



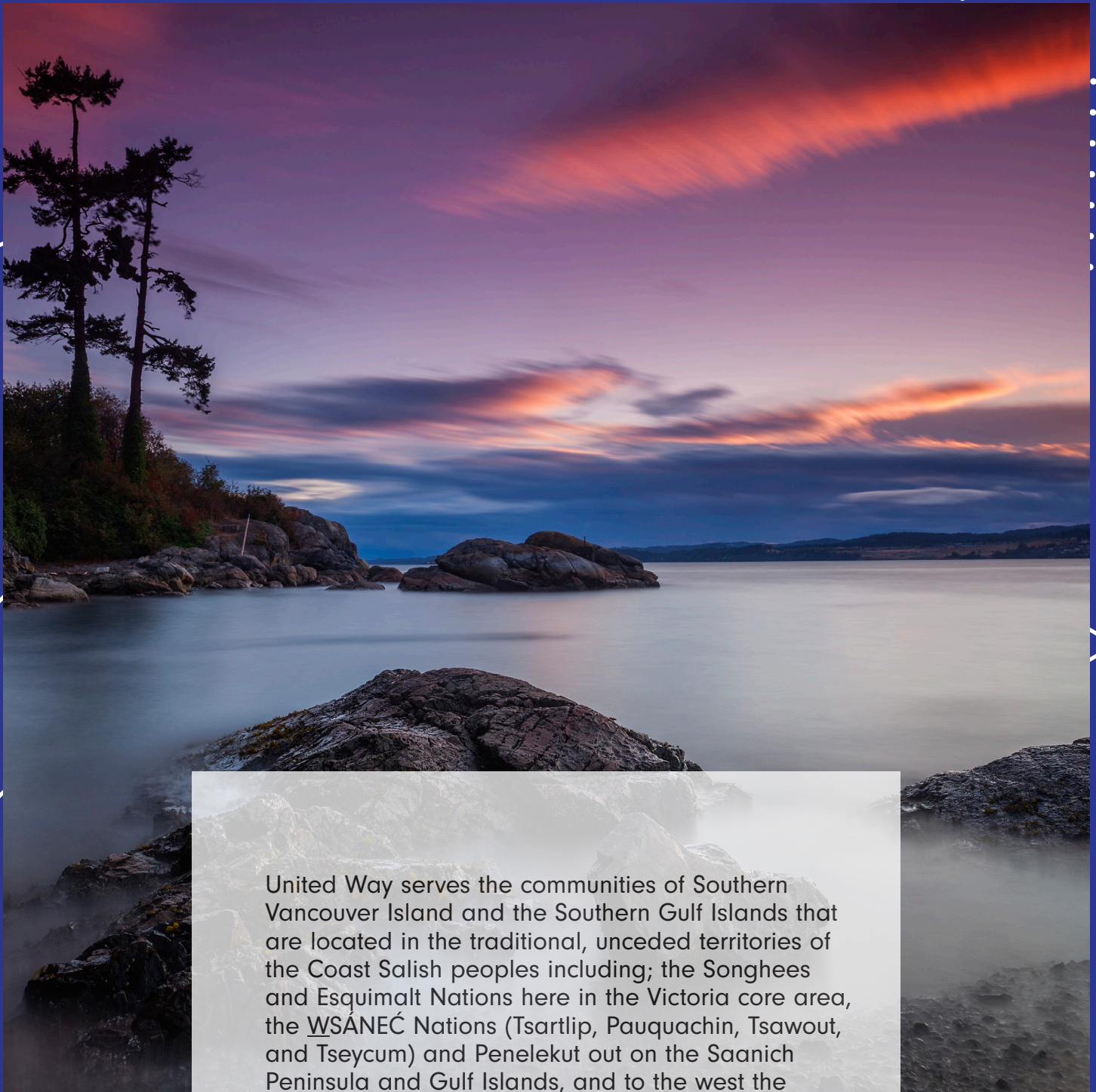
2020-2021

IMPACT REPORT



United Way
Southern
Vancouver Island

A YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC



United Way serves the communities of Southern Vancouver Island and the Southern Gulf Islands that are located in the traditional, unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples including; the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations here in the Victoria core area, the WSÁNEĆ Nations (Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tsawout, and Tseycum) and Penelekut out on the Saanich Peninsula and Gulf Islands, and to the west the Beecher Bay, T'Sou-ke, Pacheedaht, and Malahat Nations. We respectfully acknowledge that we live, work, and play within these traditional territories.



