

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – October 7, 2024

United Way Peterborough & District partners with PATH for their Coats for Community initiative

PETERBOROUGH, ON (October 7, 2024) – United Way Peterborough & District and Peterborough Action for Tiny Homes (PATH) shared an exciting community announcement from the PATH location at 385 Lansdowne Street East. The two organizations have formed a partnership to expand the reach of the Coats for Community winter clothing program.

United Way Peterborough & District has coordinated an annual winter coat drive for almost four decades, providing tens of thousands of pieces of winter gear to community members in need. **The generosity of Peterborough residents last year resulted in 1,844 coats and 1,272 mitts and hats being distributed to over 500 people.** The need for winter gear has continued to grow each year, and our community has continually risen to the occasion by donating their new or gently used winter coats.

PATH has developed a strong clothing and essential items donation program called the Community Clothing Hub (also accepts essential items). The Community Clothing Hub supplies agencies like One City Peterborough, Elizabeth Fry Society of Peterborough, and YES Shelter for Youth & Families with clothing for people experiencing homelessness. This clothing donation program was first developed by Elizabeth Fry Society of Peterborough and PATH as part of a project that received funding from United Way in 2022/2023. This project quickly grew into a robust process where volunteers are able to accept clothing and essential item donations at the PATH location and then supply frontline agencies with these items. Clothing that is not practical for people experiencing homelessness, such as formal wear or designer clothing, is donated by PATH volunteers to Vinnie's.

United Way Peterborough & District has partnered with PATH as an opportunity to expand their Coats for Community program to keep up with the demand. "Our purpose at the United Way is to facilitate community building by collecting support from those who can give and then strategically distributing these resources to those in need," stated **Jim Russell, CEO of United Way Peterborough & District**. "Our new partnership with PATH strengthens our ability to collect and distribute winter gear to people who need it most. This partnership allows us to meet people where they are at by distributing directly to service providers throughout Peterborough."

PATH volunteers are excited to partner with United Way to support their ongoing services as they continue to advocate for setting up sleeping cabins at the PATH location at 385 Lansdowne Street East. "While we are not able to keep people warm

this winter in sleeping cabins, distributing winter gear with United Way will help keep people warmer,” said **Bev Assinck, PATH volunteer and Board member**. “We have the unique opportunity to utilize our Lansdowne Street East location as a clothing hub, where you will be greeted by volunteers to accept your donation. Volunteers will then sort the clothing, wash and mend as needed, and then distribute the exact items that are needed to frontline serving organizations.”

How to donate to Coats for Community 2024

Community members are invited to bring their new and gently used winter coats, snowpants, hats and mittens to PATH at 385 Lansdowne Street East. Volunteers will be accepting donations from Wednesday, October 23 to Saturday, October 26 between the hours of 9:00AM and 3:00PM daily. There is a strong need for men’s winter coats, especially sizes medium through XXL. Women’s and children’s items are also needed.

How to access free winter gear

The coats and other winter items donated by the community will be distributed to local agencies and groups throughout Peterborough. United Way Peterborough & District will be inviting local agencies to pick up winter gear on behalf of their clients and neighbours in need. PATH will then coordinate the distribution directly with the agencies throughout the winter, ensuring that people can receive what they need to protect themselves in the coldest months of the year.

Information and updates will be posted to United Way Peterborough & District’s website at www.uwpeterborough.ca

For media inquiries, please contact:

Jim Russell
Chief Executive Officer
United Way Peterborough & District
jrussell@uwpeterborough.ca
705-742-8839

Sara Mountenay
Development & Communications Officer
United Way Peterborough & District
smountenay@uwpeterborough.ca
705-313-0651