

Subject: **COVID-19 Update from United Way of KFL&A – May 11th**

Good morning! In this week's update, you can read about how we will plan recovery in the social services sector, celebrate a philanthropic leader's 100th birthday, learn more about federal funding being stewarded through the United Way. I have also included a link to a national story that highlights the good work being done in Kingston around youth homelessness.

PLANNING FOR RESPONSE, RECOVERY

Agencies have been immersed in responding to the immediate needs of their clients while adjusting to physical distancing requirements during the current pandemic. The need for mental health support and counselling is up, as are calls about domestic violence and sexual assault counselling. Agencies are collectively serving over 1,000 meals a day –this has more than doubled since the start of the crisis, and does not include some of the meal delivery and food bank hampers being provided.

Our agencies have risen to the challenge in innovative, collaborative, and compassionate ways. They are addressing increased demand with innovative, often more expensive, ways of delivering programs to continue helping the most vulnerable members of our community.

We will start work on a social services recovery plan for the medium to long term to guide municipalities, funders, and community agencies to address future challenges. United Way has recruited agency leaders, City of Kingston, and KFL&A Public Health to a Social Recovery Taskforce.

Our goal is to deliver a report with a thoughtful analysis of the opportunities for stabilization, collaboration and coordination among agencies in different areas within the social service sector. This will include food programs, housing and homelessness, mental health, counselling and domestic violence. I will keep you informed as we progress in our work.

SPOTLIGHT ON YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN KFL&A

Earlier this month, United Way and Kingston was featured in a special piece entitled [“How this Canadian city is curbing youth homelessness”](#) in the online publication **Future of Good**. The piece gives an excellent perspective on addressing youth homelessness in KFL&A before and during COVID-19. It highlights the work that United Way and its amazing partner agencies continue to do in our community to prevent and end youth homelessness.

CELEBRATING UNITED WAY KFL&A HONORARY PATRON BRIT SMITH

On Wednesday, May 13th, local philanthropist and our honorary patron, Brit Smith will celebrate his 100th Birthday! Brit Smith has been an integral part of the United Way, volunteering and supporting us since the early days. He has been United Way's most significant philanthropist through the years. His warmth, generosity and caring have impacted thousands of lives every year. He is an inspiration to all of us.

While the plan was to have a party honouring Mr. Smith on this milestone birthday, current circumstances won't allow that, and instead our United Way, along with other organizations in the community have put together a two-page tribute to Brit in the Kingston Whig Standard. Look for it in the digital or paper edition of the Whig on Wednesday, May 13th.

SENIORS

As mentioned in a previous update, United Way KFL&A received \$65,000 through the New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP), allocated by Employment Social Development Canada. This was immediately flowed through to registered charitable organizations for programs that serve vulnerable seniors in the KFL&A region.

Agencies are already hard at work providing extra support for vulnerable seniors. As detailed in the last update, meal and food programs through the **Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) in Napanee** offering groceries, vouchers and delivery of meals, **Rural Frontenac Community Services in North Frontenac** and the expansion of their Meals on Wheels Program and the new **Kingston Community Health Centre Seniors' Food Box program** continues with increased demand (189 boxes this week, up from 85 the previous round).

In addition to these meal programs, seniors need support to address mental health, anxiety, self isolation and four newly funded programs are highlighted below:

- **Independent Living Kingston** – Funding for staff to provide support through phone check-in calls, on-line peer groups and virtual programming to vulnerable seniors with disabilities experiencing increased social isolation, fear, anxiety, loneliness due to COVID-19 pandemic. Assist with navigating and connecting with supports for food, homecare, counselling services, programs – one to one direct support to address unique needs of seniors
- **Resolve Counselling Services Canada** – As a result of the pandemic, seniors are experiencing loneliness, anxiety, depression and stress of self-isolation. This program will address the increased need and the growing number of vulnerable seniors looking for counselling.
- **Seniors Association** – Additional staffing at the Seniors Association will provide check-in calls, and information about resources for vulnerable isolated seniors experiencing loneliness, anxiety & mental health, food insecurity, health concerns while self-isolating, including grocery, pharmacy deliveries, curb-side pick-up, medical, health. The agency will also provide virtual programming to promote physical activity, courses to stimulate their mind, connect with other seniors.
- **Southern Frontenac Community Services** – Additional support will enable this agency to reach out to seniors in Southern Frontenac with meals on wheels, and calls to check in on seniors and make sure they have the supports they need.

EMERGENCY COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND

The Government of Canada announced \$350 Million Emergency Community Support Fund on April 21, 2020. This fund will help Canadian charities and non-profits who are providing crucial resources and community-based services for vulnerable Canadians.

United Way, the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) and Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) will deploy these critical funds into communities across the country through charities providing immediate responses to the pandemic.

Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington will likely receive around \$500k, and a call for applications will go out late May. Funds will be disbursed through June and July. We are working closely with Community Foundation of Kingston and Area to see how we can best collaborate and ensure these funds have the maximum impact.

GIVING TUESDAY MAY 5TH

Tuesday, May 5th was Giving Tuesday for COVID-19. Thank you to all our generous donors, who continue to support local needs through the Covid-19 Fund. Our United Way, along with three others, took part in a Music Across The Border telethon through WPBS (Watertown) – hope you were able to tune in. If you missed it, look for our local videos that were featured in the coming weeks on our social media channels – [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Of course, you can always look for regular updates on our website at www.unitedwaykfla.ca

Thank you! Your support is changing lives impacted by this pandemic. Take care. Stay safe and well!