

LIVE UNITED

LIVE UNITE

STRATEGIC PLAN

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

**United Way
of Snohomish County**

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LIVE UNITED

**United
Way**



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

We live in an incredibly prosperous and caring community, yet many of our neighbors are at risk of never truly escaping poverty. More than 10% of all people in Snohomish County fall below the Federal Poverty Level and, for children, this number is even higher. But the Federal Poverty Level doesn't tell the whole story about hardship in our community. When factoring in those on the edge, **1/3 of households in Snohomish County are struggling to make ends meet.**

MISSION

We transform lives by bringing people, resources and strategy together to solve our community's toughest challenges.

OUR VISION

We envision a community where opportunity is not limited by poverty.

OUR APPROACH

United Way is partnering with the community in new ways to help rewrite the story for individuals and families today and build a solid foundation for their future success. We believe the power of community can help individuals and families find pathways out of poverty, but the only way we can accomplish this is by all working together with common goals.

Real, measurable change—change that impacts root causes and redirects future outcomes—requires time, financial resources and system coordination.

United Way remains fiercely committed to collective efforts and has aligned its strategic plan to identify activities that support the broader community work. We invest in solutions for both chronic and situational poverty. Chronic poverty is long term and can impact both families and individuals, leaving them ill equipped to ever move out of poverty. Situational poverty is generally caused by a sudden crisis and is often temporary.

While there are no quick fixes to break the cycle of poverty, by bringing people, resources and strategy together, we can dramatically reduce the impact of poverty in Snohomish County.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

GOAL #1: EDUCATION



LONG-TERM GOAL

Increase the number of 3rd grade students that meet grade standards to 80%.

30% OF INVESTABLE DOLLARS

FOCUS AREAS 2016-2020

Early learning, kindergarten transition and alignment between preschool and K-12.

GOAL #2: INCOME



LONG-TERM GOAL

Cut in half the number of households struggling to make ends meet.

30% OF INVESTABLE DOLLARS

FOCUS AREAS 2016-2020

Household income, employment supports (childcare and transportation) and financial education.

SUPPORT #1: BASIC NEEDS



30% OF INVESTABLE DOLLARS

Basic needs must be met to help individuals and families move beyond immediate needs. We are focused on housing, food, health, income supports like tax credits and public benefits.

SUPPORT #2: SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE



10% OF INVESTABLE DOLLARS

Examples of infrastructure strategies could include 2-1-1, Coordinated Entry, Food Bank Coalition, Everett Streets Initiative, Live Healthy 2020, Project Homeless Connect, etc.

COMMUNITY-LEVEL GOAL #1

INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR CHILDREN

Poverty is associated with a number of adverse conditions that have strong impacts on educational success, including high mobility, homelessness, hunger and food insecurity. Education and income inequality are strongly tied; creating a pathway for school success helps ensure a brighter economic future for children.

LONG-TERM GOAL

Increase the number of low-income 3rd-grade students meeting grade standards in English Language Arts (ELA) from 40% to 80% and in math from 42% to 80%.

2016-2020 INVESTMENT PERIOD

Our comprehensive strategy is focused on supporting low-income children, their families, early learning professionals and the community with the intermediate goal of increasing the percentage of low-income children ready for kindergarten. We will continue to develop our strategy and resource support for the continuum of birth-3rd grade over the next ten years.

OUR APPROACH

United Way supports children birth-3rd grade through programs, services and advocacy efforts that provide early learning opportunities and improve reading and math scores.



COMMUNITY-LEVEL GOAL #2

INCREASE INCOME TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF STRUGGLING HOUSEHOLDS

Increased income is essential to help struggling households make ends meet and create a foundation for a prosperous future. Family-sustaining employment is the foundation of financial stability. It is critical to connect youth and adult earners to education and work experience opportunities.

LONG-TERM GOAL

Increase income to reduce the number of struggling households (60,000 to 30,000).

