

UNITED in PURPOSE

EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO:



LEAD HEALTHIER LIVES

- Access to fresh, healthy food
- Maternal & infant health supports
- Healthy child development tools
- Mental health & resilience supports



SUCCEED IN SCHOOL AND PREPARE FOR CAREERS

- Quality, affordable child care
- On-level reading and kids' books in homes
- Out-of-school enrichment activities
- Mentoring in business, STEM, college prep



BUILD STRONGER FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS

- Financial coaching
- Support for urgent, basic needs
- Resource connections via our 2-1-1 Infoline
- Volunteer service & tax breaks for seniors
- Asset building & savings programs



UNITED, WE'RE BUILDING COMMUNITIES WHERE EVERYONE CAN THRIVE

Each of us has a stake in our community.

And when all our neighbors are empowered to provide for their families, when all our children succeed in school, when we all have health and a sense of well-being, our communities are safer, stronger, and more prosperous—for all of us.

And yet, more than one in three of us lives paycheck to paycheck, working hard to afford basics like food and housing*, but earning too much to qualify for assistance. In lower income homes, children often read 2-3 levels behind their affluent peers. Life expectancy declines by up to 19 years.

These aren't numbers—they are our neighbors. They live in every one of our towns and cities.

At United Way, we're striving to close these gaps and open opportunities. We aim to empower all our neighbors to:

**LEAD HEALTHIER LIVES
SUCCEED IN SCHOOL AND PREPARE FOR CAREERS
BUILD STRONGER FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS**

But we can't do it alone. We do this **TOGETHER**—with over 200 community partners and generous donors like you, investing in local solutions to critical **local** issues.

Won't you give today?

United, we can build communities where everyone can thrive. P.S. Read on to see the **power of your donation to impact a neighbor's life.**

**United Way calls these neighbors ALICE®—Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed.*



Serving Fairfield & Southern Litchfield Counties
(203) 792-5330
unitedwaycwc.org



United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut

CHALLENGE	DONATION	IMPACT
HEALTHIER LIVES		
<i>I need support for a healthy pregnancy and baby. Care from a doula significantly improves outcomes for moms and babies, especially those of color.</i>	\$115/week (\$5,980)	11 moms receive doula care during and/or after pregnancy
<i>My family needs fresh, healthy food. Fruits and vegetables are essential to health, but high prices are a barrier for many families.</i>	\$75/week (\$3,900)	8 families receive stipends for fresh produce every week for a year
<i>I'm learning to parent my young child, and I need tools to help me. 80% of a child's brain growth happens by age 3; foundations for future learning, behavior and growth are laid early.</i>	\$10/week (\$520)	5 families receive tools to promote and monitor healthy development of infants and toddlers
<i>It's hard to keep my growing kids fed on the weekends. Many children rely on school-served meals for nutrition.</i>	\$5/week (\$260)	6 students received weekend backpacks of food for one month
SCHOOL AND CAREER SUCCESS		
<i>To be able to work, I need quality childcare that I can afford. Licensed, in-home care provides a quality, affordable option.</i>	\$40/week (\$2,080)	2 new child care providers are licensed, creating 12-16 family child care spaces
<i>My child is falling behind in reading. Reading on-level in third grade is linked to high school graduation.</i>	\$30/week (\$1,560)	98 struggling readers in K-2 receive reading skills support
<i>We don't have a lot of books. Books help foster school success, but 2/3 of low-income children have no age-appropriate books at home.</i>	\$15/week (\$780)	3 moms receive reading coaching & books to read with their babies, or 30 students have their own book to read at home
<i>My child needs out-of-school learning opportunities to realize his potential. Enrichment activities improve health, school achievement, and life skills. Families with modest incomes can rarely afford to participate.</i>	\$15/week (\$780)	3 students enroll in an enrichment activity like sports, music, art, or robotics
STRONGER FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS		
<i>The cost of housing keeps going up, so it's harder to balance my budget. Rents have grown by 30%. More than 1 in 5 spends half their income on housing, which leads to instability.</i>	\$50/week (\$2,600)	2 neighbors move from shelters into a safe, stable home, or 43 families receive financial education and counseling
<i>I work hard, but can't make ends meet. 30% of people in Southwest CT struggle to pay bills.</i>	\$20/week (\$1,040)	7 individuals prevent utility shut-offs or get help with overdue bills
<i>I need tax help to access the refund I've earned. Too many can't afford tax prep services (\$300/each) and miss valuable tax refunds and credits.</i>	\$5/week (\$260)	400 families access hard-earned refunds to invest in their future, or to provide a cushion vs. unexpected costs

PROMOTING HEALTH

Healthy Food: Offering \$10 per week of free, fresh produce—because everyone should have access to healthy food. We also support mental health, maternal health, and healthy child development.



FOSTERING SCHOOL READINESS AND SUCCESS

Early Care and Education: Increasing the number of licensed, affordable child care providers who help prepare kids for school while their parents work.



Out-of-School Enrichment: Providing up to \$300 per child to offset the cost of extracurricular activities like sports, arts, music, and robotics. *Why?* Enriched learning builds health, improves academic achievement, and builds life skills, but families with modest incomes often cannot afford these activities.



Early Literacy: Providing reading coaching and books for new parents and families. Funding literacy supports for struggling readers. *Why?* Language and reading skills develop from birth and are linked to high school graduation and career success.



