

# JOIN US IN LEADING THE WAY

Your gift helps fuel United Way's community movement in 'Leading the Way' to opportunities for children to succeed. Whether you get involved, give back financially, or take action, you ensure that every child enters kindergarten ready to read and has the tools they need to graduate high school.



## GET INVOLVED.

Change doesn't happen alone! Volunteers transform communities. We make it easy and fun for individuals and groups to make a meaningful difference in our community. Visit [wevolunteer.org](http://wevolunteer.org) to see what volunteer opportunities are available!



## GIVE BACK.

Your generosity, combined with that of many others, helps to create real, lasting change in our community. Your donations support programs that are closely monitored to ensure they are effective, meet current community needs, and are financially stable and sustainable.



## TAKE ACTION.

Your voice is powerful. Use the power of your network to spread the word about the work that UWRRV is doing in our community.

**United Way**  
Rock River Valley



612 North Main Street, Suite 300  
Rockford, IL 61103

[www.unitedwayrrv.org](http://www.unitedwayrrv.org)  
[www.unitedforliteracy.info](http://www.unitedforliteracy.info)



United Way of Rock River Valley is one of the most efficient fundraising organizations in the country. We have been recognized nationally and locally for a high rate of efficiency and fiscal accountability.



# UNITED WAY. LEADING THE WAY.



## OUR MISSION

To unite the collective power of the community to improve lives.

## SECURING A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

United Way of Rock River Valley (UWRRV) mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive.

With more than a century of community collaboration and experience, we see how our communities' most significant challenges are connected – and how to bring people and resources together to address them.

United Way is always listening and ready to respond. Working together with our neighbors, we're strengthening local resilience, youth opportunity, and financial security for all.

Every day, our communities show that change is possible when people unite to take action. Together, we're creating a future where everyone, everywhere, can reach their full potential.

## HOW UNITED WAY WORKS



# AREAS OF IMPACT

## YOUTH OPPORTUNITY

Helping young people realize their full potential.

Literacy lays the foundation for lifelong learning, critical thinking, and academic success. Reading well early on is linked to better grades, higher graduation chances, career advancement, and long-term financial security. However, significant gaps exist in access to becoming literate, especially for our children in Winnebago County communities.

NEARLY  
**12,500**  
OF 17,500 CHILDREN  
0-5 IN WINNEBAGO  
COUNTY LIVE AT  
**200%**  
FEDERAL  
POVERTY LEVEL

**1 BOOK**  
IS AVAILABLE  
FOR EVERY  
**300**  
**CHILDREN**  
IN LOW  
INCOME HOMES

**\$30**  
PROVIDES  
**6 BOOKS**  
TO  
**ONE CHILD**  
IN  
WINNEBAGO COUNTY



UWRRV's primary focus is increasing childhood literacy rates in Winnebago County and ensuring every child enters kindergarten ready to read. Research indicates that reading below the expected level in third grade is highly linked to future academic challenges and dropout, incarceration, and poverty rates. Only one in three public school children in our county read at grade level by third grade.

United for Literacy partners with organizations and agencies and invests in programs for children, parents/guardians, and the community. This allows us to systematically increase access to resources to help families learn and grow together.

**OUR BOLD GOAL. FOR 75% OF THIRD-GRADE STUDENTS IN WINNEBAGO COUNTY TO READ AT GRADE LEVEL OR ABOVE BY 2034.**

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Addressing urgent needs today for a better tomorrow

### 211 Helpline - 24 hour free call/text line

When facing a crisis, individuals and families need immediate access to reliable services and resources to meet their most urgent needs. Winnebago County's 211 helpline, supported by UWRRV, is a critical resource that connects thousands of people to trained specialists offering help with crisis and emergency counseling, disaster assistance, food, health care and insurance, stable housing and utility assistance, employment services, veteran services, and childcare and family services.

### Strong Neighborhoods

Through collaborative partnerships with other local impact organizations, we provide a pathway for community residents to gain support through the programs and services offered in our Strong Neighborhood Houses.



### House locations:

#### 8th Avenue Strong Neighborhood House

908 8th Avenue, Rockford

#### Irving Avenue Strong Neighborhood House

312 Irving Avenue Rockford

#### Marie Avenue Strong Neighborhood House

825 Marie Avenue Machesney Park

## FINANCIAL SECURITY

Together, we can meet people's most basic needs and create a stronger financial future for every generation

### Emergency Food & Shelter Grant Program

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) is a federal program that helps meet the needs of America's hungry and homeless and allocates funds to provide shelter, food, and homeless prevention services, including rent/mortgage and utility assistance. United Way is proud to be the administrator of the EFSP board for Winnebago County, which is made up of social service agencies, government, and community members, and determines how funds are locally allocated.