MESSAGE FROM MARK BRESLAUER, CEO UNITED WAY SOUTHERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

How are you doing?

We have all been living through many challenges and much stress. We are now all too familiar with new norms like wearing masks and maintaining social distance. We have also learned to slow down a little more often to take stock of important things like family and community, and how important it is to connect with, and help one another.

For some, many things remained intact, and though different in some respects, there was a relatively high degree of safety and security. For many others, it has been a time of precarious living whether through isolation, separation, uncertainty, or job loss. Demand for mental health services has skyrocketed, many people have died from accidental overdoses, and there are numerous people without shelter or living on the brink of losing what they currently have.

This outcomes report is a story about an extraordinary year at United Way Southern Vancouver Island (UWSVI). And it's a story about our community uniting in local love. We have been deeply moved by the response we received from our generous and caring donors – more than **7,000 donors** and **200 workplaces** rose to the occasion to support our cause. Together, we invested over **\$5.1 million** into the community supporting **184 programs** and positively impacting the lives of **125,000 individuals** – our family members, friends, colleagues and neighbours in need. That's almost **1 in 4 people** in our region being helped by a United Way initiative or funded program.

You will also see in the pages of this report, we have changed our name from United Way Greater Victoria to United Way Southern Vancouver Island. We are excited about this announcement as we feel it better reflects and represents the 13 municipalities and 11 First Nations we serve south of the Malahat. United Way has been here for Southern Vancouver Island for 84 years. We will continue to be here through recovery and as we rebuild.

Thank you for being a big part of the light at the end of the tunnel.

We are most grateful for your support!

IMPACT

BY THE NUMBERS

The pandemic and its subsequent social impacts have been overwhelming. COVID-19 amplified and intensified existing social issues. As numerous businesses and non-profits were forced to close their doors, isolation and mental health issues exploded, seniors struggled to get groceries and stay socially connected, people lost jobs, domestic violence rates increased due to people sheltering in place – sometimes with their abusers – overdose and suicide rates increased, and with the closing of shelters for the unhoused, homeless individuals set up camp in public parks around the city.

UWSVI, along with our strong network of community agencies, was up to the challenge. With support and mentorship from UWSVI, non-profits pivoted and adapted to the new normal bringing their programming online and embracing new ways of delivering services. We rallied together in the face of great uncertainty and kept our non-profits' open at a time when their services have never been so important and essential.

Additionally, not only did UWSVI change 'how' we worked to evolve and accommodate a new way of doing business, but we also seized new opportunities to expand 'what' we worked on. We forged over 30 unique partnerships with local businesses, government, media, and community agencies to respond to emerging needs through three areas of action dedicated to isolated seniors, families in need, and individuals struggling with mental health challenges and/or addictions.

UWSVI is proud of our place in the community for the past 84 years. We are proud of our donors, our workplaces, volunteers, and our incredible frontline funded partners who provided life-changing services to community members throughout the pandemic.

