



United Way
Toronto & York Region

UNITED WAY CONDUCTS A FIRST-EVER COUNT OF HOMELESSNESS IN YORK REGION

- ***Count Me In* in York Region is part of the first coordinated national effort to provide an estimated snap-shot of how many homeless individuals there are in an area in one point in time**

January 21, 2016 – Last night, United Way Toronto & York Region conducted the first ever Point-in-Time Count in York Region. The count covered two groups: individuals in emergency shelters, extreme weather shelters and Violence Against Women shelters and transitional housing, and secondly, individuals in places unfit for human habitation (e.g. streets, alleys, etc.). Today, an additional service count continues to capture people experiencing homelessness who access services but were missed the night of the count.

As a partner in the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) in York Region, United Way carried out the count to collect important data that will help government and social services providers provide better solutions to address homelessness. The initiative is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

"We need to better understand the complex reality of homelessness so that we can act together and ensure everyone has a place to call home" said Pedro Barata, Vice-President, Communications & Public Affairs. "Government and community partners are working together in collecting this information because we know it is a crucial foundation for making a real, sustainable impact to tackle homelessness in our communities."

The count was coordinated in close collaboration with input from local residents including community members, individuals with lived homelessness experience, government and members of the police department. All were called upon to lend their knowledge and skills to address issues and work together to find solutions.

"We've been working to address issues such as housing and mental health challenges that impact individuals experiencing homelessness," said Phil Brown, community champion and Chair of the York Region Homelessness Community Advisory Board. "Together, we're working to find solutions that will ultimately reduce homelessness and the count is a first step to create a local and national picture so we can better tackle these challenges."

Following the count, United Way will work to analyze the data gathered. Next steps include the release a report in the spring of 2016, at which time findings will be shared.



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United Way Toronto & York Region is a charity dedicated to creating opportunities for a better life for everyone from the waterfront of downtown Toronto, to the southern shore of Lake Simcoe. Working in partnership with others, we mobilize people and resources to support a network of agencies that help people when they need it most. United Way also addresses the root causes of social problems, working to change community conditions for the better over the long term.

Media Contact:

Adriana Suppa, United Way Toronto & York Region

Office: 416-777-1444 ext. 554
Mobile: 416-274-6004
Email: asuppa@uwgt.org