2016-2020 INVESTMENT PERIOD

We will focus on supporting low-income adults and youth to improve their employability and maximize eligible benefit income. We will continue to develop our strategy and resource support for these efforts over the next ten years.

OUR APPROACH

United Way recognizes that increased income is essential to help struggling households make ends meet and create a foundation for a prosperous future. We will invest in and advocate for strategies that increase household income through employment readiness services, employment supports (childcare and transportation) and financial education.



COMMUNITY-LEVEL SUPPORT #1

PROVIDE BASIC NEEDS TO STABILIZE INDIVIDUALS TO PREVENT FURTHER CRISES

Access to safe shelter, adequate health care options and nutritious food create the cornerstones for quality of life. Too many households are stuck choosing between rent and food or electricity and medications. Having those basic necessities met allows individuals and families the energy to think about the future, plan for emergencies and simply enjoy everyday life.

OUR GOAL

Hold steady the number of households that are stabilized to prevent further crises.

OUR APPROACH

United Way will work with partners and other funders in the community to identify service gaps and how best to address them, whether through funding, partnerships, or advocacy. We will invest in and advocate for strategies that help individuals and families meet their basic needs. Areas could include shelter/housing/utilities, health and food assistance.



COMMUNITY-LEVEL SUPPORT #2

SUPPORT SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE TO DELIVER CRITICAL HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Infrastructure to support the delivery of human services is a critical component to any community's efforts to address poverty. Systems-level coordination allows organizations to most effectively and efficiently deploy resources to meet community needs.

OUR GOAL

Maintain a strong delivery system infrastructure.

OUR APPROACH

Multiple assistance programs serve the same people, but it can be difficult to coordinate systems or programs due to differences in eligibility, target population or focus. United Way invests in and advocates for system-level service coordination efforts that reduce redundancies and increase efficiencies.



DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

ENGAGEMENT

Each year we partner with individuals and organizations to drive change. We are implementing goals and benchmarks to track this change, because it will take all of us to break the cycle of poverty. We will increase giving and volunteerism by building lasting relationships and year-round engagement.

GOALS

INCREASE DONOR RETENTION RATE

72% ▶ 75%

INCREASE NUMBER OF NEW DONORS

10% Annually

FROM A 3-YEAR AVERAGE OF 1,427

- Increase number of campaigns using continuous giving by 20%.

BUILD EMERGING LEADERS AFFINITY GROUP THAT FOCUSES ON VOLUNTEERISM

VOLUNTEER



STRATEGIES

INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDING DONORS & VOLUNTEERS

- Create volunteer opportunities aligned with our focus.



- Build workforce volunteer program that strengthens relationships with companies and their employees.
- Identify and create giving opportunities for new businesses, organizations and associations.



BRAND

As United Way has grown from being a transactional fundraising organization to an organization focused on solving our community's toughest challenges, our messaging has become complicated. We have positive visibility in the community, with more than 90% of our community aware of who we are. Outside of the workplace, where our presence is less strong, there is less clarity about what we do, exactly. This confusion is directly impacting our ability to support critical services in community. Fewer people are considering United Way for donating their resources, volunteering their time or lending their voice through advocacy. By clearly communicating who we are, what we do, why it matters and what impact we are having on our community, we will build a trusted brand across generations of donors.

GOALS

INCREASE INDIVIDUALS WHO SEE US AS THEIR CHARITY OF CHOICE

26% ▶ 75%

INCREASE DONORS THAT SEE US AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE AND TRUSTWORTHY

67% ▶ 80%

INCREASE AWARENESS OF UNITED WAY'S NEW FOCUS



STRATEGIES

INCREASE PARTNERSHIPS WITH BUSINESSES AND NONPROFITS



- Develop messaging that explains our focus and shows why United Way is trustworthy and capable.
- Create events that clearly explain the new focus and engage with donors.
- Engage with donors, volunteers and the community-at-large on an individual basis through more engaging and effective channels including social media, video, online targeted advertising, events, general awareness advertising, newsletters and email marketing.



STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEWED BY

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