THANKS TO



**7,000+
DONORS**



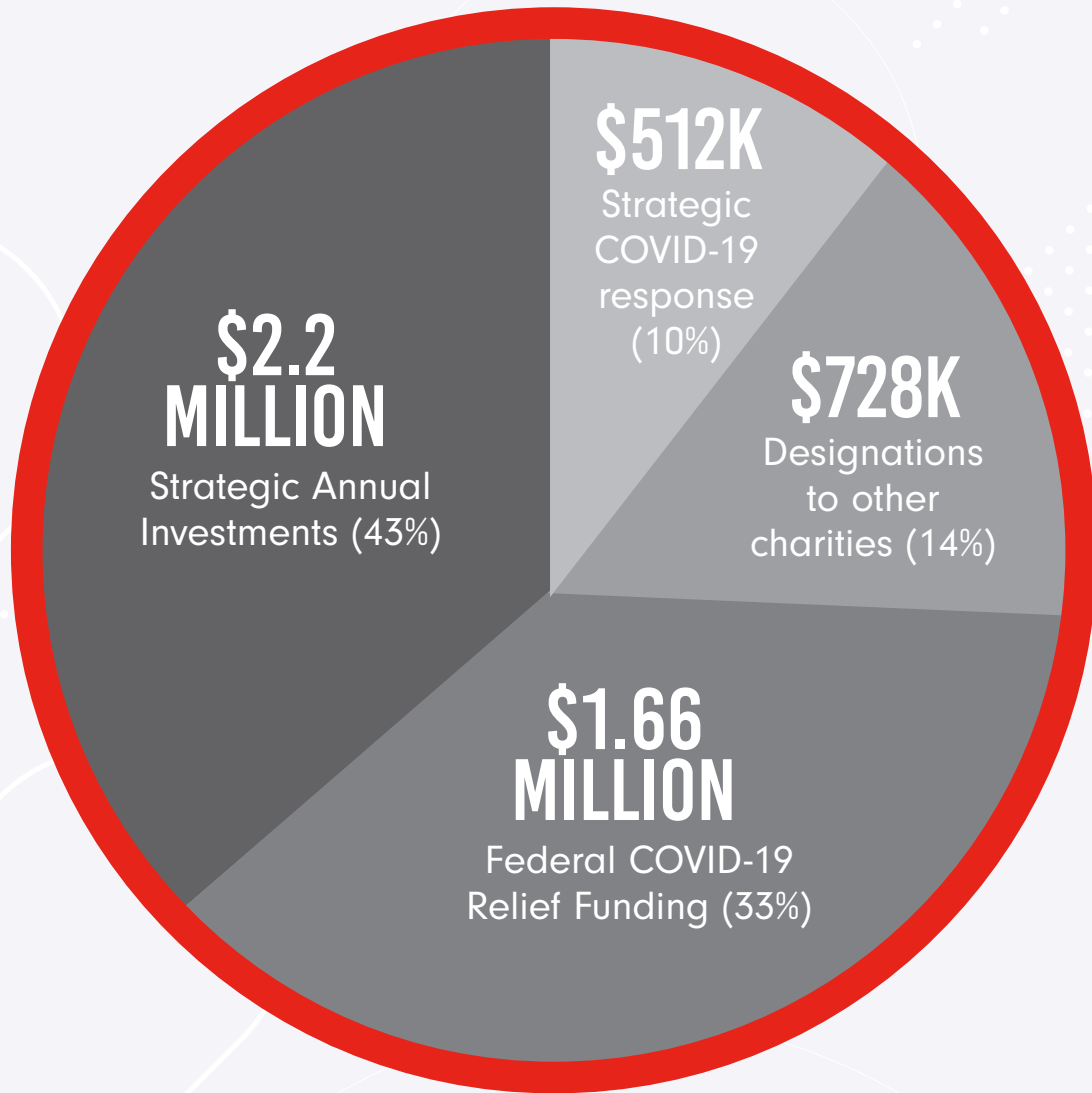
**200
WORKPLACES**



**250
VOLUNTEERS**

3.

for coming together during COVID-19



\$5.1 MILLION



INVESTED

184

programs supported

125,000

local lives changed

1 IN 4

people in our region being helped by a United Way funded program

101

local community partners funded

30

unique partnerships

DID YOU KNOW?

2,600



people provided over **123,000 hours of volunteer service** to support organizations during the last year!

2,800



seniors received critical support during the pandemic that included reassurance calls, nutritious meal deliveries, medication pick-ups, post-hospitalization care, and much more.

18,000



people (7,600 of them children and youth) received counselling, mental health support, crisis outreach, and tools to help them reduce anxiety and depression throughout the past year.

