

# Media Release

## United Way Simcoe Muskoka

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United Way  
Centraide  
Simcoe Muskoka

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 12, 2023**

## **UNITED WAY SIMCOE MUSKOKA PARTICIPATES IN BARRIE PRIDE PARADE**

**Barrie, ON, June 12, 2023** – On Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup>, members of your United Way staff team joined dozens of organizations in participating in the 2023 Barrie Pride Parade. It was a beautiful day, the sun was shining, we got to engage with hundreds of members of our community, and to be honest, we had a lot of fun doing it, too.

All in all, it was a great day.

But that is not why we were there.

We participated in the Barrie Pride Parade because we believe in contributing to communities where everyone feels that they have value.

We believe in contributing to communities where everyone feels that they belong.

We believe in contributing to communities where everyone feels loved.

As a society, we have historically failed those young people who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. Consider the following two statistics:

- According to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, [“1 out of every 3 homeless young people in Canada identifies as 2SLGBTQIA+”](#).
- A study conducted by the Newport Academy found that 2SLGBTQIA+ youth [“consider suicide and make suicide attempts at about twice the national rate for all adolescents”](#).

This is not because 2SLGBTQIA+ folks are inherently more likely to suffer from mental health or depression; whether it be by their peers, their families, or society as a whole, these young people have been made to feel less than.

Something has to change and we all need to be part it.

Young people need to know that they are safe and that they belong in their homes, their schools, and their communities regardless of how they identify.

This is why your United Way participated in our region’s largest Pride Parade.

We want to be part of the change.

On a final note, “allyship” cannot be a “one day a year”, or even a “one month a year” thing. We need to take a stand for what we believe in, engage in the difficult conversations, and role model empathy and acceptance 7 days a week, 52 months a year.

“Pride” is not about having fun on Parade Day – it is about saving lives.

## **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, United Way Simcoe Muskoka is ensuring that residents have the resources and assistance they need to unlock their full potential.

<https://uwsimcoemuskoka.ca/>

## **Image**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xQ2jsluXlcnf5XR4FEXQhpY7O4\\_ABIQb/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xQ2jsluXlcnf5XR4FEXQhpY7O4_ABIQb/view?usp=sharing)

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