

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## UNITED WAY INCREASES SUPPORT FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS

United Way of Winnipeg is increasing support to four programs that help keep children and teens off the streets and away from a life of crime and drugs.

“To succeed in school and in life, children need role models and the skills to help them through to graduation,” said Ayn Wilcox, Chair of United Way’s Community Investment Committee. “That’s why United Way supports mentorship and after-school programs that give children the self-esteem and confidence they need to become engaged and productive adults.”

This year, an additional \$180 000 will help Winnipeg children and youth achieve their potential. United Way agency partners Graffiti Art Programming (GAP) and Nor’West Co-op Community Health Centre are both receiving additional support. And for the first time, Art City and the Community Schools Initiative Summer Learning Enrichment Program (CSI SLEP) have been granted sustained funding.

“United Way, along with support from other partners, enables us to provide high quality summer learning enrichment programs for the most at risk children in our city,” said Strini Reddy who is with the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg which runs CSI SLEP. “These programs not only keep the children safe throughout the summer, but also raise their level of confidence and their ability to do better in school.”

Art City, a new United Way agency partner, aims its programming primarily at children and runs an after-school program five days a week and a Teen Art Club on Saturdays. Art City fosters a sense of self-worth, accomplishment and community ownership among its young participants.

“United Way has always been incredibly supportive of Art City and community art,” said Jason Granger, Executive Director of Art City. “This new contribution will further strengthen our programming and allow us to play an even greater role in fostering community engagement in the West Broadway neighbourhood.”

United Way is committed to investing in areas that Winnipeggers themselves tell us are vital priorities. In a report released by United Way last month, half of the nearly 3 000 people surveyed said youth crime and gang activity is one of their top three social issues of concern. By supporting United Way, Winnipeggers help create opportunities for a good life for everyone, including the children and teens living in our city.

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