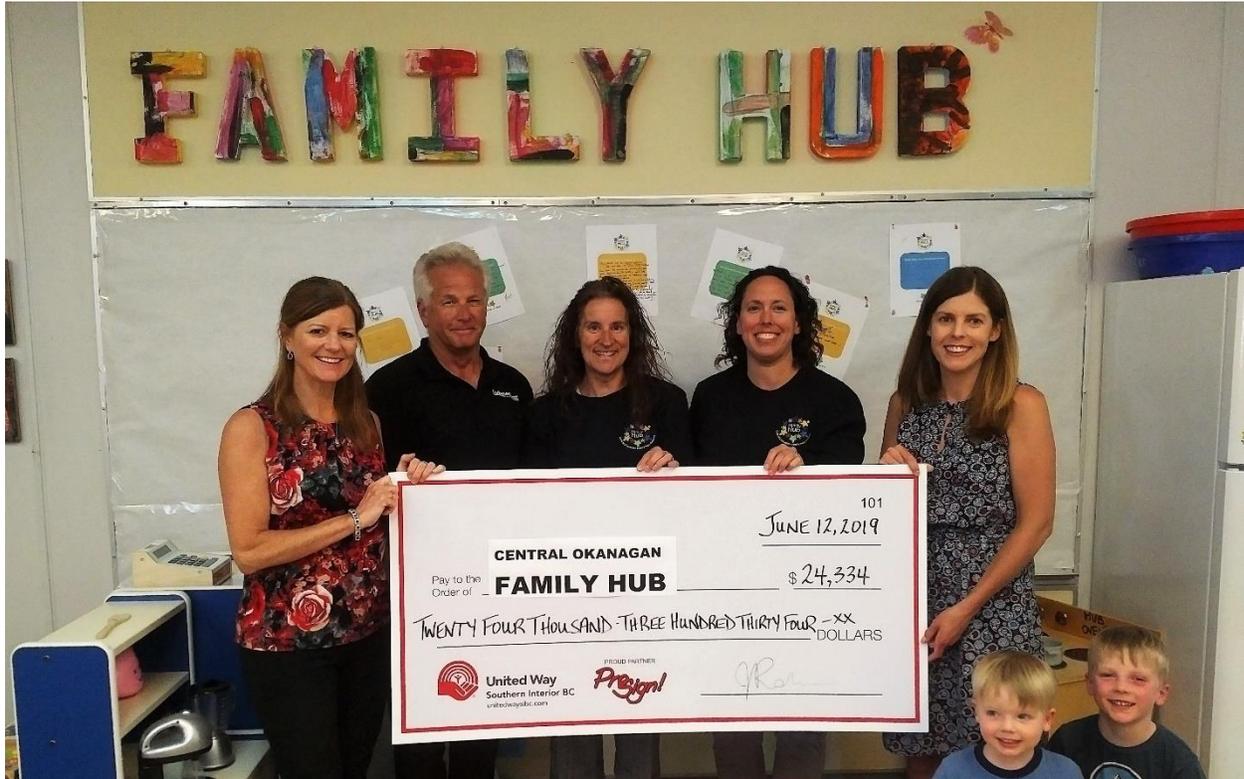


For Immediate Release: Central Okanagan

United Way benefactors impact local families of the future

The Central Okanagan Family Hub proves its pilot model as an essential community resource



Shown above (left to right): Jude Brunt (United Way SIBC), Peter Boyd (Your Independent Grocer/KCR Board), Ellen Boelcke (KCR), Katelin Mitchell (KCR), Jennifer Robins and sons (United Way SIBC Board Vice Chair).

June 12th, 2019 (Kelowna) – Today saw the presentation of the remaining installment of a three year grant resulting from a generous legacy bequest to United Way to “do something good in our community”. Knowing the increasing need for services for young children and families in Kelowna and the increasing social issues affecting our most vulnerable--our kids, United Way first invested in 2016 in a three year pilot project to create the one-stop-shop for at-risk families with children 0-12 years old.

The Central Okanagan Family Hub, based out of Pearson Road Elementary in Rutland, opened in June of 2016 and has been operated by Kelowna Community Resources since then. The Hub has helped over 13,000 visitors to date offering a variety of services and programs often as simple as offering a cup of tea and a friendly ear for a new parent struggling with their young family--not knowing where to turn for both practical and emotional help.

“United Way has been proud to play a big role within that vision as the model has evolved,” said Jude Brunt, Community Investment Manager at United Way SIBC. “The centre has proven itself as a vital one-stop-shop resource for families from Lake Country to Peachland. However, the need for increased community supports that address connectivity and social isolation for young families is not diminishing any time soon and with that in mind, we will continue to sit on the Hub Leadership Committee to offer our support.”

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Southern Interior BC

Too many Okanagan children — still 1 in 5 — are growing up in poverty and an astounding half of all children in single-parent families have lived in poverty at some point. Single parents with a disability *and* children under 19 have an astronomically high poverty rate of 53%. In addition, nearly half of recent immigrant children are poor, one in three Indigenous children live in poverty and more than one in three (39%) children living with other relatives are all at-risk in some way. These kids & their families all need practical community initiatives like the Hub and other United Way projects to help prevent them from falling through the cracks and descending into deeper social issues like homelessness, food insecurity & mental health problems.

The Hub is moving forward as a self-sustaining successful program, but will rely on the continued generosity of our local community and businesses leaders. A drive-thru breakfast on Friday morning at the Pearson Rd Hub location will conclude the “A Lot for a Little” campaign which KCR spearheaded to ensure long term sustainability and continuation of the clear impact this incredible community legacy has had to date. Enjoy a delicious bagged breakfast at The Hub from 7:30am to 9am on Friday, June 14th and support this vital community resource at the same time!

For more information on the United Way’s investment in the Central Okanagan Family Hub, visit:
<https://unitedwaysibc.com/how-we-help/kids/co-family-hub/>

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About United Way Southern Interior BC (SIBC)

United Way Southern Interior BC serves communities across the Okanagan, Columbia, Shuswap and Similkameen – formed by the merger of United Way CSO and United Way NOCS, United Way SIBC builds on over 65 years of community investment. Our mission is to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action. The United Way invests time and resources in three focus areas that support all that kids can be, move people from poverty to possibility and build healthy, strong communities. For more information, visit www.unitedwaysibc.com or call 1-855-232-1321 or in the North Okanagan: 1-866-GIVE4UW.

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