

Media Release

United Way Simcoe Muskoka
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 20, 2023

“This is What Community Looks Like!”

United Way Simcoe Muskoka’s Holiday With a Hero a Huge Success for 80 Vulnerable Children and Youth

Barrie, ON, November 20, 2023 – This past Saturday, United Way Simcoe Muskoka hosted its third annual “Holiday with a Hero” event. Eighty vulnerable children and youth were connected with heroes (firefighters, paramedics, police and military) for a unique holiday party designed to break down barriers. The holiday spirit could be seen in all the smiling and laughing faces of the children and heroes alike.

“Today was all about coming together to support some awesome kids and their families,” said Brian Shelley, United Way Simcoe Muskoka Chief Executive and Philanthropy Officer. “It was impactful for all of us; I’ve had several officers tell me that it was one of the most rewarding days of policing in their careers.”

The day started bright and early with each youth paired with a local hero for a fully funded shopping spree, followed by a procession of emergency vehicles to the Innisfil YMCA for breakfast, face painting, cookie decorating, a bouncy castle, and an extra special visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. While the kids mingled with their heroes, a team of volunteers were busy gift-wrapping each child’s purchases, packing them in a Santa sack for each family to take home at the end of the morning.

Holiday with a Hero is a true community effort, with over 150 volunteers giving their time Saturday morning. Shelley added that all funds were raised through donations from individuals and local businesses.

“We are so thankful to everyone who supported Holiday with a Hero,” added Shelley. “This is what community looks like!”

To learn more or to make a donation to support United Way Simcoe Muskoka’s efforts to support children and youth through initiatives like Holiday With a Hero, go to <https://uwsimcoemuskoka.ca/heroes/>

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About United Way Simcoe Muskoka

United Way Simcoe Muskoka is a local charity dedicated to bringing together people and organizations to meet community needs by tackling complex social issues. To learn more go to <https://uwsimcoemuskoka.ca/>

Media Inquiries

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