

## Media Release

**United Way Simcoe Muskoka**  
1110 Highway 26, Midhurst, Ontario L9X 1N6  
UWSimcoeMuskoka.ca



---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**January 17, 2023**

### **“Coldest Night of the Year” returns for a second year in Bradford**

**Barrie, ON, January 17, 2023** - Poverty is an everyday reality for more than 60,000 of our friends, family and neighbours, limiting potential, increasing physical and mental health risks and raising obstacles that most people never even have to think about. That’s why for the second year in a row United Way Simcoe Muskoka will be hosting the Coldest Night of the Year event in Bradford. This winterrific family-friendly walk raises money for local charities serving people experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness.

Tackling a problem as big as poverty will take all of us. That’s why United Way Simcoe Muskoka is funding multi-year collaborative projects across Simcoe Muskoka. These projects are addressing the root causes of poverty and isolation to drive long-lasting change for our most vulnerable residents. In Bradford, that project is YouthCALL Service Link, a live-answer telephone service that is assisting transitional-aged youth in a time when they need it most. While many services exist for adults and children, those transitioning into adulthood are often left without resources or help. All this despite the fact that transitional-aged youth experience higher rates of mental health challenges and addiction, and LGBTQ+ youth are at increased risk of poverty due to family rejection, social isolation, homelessness, and a lack of education and employment opportunities.

"We know that 20% of Canada's homeless population is youth; we also know that if they can get connected to safe, sustainable housing within the first two years, their chances of getting out improve significantly. This is why programs like YouthCALL are so important and why your United Way is raising funds through Coldest Night of the Year." Brian Shelley, Chief Executive and Philanthropy Officer, United Way Simcoe Muskoka

Last year’s Coldest Night of the Year event in Bradford involved 200 walkers and 25 volunteers who helped to raise over \$40,000. This year’s goal is to raise \$70,000.

In addition to YouthCALL, United Way Simcoe Muskoka supports projects that help those transitioning out of homelessness or domestic violence into a new home, connects social and primary health services, empowers mainstream organizations to grow Indigenous cultural safety practices, and supports individuals and families in times of crisis by providing modest, short-term emergency funds when existing social services aren’t able to help.

To learn more, sign up a team, make a donation, or enquire about being a corporate sponsor for this year's Coldest Night of the Year event, go to: [cnoy.org/location/bradford](https://cnoy.org/location/bradford)

## **About United Way Simcoe Muskoka**

Poverty touches most aspects of a person's life from food, shelter, and employment, to mental and physical well-being. United Way Simcoe Muskoka seeks to improve lives and build communities by leveraging collective resources and mobilizing collective action to achieve the greatest impact. Through services such as the Urgent Needs Fund and by funding critical services throughout our communities, your United Way is ensuring that residents have the resources and assistance they need to unlock their full potential.

<https://uwsimcoemuskoka.ca/>

## **Media Inquiries**

United Way Simcoe Muskoka  
Deborah Neary  
Marketing & Communications Specialist  
(647) 545-9703  
[dneary@uwsimcoemuskoka.ca](mailto:dneary@uwsimcoemuskoka.ca)