28,000



residents on southern Vancouver Island were able to access healthy meals in a COVID safe environment at community kitchens and neighbourhood houses.

1,000



newcomers and immigrants received support in navigating a new and complex system during the pandemic. Services included meals, English language learning, and virtual meetups to combat isolation.

1,500



people with disabilities/diverse abilities accessed support through virtual group sessions, disability resource advice, counselling, virtual programming, and peer to peer check-ins.

IMPACT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

It takes a community coming together to overcome obstacles and to find creative solutions when faced with adversity. Our partnerships with local businesses, government, and community agencies allowed us to rise to the challenges COVID presented during 2020. As we continue to recover and rebuild from the pandemic, partnerships will continue to be a key element.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Because of UWSVI's expertise in the social service and not-for-profit sector, the Government of Canada entrusted UWSVI to manage and distribute \$1.6 Million through the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF). UWSVI funded 55 agencies and 60 programs (16 of which were co-funded in partnership with Victoria Foundation). UWSVI also managed and distributed \$158,770 through the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Serving Program impacting eight senior serving organizations.



"I have gone through a lot of stress and hardship lately: COVID, the legal process following the departure from a domestic violence relationship, adapting to a new life as a single mom of two and living in a way smaller space I have put myself last on the list... While a haircut may seem like nothing, it reminded me today that as a woman, I deserve to pamper myself now and then, nurture and love myself despite everything else that comes into my life. In order to heal, I need to feel good about myself and fall in love with ME again."

A client of **Wear2Start**, an organization that provides haircuts and assistance to women in need and that received ECSF funding.

SIGNATURE INITIATIVES



More Than Meals – this meal delivery program delivers three nutritious meals a week together with critically important social visits to isolated seniors across the CRD. Started in March, 2020, United Way brought together four seniors serving organizations to create efficiencies and to better coordinate the meal program. At the beginning, 200 meals were being delivered a week. Now 1,800 meals are being delivered each week meaning that 600 seniors are receiving food and friendship.



The Little Phoenix Daycare – one of Canada's first trauma-informed child care facilities. United Way Southern Vancouver Island (UWSVI), in partnership with Family Services of Greater Victoria (FSGV) and Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS) raised funds to complete construction on the Little Phoenix Daycare, furnish the facility, and fill the shelves with books and toys to bring the space to life. Opening Summer 2021, the daycare will provide a safe haven for young children on Southern Vancouver Island who have

experienced/are experiencing high levels of stress and trauma in their young lives, which may be related to family violence, sexual, psychological, physical and emotional abuse and/or traumatizing experiences such as living in a refugee camp.

Local Love Cafés – UWSVI hosted five virtual Local Love Cafés – one featured a panel discussion on collaborations during COVID-19 with Mandy Farmer, President & CEO of Accent Inns; Darlene Hollstein, General Manager of The Bay Centre; Kristi Rivait, Co-Founder of Scale Collaborative; Sandy Richardson, CEO of Victoria Foundation and Mark Breslauer, our CEO. Another café profiled Isobel McKenzie, Seniors Advocate for BC who talked to the emerging needs of our valued seniors throughout the pandemic. Additionally, estate planning and retirement preparation sessions were offered to our donors and the general public.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

In support of frontline workers who put themselves at such high risk to protect all of us, UWSVI partnered with **Accent Inns** to manage the Hotels for Frontline Workers Fund. Over 1,500 free hotel room nights were made available to frontline workers so that they could get rest and self-isolate to keep their families safe.



*"United Way has done so much good with their Local Love campaign," says **Mandy Farmer, President and CEO of Accent Inns & Hotel Zed.** "They literally came to our rescue when people started calling the Accent Inns front desk wanting to pay for part of a hotel stay for a frontline worker. Over a weekend, we forged a partnership that helped pay for rooms for frontline workers who needed to self-isolate away from their families. It was a tremendous feeling to be able to tell a nurse who could not afford a hotel bill on top of all their regular bills, that their stay was covered by the generosity of their community. Thank you United Way for changing lives. We are grateful for the partnership with UWSVI."*

Working with **Bell Canada**, UWSVI distributed 850 cell phones and SIM cards to people in need across southern Vancouver Island.