Impact Movements to Improve Outcomes for Kids, from Cradle to Career:

We support 2 impact movements in Bridgeport and Stamford, and we are developing a third movement in Danbury. Currently, these cross-sector partnerships are working on initiatives ranging from maternal health and on-track child development, to STEM enrichment and college enrollment and transition.



BUILDING STRONGER FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS & SUPPORTING BASIC NEEDS

Asset building: We fund financial coaching and savings programs. And we help families keep their hard-earned money through free tax preparation and discounts on RX drugs.



Meeting Urgent Needs: Through 2-1-1, we connect neighbors in need to critical health and human services. And we deploy emergency federal funds for food, rent, utilities, and shelter.



"Thanks to a doula's supports, I played a positive, active role in the birth of my healthy baby."



TIARA, a first time mom, was determined to have a healthy pregnancy and baby. But she was also terribly worried by the statistics for black moms, and by her own hospitalization with Covid early in her pregnancy.

She found doula care through her health center and a community partner, funded by a joint grant with United Way. The doula coached her on self-care, breastfeeding, labor, and delivery. Inspired, informed, and confident, Tiara gave birth to a healthy baby boy. Today, they are both thriving.

INSIGHT Black moms are 3X as likely to die from pregnancy-related deaths as their white peers. Black infants are 2X as likely to die in their first year of life. Doula care improves outcomes.

"You don't know how happy I am to receive this card. I didn't know how I would feed my kids."



DEREK provides for his family of seven by picking up extra shifts at his retail job. Despite working overtime on most days, he finds himself only able to cover the basics they need to survive. To help, he relies on school meals to feed his six children. When his working hours were cut, Derek wondered how he would afford to put food on the table.

Through the United Way's Healthy Savings program, Derek received weekly stipends for fresh, healthy produce. This support helped him decide to buy fresh food at the grocery store and to feed his family well.

INSIGHT 50% of hardworking adults find it a challenge to afford food.

"My dream of a better life is becoming more real every day."



ABIMBOLA enrolled in community college as a path to a brighter future. But he needed a full-time job to support himself, some math tutoring, and a network of friends to thrive.

He found UPLIFT - a program supported by United Way - which offered him academic, social, and financial supports. Today, he has a banking job, an Associate degree, and is bound for UConn to study Finance. He is giving back by mentoring other youth facing challenges.

INSIGHT Men of color graduate from community college at 1/6 the rate of white men in the US. They are more likely to lack sufficient food, stable housing, and mentoring supports.

"It's been a great relief to have my child in such good hands. I trust her 100% to take care of my daughter."



CAROLINE needed care for her child so she could continue to work, support her family, and advance professionally. However, she was distressed by the high cost of quality care.

She found United Way's Cora's Kids initiative. Cora's Kids is a network of providers who receive licensing support, professional development, and start-up supplies. In return, providers charge reasonable rates to working families. There she met Fanny, a trained, licensed, trusted provider who offered more than just affordable care--she provided quality learning activities to promote her daughter's on-track development.

INSIGHT Quality childcare is scarce and expensive, often consuming 30% of a household budget.

"These programs have enriched his life in a big way. Thank you for creating wholesome memories for our family."



KAREN lives with her nine-year old son Don, a special-needs child diagnosed with autism and ADHD. Everyday life can be challenging, but with the help community support and a trained service dog, they lead a fulfilling life.

Thanks to United Way's ALICE Enrichment Fund, Don participated in special-needs Tai Kwon Do and adaptive swimming lessons. Through these enrichment activities, he gained confidence and skills. He can now stay safe around the pool and even swim independently in the deep end.

INSIGHT Enrichment activities improve health, school achievement, and life skills. Families with modest incomes can rarely afford to participate.

"I was astonished by this help. I am very grateful."



PAUL lives in group senior housing in Darien and gets by with a small Social Security check. He has a heart condition. When Covid hit, food prices rose steeply, and his doctor insisted that he protect himself with masks, gloves, wipes, and disinfecting products. These unplanned expenses were too much for his modest income.

A gift card from United Way helped him buy the food, protective gear, and cleaning products to keep himself healthy and safe.

INSIGHT Seniors on fixed incomes struggle to weather unexpected expenses.

"Although I'm just starting out in a new career, I am hopeful for what the future holds."



JAMES lost his job as a forklift driver when his company's warehouse closed. Due to limited computer skills, James did not search for a job online. Instead, he visited job sites in person to ask if they were hiring. He searched for months with no success, draining his savings to get by.

Through a United Way partner, James enrolled in a digital training program where he learned computer skills that expanded his prospects and landed him a job with benefits. He's now working with a budget coach to get his finances back on track and rebuild his savings.

INSIGHT 40% of Americans cannot cover a \$400 emergency expense.

"I'm hopeful for the future—for my family and for other youth who are drowning in their own personal crisis of homelessness."



ELIZA lived in the family car as a child, struggled with depression as a teen, and suffered in an abusive relationship as a young adult. She decided she wanted something better for her one-year old daughter. She fled, with nowhere to go.

With the help of community partners and United Way, Eliza found a home, got a job, transitioned off disability, and returned to college. Her daughter attends a preschool on scholarship. She is paying it forward by advocating for improved policies and services for homeless youth.

INSIGHT On a given night in Fairfield County, over 1,000 youth are homeless or unstably housed.