

2024-25 UWSVI Priority Population Descriptions

United Way Southern Vancouver Island (UWSVI) believes that all people have the right to live in a strong and caring community, and that anyone can, at different times in their lives, be at risk of one or many challenges.

UWSVI focuses our limited resources to support people who are living in a state of economic, cultural, and social poverty.

Although belonging to one or more of the following groups does not necessarily make one 'at risk' - it is often a combination of factors that can lead to increased social challenges and/or inequities.

Families –families that experience chronic low-income and few social supports, teen parenting or lone parenting with low income, high household mobility, homelessness, low personal capacity and/or family dysfunction.

Children and Youth –children and youth who live alone or are homeless, live in families experiencing chronic low-income, live in dysfunctional families, experience or witness abuse or trauma, lack interpersonal and social skills, have cognitive challenges, neurodiversity, or emotional or mental health issues, are not engaged in or succeeding at school, or experience low sense of belonging in school or community.

Seniors and Elders – people 65 or older, who live alone (which is a key risk factor for social isolation, along with being 75+), have low income, are single or bereaved, are in poor health, experience language/cultural barriers, and/or have transportation difficulties.

Indigenous Peoples –individuals and communities that have been affected by the multigenerational impacts of colonialism, especially the effects of residential schools. These effects may include systemic racism and discrimination, resulting in chronic low income, high mobility, loss of culture, and other negative social indicators. Indigenous Peoples include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people.

People with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities –individuals who have physical, cognitive, or other challenges that can hamper or reduce one's ability to carry out day-to-day activities, have low income, are in poor health, and includes those living with chronic illnesses.

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People with Mental Health and/or Addictions Challenges –individuals who face barriers such as mental health challenges, trauma, and/or substance addictions that interfere with their daily living activities and employment opportunities.

Newcomers –recent refugees and immigrants to Canada (generally defined as those who arrived in the last five years), who may have faced discrimination, have language barriers, have low income, are unable to obtain employment commensurate with their credentials, are stay-at-home parents or seniors.

Racialized Communities and/or Ethnic Groups – communities who face the immediate and historical impacts of individual, institutional, and societal racism as well as those who may experience religious discrimination and/or marginalization.

Survivors of Sexual and/or Domestic Violence –adults and children who have experienced sexual assault and/or abuse, as well as those who have experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional trauma in domestic relationships.

LGBTQIA2-S Community – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and Two-Spirit (the terms used to describe gender identities and sexual orientations are constantly changing and being updated to better represent people) who face harassment, bullying, prejudice, and discrimination among other barriers affecting their wellbeing and equality.