

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT UNITED WAY

More information is available on our website at www.unitedwaymc.org

Imagine if...

- You are 8 months old and no one pays any attention to you while you sit in a car seat all day.
- You are 3 years old and you've never seen a book.
- You are 10 years old and your parents are never home to help and support you.
- You go home and there is no food in the cupboard, you have \$3 in your wallet and 2 young kids to care for, and you're worried about being evicted or having your utilities cut off.
- You are afraid for your safety when you go home because you've been hit many times and your life has been threatened.

Why should I give to United Way of Marathon County?

Because you can help us find solutions to community problems and decrease situations like those listed above. These situations happen far too often in our communities... and that's why we need your help. No single agency can solve these issues. By bringing together people and organizations who have the passion and expertise, United Way can make lasting change in our community on these issues.

We are focusing on the building blocks for a good life:

Education – focus of early childhood development and helping at risk youth

Income – helping families be financial stable and have food and shelter

Health – support for victims of abuse and other mental health wellness issues

Through United Way you can count on your gift being invested locally in programs that offer solutions, accountability and results.

Doesn't United Way just raise funds for local agencies? United Way does invest community dollars in programs at about 30 local agencies. It spends community money just like you spend yours, carefully and wisely. United Way focuses resources where they can do the most good. These agencies are important partners in working together to solve community problems.

What are United Way's administrative costs?

When you give a dollar, 86 cents goes directly to community programs which are held accountable and address the priority areas. The United Way Board of Directors is concerned about keeping costs low and our costs are well below the Better Business Bureau recommendation of 30%.

Does my contribution stay in Marathon County and what if I don't live in Wausau?

Dollars raised here stay here and funding decisions are also made locally. United Way funded programs serve an estimated one in four people throughout Marathon County. You might be surprised to learn how many people in rural Marathon County have benefited from a United Way program. Check out "United Way in Your Community" to see which United Way programs benefit your community.

Can I designate my gift to a specific program or to another United Way?

Yes, if your gift is at least \$50 annually, fill in the optional section of the pledge form. Your full gift to another United Way will be sent with no administrative fee. When you request that your donation go to a specific program, it goes there. United Way has always honored all program designations as the first dollars the program receives towards its United Way grant, and increased grants when the designations exceed the grant amount. However, it has the explicit authority to redirect these gifts if necessary. Please see 2011 Program Directory for a complete listing.

I know many people I work with have tight budgets, how can we expect them to give?

Some of the most generous givers are those who've experienced tough times. Everyone should be given an opportunity to help others. In these economic times, clearly there are others facing more desperate situations. Giving through payroll deduction is easy, and even a small amount each pay period makes a difference.

What is United Way's Summit League program?

The Summit League is a group of people giving a leadership gift of \$600 or more. These gifts, when combined, represent more than 35% of the total dollars raised.

What's different about United Way, isn't it better to just give directly to an agency?

There are many things we do as individuals to make a difference, like volunteering or giving to a favorite cause. When you give to United Way, you provide funding to a number of organizations that are working on the most pressing issues in our community. None of them could address the issues alone—the strength is in the collaboration. The value of United Way is that together we can do so much more to create lasting change.

Do programs serve mostly minorities?

United Way funded programs have criteria to provide equal access to people in need. As best we can determine, the percent of minorities served is equal to their percent of the population.

Why does United Way provide services like 2-1-1 and Volunteer Connection and keep some of the funds it raises?

United Way provides these core support services because it's cost effective and the programs contribute to United Way's mission. These programs streamline solutions, build alliances and gather data about needs. The programs go through the same accountability process as all funded programs and represent less than 10% of funds raised. United Way's 2-1-1, formerly First Call, has been a core service of United Way for 20 years. Volunteer Connection has been housed at United Way for 4 years and during that time there has been an estimated savings of over \$300,000 because of efficiencies. These services help United Way respond to needs and limit duplication.

I know someone who needs help, should I have them call United Way?

United Way does not provide direct services to individuals in need, but can connect people to organizations that can help. Individuals should call United Way's 2-1-1 a free, confidential, 24/7 information and referral phone line that can help with all types of assistance and needs.

What about funding to the YMCA and Boy Scouts? The YMCA has chosen NOT to apply for funds for 2011. The Boy Scouts are receiving funds for programs for at-risk youth.

Does United Way fund Planned Parenthood or abortions?

United Way of Marathon County does not fund abortions or Planned Parenthood. Each United Way is independently governed and makes decisions based on the needs of the local community

How can I get involved with United Way?

There are many ways for you to get more involved in caring about your community.

- If you are a young professional, consider joining United Way Emerging Leaders. There are now over 100 adults (generally under age 40) who gather to do volunteer projects, network, and learn more about leadership and their community.
- If you want to get directly involved in helping women become financially secure, United Way Women In Action might be for you. Women in Action raise funds from members and events and those funds are distributed directly to projects they care about.
- If you are 55+, consider volunteering with United Way RSVP program.
- And, if you want to join a United Way committee or be an office volunteer, just call or email the United Way office at 715-848-2927 or email uway@unitedwaymc.org.
- And last of all, volunteer opportunities for many community organizations are listed through United Way Volunteer Connection.

What is LIVE UNITED? It takes the entire community to make a difference. No single shelter, food pantry or child care center alone can solve the challenges we face. We need **you** to LIVE UNITED and be part of the change. Together, we can inspire hope and create opportunities for a better tomorrow. It's more than a T-shirt—it's a way of life, and we're inviting you to join the team and help make our community an even better place to live and work. We encourage you to not just wear the shirt, but LIVE it – Give, Advocate, Volunteer.