

MEDIA RELEASE

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TIME TO COLLECT – KOATS FOR KIDS IS UNDERWAY!

United Way of Winnipeg and its partners have officially launched Koats for Kids, now in its 19th year! Koats for Kids provides a unique service in response to a growing community need. It not only provides a benefit to those who utilize the service as clients, but to those who participate.

Since 1989, Koats for Kids has distributed a whopping 100 000 articles of winter outerwear. It's all possible because of a long-standing partnership of non-profits, community services, businesses, government and community members.

This year's program was launched in the basement of Oyate Tipi Cumini Yape, a United Way partner organization. It's the mission headquarters that will hopefully be up to its rafters in clothing this winter. In addition to providing thousands of Winnipeg children and families with free and clean winter outerwear, Koats for Kids provides unique pre-employment training for members of the community. Koats for Kids volunteers learn important life skills. The program allows participants to volunteer one day and be paid for the next.

"In a welcoming, safe environment these individuals learn basic job skills and build self-esteem, things that most of us may take for granted," said Scott Sanders, Chair of United Way's Board of Trustees. "These skills may lead to further education or employment, opening a world of opportunities, all because somebody pulled a coat of out of a closet."

Individual donations of coats, scarves, mitts, boots or ski pants can be dropped off at any Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Station or Perth's location. For larger donations, including school coat drives, please call 586-KOAT (5628) or email koatsforkids@shaw.ca to arrange for a pick-up or drop-off. Together, we can keep Winnipeg children warm this winter!

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