbourhood.

Scarborough Village is one of five urban neighbourhoods across Canada participating in the Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) project, and one of the priority communities identified by United Way and the City of Toronto in the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force report.

This neighbourhood engagement initiative, funded by the Government of Canada and led locally in Toronto by United Way, has empowered residents to create a vision and action plan for their neighbourhood. It's working from the ground up with local residents, businesses, schools and others – people who know what's best for their neighbourhoods – to identify how they want their neighbourhood to change. And their solutions will provide United Ways across the country with a blueprint to help other communities with their own neighbourhood rebuilding initiatives.

In fact, ANC will help inform both government public policy to build strong neighbourhoods and United Way's own neighbourhood strategy.

ANC launched in the spring of 2005.

Hands-on experience helps youth from Scarborough Village get a feel for film techniques at a National Film Board claymation workshop through Action for Neighbourhood Change. These workshops engage youth and introduce them to a world of possibilities.



Photo by Veronica Henri

...change happens.

With you...

Giving youth a chance is a priority for United Way. By offering at-risk youth alternatives to getting into trouble, we can help them build productive lives. Several United Way agencies across the city offer programs, in partnership with schools and police that target children who are in trouble with the law or are acting out in school.

Reaching for the stars.

If you're a seven to twelve year-old with problems in school, the Jamaican Canadian Association's Leaders in Partnership could be your lifeline. The program operates in various schools in the North York area and is supported by agency staff and police from 31 Division. The goal is to reduce delinquency, improve school performance, social competence and behaviour while helping kids build stable relationships with adults.

Research from the Child Development Institute (CDI) shows that behavioural problems – conduct disorder – are the most common reason for a child's referral to a mental health service. If problems are not addressed early, negative behaviour becomes entrenched and the prognosis is poor. In fact, 50 to 70 per cent of men in jail have a history of conduct disorder. Early intervention programs such as Leaders in Partnership and CDI's Under 12 Outreach Project are crucial to helping children break problem behaviours and get on a positive track.

In the Leaders program, art and play therapy, theatre and role-playing teach children to develop empathy for others and increase self-esteem. There are sessions where children learn to stop bullying, develop an understanding of the court system and the consequences of getting into trouble. These learnings lay the foundation for positive behavioural change. There's even a traditional gold star for good behaviour which rewards young people and fills them with pride for what they've accomplished.

By graduation day, there are fewer visits to the principal, less bullying by participants and a decreased number of suspensions. Thanks to United Way and Leaders in Partnership, most children are on their way to productive lives. They truly reach for the stars.

Children's artwork captures learnings from a program that helps 7 to 12 year-olds deal with problem behaviour. These drawings provide a window into how "graduates" deal with bullying and name-calling.



...partnerships create results.

With you...

United Way is helping youth develop their potential through leadership programs, skills training, employment help and more. In 2005, we welcomed two new youth-focused agencies to the United Way family.



Photograph by Veronica Henri

“The Violence Intervention Project has taught me a lot about myself and where my life is going. When I joined I was at the end of my road. I had no idea how I was going to get out of the shelter system... I managed to get myself out of the shelter system and back on my feet with the help of the staff at East Metro and VIP.”

- Peer Leader, VIP

East Metro Youth Services

Excited voices echo through this agency as young people talk about how they deal with life's challenges in a positive way.

It's all part of the innovative Violence Intervention Project (VIP), created by youth volunteers through East Metro Youth Services, that encourages young people to channel their ideas and energy to address community and school safety issues. Participants are victims, perpetrators or witnesses of violence in their community.

Instead of struggling with isolation or falling in with the wrong crowd, youth can take on positive leadership roles by running violence prevention workshops about bullying, gang or dating violence, healthy relationships, anger management and conflict resolution. They develop skills that will help them go back to school or find jobs. And workshop participants learn valuable tips on how to deal with conflict.

There's nothing else like it in Scarborough and it's making an impact. In the words of one school principal, “We know that prevention is cheaper than cure, and I can say without hesitation that funding for this project has been excellently used to prevent violence and to invite our students to consider their community through voluntarism, and promote community safety.” This unique program, funded by United Way and other partners, has been a model for similar programs in other areas of the city.

For Youth Initiative

There's graffiti on the wall and hip hop rhythms fill the air. Walk through the doors of For Youth Initiative (FYI) and you'll see it's a place that youth can call their own.

FYI is targeted to young people who are the hardest to reach. FYI's method: young people reaching out to young people. Staff, volunteers and even board members are young, which means they connect well with their peers.

The approach is youth-focused and interactive, engaging young people with educational programs that are pop-culture and anti-racism inspired. Black History Celebration, which has grown to involve 22 community partners, has participants showcasing hip hop, dance, spoken word poetry and live graffiti drawing. Young women in the neighbourhood have carved out a safe space to talk about and find solutions to harassment and safety issues, sexuality and body image concerns. And young people are working to create a new youth resource centre in a housing complex to provide alternatives to violence, to offer employment support and a safe place to talk about issues.

It's about talking to youth from their perspective, listening, and giving them a chance to grow.



Photograph courtesy For Youth Initiative



Photograph by Veronica Henri

(Top to bottom) - A graffiti artist puts the final touches on a mural at new United Way agency For Youth Initiative and staff proudly display their new member agency sign.

(Opposite page) - The innovative Violence Intervention Program encourages young people to channel their ideas and energy to address community and school safety issues through youth leadership opportunities and peer-led workshops.

...youth have a chance.

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Many of the more than 100 Tamil seniors who make Call-A-Service Inc./Harmony Hall part of their lives are dealing with language barriers and isolation. The agency helps connect them to social opportunities and make them feel more at home in their new community.



A clatter of plates, laughter and the aroma of cumin and chilis pervade the air at Call-A-Service Inc./Harmony Hall Centre for Seniors. A group of Tamil seniors is dicing ginger for a cooking class – across the room, others share smiles while learning the intricacies of English pronunciation. Yesterday, a bus trip took them to a market, an opportunity for socializing and getting to know their city better.

With the support of United Way of Greater Toronto, Call-A-Service Inc./Harmony Hall seniors' program responds to the needs of isolated and elderly newcomers. Many of the more than 100 Tamil seniors who make Call-A-Service Inc./Harmony Hall part of their lives are dealing with language barriers and isolation. The agency helps connect them to social opportunities and make them feel more at home in their new community. Seniors also find help through counselling as they struggle to overcome the trauma of coming from a country marked by violence and conflict.

For Tamil seniors, this United Way program is the way – a bridge from old to new, from isolation to connection.

Cooking opens doors to connections and friends. Newcomers at Call-A-Service Inc./Harmony Hall Centre for Seniors dish up plates of savoury rice and curry for new friends.



...newcomers make connections.