"We recently had the opportunity to help a young mom with one of the donated phones. Her phone broke while she was needing to apply for legal aid, and dealing with court via phone. She also uses it for supervised Zoom visits on her phone for her children with their dad. Having your phone break especially during COVID is so stressful with so many services only handled online. As our young mom said: 'I don't know how I would be doing these things without this new phone.'"

- Fione Wilson, General Manager, Fund Development, YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island.



As part of the One Million Masks Initiative led by Deloitte and that included other corporate partners such as **BC Transit, BC Ferries and BCAA**, UWSVI facilitated the distribution of 32,000 masks to 30 agencies throughout the CRD to help frontline workers and the families, youth, and the homeless population that they serve.



Big Wheel Burger sold a total of 1,452 burgers raising \$5,000 for the first annual Burger Day for United Way promotion on September 8, 2020. "We're really excited about our Burger Day for United Way," said Calen McNeil Founder of Big Wheel Burger Inc. "We've been wanting to partner with United Way for some time now and we couldn't think of a better cause then to raise money for children's literacy."



During the month of October 2020, UWSVI teamed up with **Bottle Depot** on our Bottle Drive for Tots for the Little Phoenix Daycare. Through donations from their charity bins, over \$7,000 was raised to help furnish the daycare designed for children who have experienced trauma.

MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS

Through the **Capital Daily Holiday Donation Drive** more than 500 readers and United Way donors came together the last two weeks of December 2020 to raise over \$150,000 to support the **Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses** for families throughout the CRD.



"Working with the United Way, we saw how tirelessly and how widely neighbourhood houses work with families in need across Greater Victoria. We are honoured to help them continue their vital work and so grateful to our fellow citizens and businesses for their support."

- Andrew Wilkinson, co-founder of Tiny, a tech-focused holding group based in Victoria and a benefactor to The Tiny Foundation.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS



Thanks to a donation from **Seaspan, Southern Railway of British Columbia and the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation**, UWSVI's Hi Neighbour program funded 12 initiatives in the Township of Esquimalt to help vulnerable populations through the pandemic.



Working with **Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Victoria, HeroWork Society and Soap for Hope Canada**, UWSVI created the Neighbourhood Response Team and coordinated two neighbourhood collections. Approximately 650 tents, sleeping bags, tarps and sleeping mats were collected to support the homeless population to isolate during the pandemic. Almost 30,000 personal hygiene items, from shampoo to toothbrushes to tampons, were collected to help keep people clean and healthy at local shelters, transitional homes, food banks, and seniors' facilities.



UWSVI teamed up with **Earls, and the Bay Centre** to launch #FeedOurCommunity Bay Centre campaign - a one for one match program - for every grocery kit purchased from Earl's, one was donated to a family in need. Over 50 food kits were distributed to **Quadra Village Community Centre** and **Max Courier** donated their time to ensure each package was carefully transported.

"Thank you so much for the food kits. The recipients were incredibly grateful and it truly made a difference. One recipient was so excited to be able to provide a special birthday meal for her sons. Another recipient messaged me to say "I'm in tears this is the best mother's day gift ever."

- **Chloe Dufort, Quadra Village Community Centre**

We are extremely proud of our over 100 incredible frontline funded partners who provided life-changing services to community members throughout the pandemic. Thank you for serving our community at a time of great adversity. For a complete list of all our funded partners, visit uwsvi.ca



AREAS OF ACTION

Through the pandemic, UWSVI focused on three Areas of Action to address the most pressing needs in our region.



ISOLATED SENIORS

helping connect isolated seniors to healthy meals and companionship



FAMILIES IN NEED

strengthening local neighbourhood resources for families



MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS

providing counselling, outreach and peer support services and ways to improve system navigation for individuals struggling with mental health and/or addictions



YOU
HELPED

DELIVER
FOOD AND
FRIENDSHIP
TO SENIORS

Southern Vancouver Island has one of the highest populations of seniors over the age of 80. Many seniors have limited income, mobility issues and experience food insecurity. The pandemic has compounded these issues meaning seniors are facing acute stress and anxiety and increased isolation.

