

Information Letter - United Way of Halton and Hamilton 'What Serves Us' Survey

You are invited to participate in a survey conducted by United Way of Halton and Hamilton to identify community strengths and needs. The results will be used to support their funding approach.

This letter explains what the study is about, possible risks and benefits, and your rights as a participant.

Description and Selection of Participants

To participate in the study, you must be:

- 16 years old or older
- Living in or receiving community services in Burlington, Hamilton, Halton Hills, Milton or Oakville.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can decline to answer any question. Declining to participate in the research does not impact your access to any community services. You can also keep the body products you received to participate.

Confidentiality

All answers to the survey are anonymous. Contact information for those wanting to participate in the gift card raffle will be in an entirely different system and unconnected with your survey responses.

All data is stored on secure servers and password protected. Your information will be stored by Brighter Spark Applied Research and Consulting Inc. Only approved members of the research team will have access to the data collected in this study. We expect this survey to be repeated every few years and so will store the data for an indefinite period in order to allow for comparison over time.

We may use quotes from those participating in the survey. We will not use any quote that could identify an individual.

The data collected may be used for follow up projects with individual community service agencies.

Remuneration for Participation

Participants will receive a body products kit for participation in the study. Kits are available at community service centres throughout Halton and Hamilton. See our website for locations – <http://uwhh.ca/survey> - where you can pick up a kit.

You can also enter into a raffle to win a gift card. Gift card values will range from \$50-100 and the odds of winning will vary but be no worse than 1 in 20. At the end of the survey, there is a link to a different survey platform where you will enter your name and email address. We will contact winners by email within 15 days of the closing of the survey (expected closure date is August 30, 2026) and arrange for delivery to you or pickup at a local community service.

Risks of Participation

The discomforts to you of participating in this study include being asked about difficult or sensitive aspects of your life and experiences. We have attempted to address this by making none of these questions required and have a help line available if the survey triggered anything you wish to discuss with a mental health professional.

Benefits of Participation

Participation in the study may benefit you by helping you identify services that would benefit you and your family. The study may benefit the community by supporting a major funder of community services in the region in incorporating lived experiences of clients into their decision making.

Findings and Feedback

The research results will be shared in both a detailed report provided to United Way Halton & Hamilton, and a high level public version that will be posted on the project website (<http://uwhh.ca/survey>) by October 1, 2026. Those who provide an email address related to the gift card drawing will receive notification when the report is posted.

Questions and Approval

If you have questions about the research, its procedures, your rights as a participant, and/or your role in this study we invite you to contact Evan Gravely at evan@brighterspark.ca or Allison Van at allison@brighterspark.ca.