

## Media Release

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



---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 25, 2023**

### **United Way of Simcoe Muskoka to present documentary “Birth of a Family”**

*Local charity hosting an evening of education and reflection to commemorate Truth and Reconciliation Week*

**Midland, ON, August 25, 2023** – United Way Simcoe Muskoka will be screening the award-winning film *Birth of a Family* at the Midland Cultural Centre on September 26, 2023, as part of the 2023 Real2Reel Film Festival. The local charity is partnering with the Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle and Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin to host the evening in recognition of Truth and Reconciliation Week.

“They say that there can be no reconciliation without truth,” said Brian Shelley, United Way Chief Executive and Philanthropy Officer. “It is important to create space for those with lived experiences to share their stories so that we can begin to move forward with reconciliation in a good way.”

In this deeply moving feature-length documentary, three sisters and a brother meet for the first time. Removed from their young Dene mother during the infamous Sixties Scoop, they were separated as infants and adopted into families across North America. Betty Ann, Esther, Rosalie, and Ben were only four of the 20,000 Indigenous Canadian children taken from their families between 1955 and 1985, to be either adopted into white families or live in foster care. As the four siblings piece together their shared history, their connection deepens, and their family begins to take shape. Following the film, Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle’s Heather McIntyre will moderate a panel discussion to further explore the impact of the Sixties Scoop.

United Way Simcoe Muskoka’s Real2Reel Film Festival is sponsored by the RBC Foundation and aims to reduce stigma and raise awareness of complex community issues. Net proceeds raised through this event will support the United Way’s funding of the Wijiinokiiwag project delivered in partnership between CMHA and the Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle.

**When:** September 26, 2023 – 6:30-9:30pm

**Where:** The Midland Cultural Centre, 333 King St, Midland, ON L4R 3M7

**Who:** This event is open to the public. Tickets are \$7.53

**Tickets:** <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/truth-reconciliation-film-screening-birth-of-a-family-tickets-700351930477>

**More Information:** <https://uwsimcoemuskoka.ca/birth-of-a-family-2023/>

This film contains material of a sensitive nature, including the Sixties Scoop, that may be triggering for some individuals. Please take part as you feel comfortable.

-30-

**About Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin**

Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin provides wholistic health care and wellness programming that incorporates Indigenous culturally grounded, collaborative health care to residents of North Simcoe and Muskoka.

<https://mamaway.ca/>

## **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.

---

## **Media Inquiries**

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