Thanks to you, through United Way's **More than Meals** program, seniors are getting healthy meals delivered to their homes. Not only that – they are getting critically important social visits and connections with the outside world.

Thelma is in her 80s and lives in James Bay. For all of her life, she has been very independent and proud of it. She lives on her own in an apartment and is well connected with her community. Last year, Thelma was diagnosed with a heart condition. Her mobility immediately became a challenge.

When COVID-19 hit, her life became even more complicated. Thelma was no longer able to leave her home to get groceries and was struggling with how to access food. **More than Meals** came to her rescue delivering three suppers a week and a variety of other groceries to tide her over to the following week. Without the nutritious meals and friendly visit from volunteers, Thelma is not sure how she would be coping today.

Your support means that **isolated seniors** across Southern Vancouver Island will continue to receive meals and friendship.



YOU HELPED CREATE A SAFE PLACE FOR CHILDREN

COVID-19 has impacted families hard. Family breakdown and domestic violence is on the rise. Relationships are strained. Victoria's unemployment rate has jumped from 3.4% to 5.7% during the pandemic. Loss of employment, financial instability, housing and food insecurity are weighing deeply on the minds of many families. Children are often caught in the middle.

Thanks to your support, the **Little Phoenix Daycare** is set to open in the summer of 2021 in Victoria. It will be a safe haven for children who have experienced trauma or who are dealing with serious life challenges such as domestic violence, inter-generational trauma and significant health issues. Trauma counsellors, art therapists and other childhood experts will be on hand to support each child.

"It's really difficult to get an appointment with a child psychologist. Locally it can take up to a year and that's a lifetime for a little one. By having wrap around services on hand at Little Phoenix, we can address a child's need immediately and figure out the best course of support," said Jane Taylor Lee, Executive Director of Family Services of Greater Victoria, one of two community agencies that will operate the daycare. The Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society is the other partner in the daycare. University of Victoria is a research partner in the daycare so that best practices can be shared across the country.

The daycare will accommodate seven infant/toddlers and 24, 3-5 year olds. Considering that the first five years lay the foundation for a child's life, we thank you for ensuring that no child will get left behind.



**YOU
HELPED**

**PEOPLE STRUGGLING
WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH**

Over 50% of Vancouver Islanders say their mental health has deteriorated during COVID-19. For those who were already struggling, the pandemic has compounded matters.

Tracy is one of those people who struggle. By the time she reached out for help, she was in a complete crisis. "I had teenagers at home and a marriage that was struggling. I could barely leave the house as my anxiety and OCD [obsessive compulsive disorder] had gotten so bad," said Tracy. "I needed help."

Thankfully, Tracy received help from Mental Health Recovery Partners, a United Way funded agency specializing in peer to peer support. She has met a community of compassionate people who have been through their own journeys with mental health struggles.

She now understands that she isn't alone. Feeling a sense of connection and having a community that cares are cornerstones to mental health recovery.

It's because Tracy broke her silence and asked for help, she is full of hope and possibility. "I can say I am healthy again. My kids have a mom who is actually present in their lives and my husband has a wife, not a shell of the person he married."

Thank you for showing that you care by giving to support those struggling with mental health and/or addictions.



**YOU
HELPED**

**FAMILIES
SUCCEEDED**

Sometimes, families need just a little bit of assistance to get by. For families like Allan and his seven children, a weekly food hamper that he receives from Oakland Community Association is literally a life saver.

Every week, Allan and his family receive a box full of groceries including eggs, bread, yogurt and locally grown produce. Often there are treats – like cupcakes or pastries. All of this is free.

“It’s like a gift that kind of came out of nowhere,” said Allan. He adds, “Food security is family security.”

Oakland Community Association is one of the Neighbourhood Houses that benefitted from the Capital Daily Holiday Donation Drive. A matching gift of \$75,000 meant that every dollar you gave to help families in need last December was matched dollar for dollar by a grant from Heart Pharmacy, Jawl Properties, Tiny Foundation and a couple of anonymous donors. In total, \$150,000 was allocated to local Neighbourhood Houses.

