

NEWS RELEASE

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**Winnipeg Teens Get Something Started  
United Way Youth Kick-off 2006 Day of Caring Program**

100 high school students from 16 different schools got something started today, by kicking off United Way's 2006 Day of Caring Program by volunteering to work on 21 projects at agencies throughout the city.

For more than a decade, United Way has run "Day of Caring Projects" that team up volunteers with funded agencies to work together to complete meaningful, hands-on projects at the agency. Each project – whether it's building a playground, painting a fence or planting a flower garden – is completed in one day and makes a lasting impact on the volunteers and the people who use the services of the agency.

The student volunteers met at the Forks in the morning and then headed out to 18 United Way funded agencies to work with agency staff to complete a much-needed project. Some examples were: A group of students went to help Graffiti Art Programming and worked with staff to remove graffiti around the downtown area; Ndinawemaaganag, a youth centre on Selkirk Avenue got a fresh face as student volunteers picked up paint brushes and rollers and other students helped to prepare and serve meals thorough Ma Mawi's community lunch program.

"The United Way of Winnipeg invests heavily in our youth" says Eric Friesen, Manager of Youth Programs for United Way. "This is a fantastic opportunity to bring it all together and showcase the positive impact Winnipeg youth are having in our community."

"As a member of the Youth Relations Council," says Kanwal Brar , "I like to serve as a positive voice for youth and provide input from my own unique experiences and perspectives to the overall vision of United Way of Winnipeg."

United Way coordinates Shaw United Way Youth Connections which is a funding program run by youth, for youth. United Way has coordinated the Day of Caring Program for more than a decade. During that time, more than 300 Day of Caring projects have been completed.

Last year, United Way invested \$1.8 million to address youth issues at their core through bullying and respect workshops, after-school programs, drop-in centres and mentorship programs that promote staying in school, teach responsibility and build self-esteem.