

How United Way IMPACTS: Health & Wellness

Besides securing resources to fund programs like the ones we talk about in this eNewsletter, our purpose at United Way is to connect the community to issues by bringing people together to create awareness and dialogue. Join us for lunch on Thursday, May 27th at our first Community Issues Lunch Forum, where a panel of United Way partners will discuss issues that affect our community's health and how your support of United Way is improving lives in our community. See below for details & to RSVP!

Building blocks of a good life

A strong economy depends on the good health of its citizens. Businesses retain a vital & productive workforce, attracting new economic growth to the region. Health care costs, and their burden to society, are reduced. But to an individual, good physical & mental health for themselves and their family are even more basic: they are essential building blocks of a good life and peace of mind.

Every day, United Way and its partners are helping to improve the lives of people in our community by providing access to programs and services. Your support of United Way helps to ensure that programs like these are available in our community. With one gift, you give our community a better future.



Poverty. Obesity. Disease. Mental Health.
Intertwined and interrelated. To make an impact in any one area, we have to address all these areas.

Lutheran Social Service: Helping individuals gain control of their finances

The numbers: In 2009, 1,692 financial counseling sessions were provided for budgeting, housing, and bankruptcy counseling; this number is expected to increase to 1,800 sessions in 2010.

The impact: United Way's funding is critical in order to provide financial and housing counseling free of charge and in a timely manner, to prevent the escalation of a client's financial problems. In this faltering economy, providing guidance to clients in crisis who may otherwise make decisions without weighing all of the consequences or knowing all of the facts can be devastating to the individual, their family, and the community.

25% of Mankato residents live below the federal poverty level

Open Door Health Center: Providing healthcare to all

The numbers: In 2009, 2,050 individuals received preventative, restorative, and emergency services at the Open Door Health Center; this number is expected to double in 2010. Nearly 49% of these patients live in poverty and 44% are uninsured.

The impact: United Way's financial support enables ODHC to provide healthcare services to uninsured and underinsured individuals on a sliding fee scale. Without access to these

YOU'RE INVITED!

Community Issues Lunch
Forum:
Our Community's Health

DATE: Thurs., May 27, 2010

TIME: Lunch begins at 11:45;
Program from Noon - 1

LOCATION: BEC Library
Auditorium, 100 E Main St.,
downtown Mankato

Get a closer look as our panel of United Way partners (who are highlighted in this issue of the eNewsletter) dive into issues impacting our community's health and learn why your gift to United Way makes such a difference in our community. [Click here to RSVP.](#)

Lunch will be provided thanks to sponsorship by Subway and Pepsi.

GIVE.

services, many of their clients would be forced to go without healthcare and react to only the most urgent medical problems.

26% of Blue Earth County residents are considered obese

YMCA: Wellness and getting involved

The numbers: In 2009, United Way funding empowered 2,493 individuals and families to get active by providing financial assistance for YMCA memberships; in 2010, this number is expected to increase by 10%.

The impact: Because low-income households are statistically more at risk of obesity, ensuring access to workout facilities and healthy programming like those at the YMCA are an essential part of enabling a healthy lifestyle for those most at-risk. At the YMCA, families, regardless of their economic situation, have a place where they can be together in a safe, welcoming environment, helping to build strong families for our community.

1 in 4 Americans experience a mental disorder each year

Lutheran Social Service: Improving mental health

The numbers: In 2009, LSS provided counseling services to 201 unduplicated clients in greater Mankato and expects that number to increase by 20% in 2010. LSS has been experiencing an increase in the number of clients seeking mental health services who are uninsured or have high deductibles, or whose income level is "too high", to qualify them for other assistance.

The impact: Through counseling, clients have shown that the stressor(s) that brought them to LSS for counseling services have decreased or been eliminated, and indicate an improvement in level of functioning.

[Click here](#) to read one woman's story of her personal struggle, and how LSS helped her change her life.

90% of a child's brain is developed by age 3. Getting involved early is crucial for that child.

First Steps: Getting involved right from the start

The numbers: 80 families took part in the First Step program in Blue Earth County in 2009.

The impact: Home visitors work intensely with first-time, at-risk parents to give them the tools and confidence they need to be successful parents, and to connect them to other community partners that provide services the families need. By helping to mitigate and decrease risk factors that correlate to child maltreatment and children not being ready for kindergarten, the First Steps program helps to break a cycle to give at-risk children a better chance at a healthy, successful life.



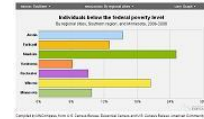
United Way's 2-1-1 line is a free, confidential resource referral

line that helps connect people to local services they need, from childcare to housing to counseling to employment.

ADVOCATE.

MNcompass.org

When you click on the words Poverty, Obesity, or



Disease in the red box above, you'll automatically be linked to a related chart, thanks to data gathered by MN Compass. This website has a wealth of information that we are able to utilize in our work to unite our community around issues at the local level. Take a look!

VOLUNTEER.



LIVE UNITED.