Neighbourhood Houses are a network of vital community hubs that offer a wide range of programs from recreation programs, to counselling, to out-of-school care and to food security.

Thanks to Capital Daily reporter Emily Fagan for telling Allan’s story.

THANK YOU TO OUR VALUABLE FRONTLINE FUNDED PARTNERS

We are proud to work with the following local community service agencies.

1Up Victoria Single Parent Resource Centre
211 British Columbia Services Society
Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society
Alzheimer Society of BC
AVI Health & Community Services Society
Backpack Buddies Victoria
Beacon Community Association
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Victoria Capital Region
Boys and Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria
Bridges for Women Society
Burnside Gorge Community Association
Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Victoria
Centre for Outreach Education (CORE)
Coalition of Neighborhood Houses
Community Options for Children and Families Society
Community Social Planning Council
Connections Place Society
Cornerstone Youth Society
Cridge Centre for the Family
Esquimalt Community Garden Society
Esquimalt Farmers Market
Esquimalt First Nations
Esquimalt Neighbourhood House Society
Esquimalt Recreation Centre
Extreme Outreach Society
Fairfield Gonzales Community Association
Family Caregivers Society of British Columbia

Family Services of Greater Victoria
Farmland's Trust Society
Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group
Friends of Living and Learning Through Loss
Frontier College
Galiano Health Care Society
Garth Homer Society
Greater Victoria Eldercare Foundation
Harbourview Church
HeroWork Project Society
Indigenous Perspectives Society
Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria
Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre Association
Island Sexual Health Society
James Bay New Horizons
John Howard Society of Victoria
LDABC The Learning Curve
Leadership Victoria
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada
Little Free Libraries
- Greater Victoria Placemaking Network
Living Edge Community
March of Dimes Canada
Mayne Island Assisted Living Society
Mental Health Recovery Partners Society, South Vancouver Island
NEED2 Crisis Intervention and Public Information Society of Greater Victoria
Nesting Doula Collective
Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society
Oasis Society for the Spiritual Health of Victoria

Our Place Society
 Pacific Centre Family Services Association
 Pacific Training Centre for the Blind
 Pacifica Housing Advisory Association
 Parent Support Services Society of BC
 Pauquachin First Nation
 Paws for Hope Animal Foundation
 Peers Victoria Resources Society
 Power to Be Adventure Therapy Society
 Rent Smart Education & Support Society
 Saanich Neighbourhood Place
 Saanich Volunteer Services Society
 Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands
 Community Services Society
 Seniors Serving Seniors Association of BC
 Shelbourne Community Kitchen Society
 Silver Threads Service
 Soap for Hope
 Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
 of Vancouver Island
 Songhees Nation
 Sooke Family Resource Society
 Sooke Transition House Society
 South Island Centre for Counselling
 & Training Society
 The Anawim Companions Society
 The British Columbia Lions Society
 for Children with Disabilities
 (Easter Seals BC Yukon)

The Circle Salt Spring Education Society
 (Formerly SWOVA Community
 Development and Research Society)
 The Galiano Club
 The Salvation Army – Victoria
 Together Against Poverty Society (TAPS)
 Umbrella Society for Addictions
 and Mental Health
 Vancouver Island Men's Therapy
 Centre Society
 Victoria Brain Injury Society
 Victoria Child Abuse Prevention
 & Counselling Centre Society
 of Greater Victoria
 Victoria Conservatory of Music
 Victoria Cool Aid Society
 Victoria Disability Resource Centre
 Victoria Festival of Authors Society
 Victoria Immigrant and Refugee
 Centre Society
 Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC)
 Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society
 Victoria Sexual Assault Centre Society
 Victoria Women's Transition House Society
 Victoria Youth Empowerment Society
 VIDEA
 We Rage We Weep Alzheimer Foundation
 Wear 2 Start Society
 WorkLink Employment Society



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Southern
Vancouver Island

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