



NEWS RELEASE
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Thompson-Nicola Cariboo Communities Better Equipped to Tackle Cold Weather Challenges

Cold Weather Preparedness Grants help agencies plan and prepare



Regional Office, Kamloops B.C. – United Way British Columbia (United Way BC)'s Cold Weather Preparedness Grant, made possible by the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR), provides support to communities facing extreme weather emergencies. Focusing on Northern BC, Thompson-Nicola Cariboo, and the Southern Interior, 19 agencies received funding to prepare for and respond to cold weather.

"We know extreme weather events like wildfires, heat domes, and the current dangerously low temperatures disproportionately affect our most vulnerable community members. Youth, seniors, and those experiencing precarious or no housing are at greater risk. Thanks to this funding and our trusted community partners, we are able to provide some relief to those who are suffering," said Kristi Rintoul, Director, Community Impact & Investment, United Way British Columbia.

Most grants focused on proactive programming to prepare for winter and provide help to those most affected by extreme weather conditions. From free preparedness workshops, creating systems to better enable a response during the cold, and increased relationship building with vulnerable clients to creating and distributing cold weather kits, grants were used to address a growing need in many communities.

In Thompson-Nicola-Cariboo, BGC Kamloops' Youth Necessity Nook and Outreach is a haven of mindful activity. On average 35 - 50 youth a day will access the drop in space as a safe, warm place to be, providing them with life skills, meals, and warm clothes; they also have access to the Necessity Nook, with food and hygiene hampers to take with them. Youth come in more when it's cold, and the demand for food and transportation (bus passes) are higher. With this funding, BGC purchased warm long underwear, sweatpants, specific items for youth showing a need like new boots and for those youth without a home, fresh clothing to wear after they've had a shower.

The “Mini Storage” run by the Aboriginal Friendship Society in Kamloops offers those experiencing homelessness a place to temporarily store their belongings. With the Cold Weather Preparedness Grant, they are providing items needed during the coldest time of the year. This includes warm clothing from long johns, sweaters, and mittens to snow pants, jackets, and chaffing candles.

Programs like these help people in need to stabilize their lives, restore trust, build relationships, and connect with service. Providing a safe place for them to access support to survive the cold weather helps keep hope alive.

United Way BC’s Emergency Response provides year-round support to individuals, families, and communities affected by extreme weather events like wildfires, floods, and extreme cold. We are committed to fostering preparedness, social infrastructure recovery, and immediate crisis response. Through initiatives such as the Cold Weather Preparedness Grant, recovery grants, and [Extreme Weather Preparedness Guides](#), United Way BC helps communities build resilience.

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About United Way British Columbia

United Way BC helps build healthy, caring, and inclusive communities across our province. We strengthen vital connections that support people in need with a focus on emergency response, kids and youth, seniors, mental health, and food security.

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Interviews are available with Kristi Rintoul, United Way British Columbia

Media contact:

Dara Hill

Marketing & Communications

United Way British Columbia

darah@uwbc.ca

Office: 236-427-1265 | Cell: 604-314-7844

