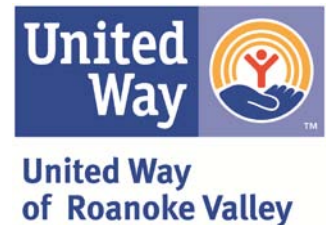


# United Way of Roanoke Valley GENERAL FUNDING PRIORITIES



## EDUCATION<sup>1</sup>

### I. Early Childhood Education

#### **Vision Statement:**

Young children in the Roanoke Valley will achieve the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development necessary to enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed in school.

#### **Goal:**

Increase the number of children aged 0-5 in the Roanoke Valley that arrive prepared for the first day of kindergarten as determined by tangible measurement tools.<sup>2</sup>

**Long-term outcome 1:** Parents of children 0-5 are able to access affordable quality out-of-home care and education for their children.

**Community Change:** Increase the quality of childcare utilized by families with young children.

#### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support programs that provide ongoing early childhood education training for pre-school teachers and childcare providers in key areas needed to stimulate age-appropriate growth and development of young children.
- Support programs that provide quality improvement support services crucial to raising and sustaining the quality of child care being provided at various settings.
- Support efforts that equip early childhood professionals and parents to help children transition from preschool to kindergarten.

**Community Change:** Expand affordable opportunities for parents to obtain quality childcare.

#### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support programs that provide affordable access to quality early care and education for families and allow parents to gain or retain employment through a combination of financial support and/or knowledge of various resources in the community.

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<sup>1</sup> General Education funding priorities have been edited to reflect input from the Education team meetings and ensure consistency with the outcomes with the more targeted initiatives.

<sup>2</sup> Note: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) and Brigance Developmental Screening will be used as the primary measurement tools, with others possibly used as well.

**Long-term outcome 2:** Parents of children 0-5 become more committed, confident and skilled in helping their children be prepared for school.

**Community Change:** Develop and implement a public awareness and engagement plan that will help parents become more committed, confident and skilled in helping their children be prepared for school.

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support programs that enhance parents' ability and engage them in supporting the age-appropriate cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of young children.
- Utilize parent education programs and other points of contact with the family as a means to increase parental knowledge on how to prepare children for school starting at an early age.
- Support early intervention services that create a healthy beginning for young children.

**Long-term outcome 3:** Community leaders and the public understand the cost and benefits of, and actively support, early childhood care and education both from the social service and economic development standpoints.

**Community change:** Public and private partners collaborate to adopt and implement a comprehensive, high quality approach to school readiness for children 0-5 in the Roanoke Valley.

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Engage in a sustained public awareness and education campaign on the importance of investing early that will mobilize parents, caregivers, community, and business leaders to support early childhood education efforts in the area.
- Support efforts to achieve agreement in the community regarding common outcomes for school readiness that are broader than and/or cut across goals of specific providers.
- Create financial and other incentives for collaboration in adopting and implementing a comprehensive high quality approach to school readiness.
- Encourage businesses to develop family-friendly policies and practices related to school readiness.

## II. High School Graduation

### **Vision Statement:**

Children in the Roanoke Valley will have the tools, resources and support they need to be successful in school and be college and/or workforce-ready.

### **Goal:**

Contribute to the statistically significant improvement of the graduation rates within Roanoke Valley by enabling students and their families to be better prepared to take advantage of the opportunities provided by public education.

**Long –term outcome 1:** Students are able to read and comprehend by the end of third grade.

**Community change:** Parents and families of children provide greater support for their children to learn to read.

#### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Engage in a public awareness and education campaign to improve parent understanding of the importance of their children having good reading skills and how they can assist their children in obtaining those skills.
- Encourage and support collaborations among existing programs that help parents develop better skills to assist their children to read.

**Community change:** Greater coordination among community resources engaged in helping children to read and comprehend by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

#### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Encourage and support collaborations among schools, community institutions, parents and volunteers that help children in to read.

**Long –term outcome 2:** Students are connected with help that they need to stay in school beginning at an early age.

**Community change:** Support research and/or evidence-based programs working with school-age children and their families that help youth succeed in school.

#### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Ensure the availability of quality before- and after-school care for school-aged children and youth that emphasizes character development and academic performance.
- Support early drop-out prevention efforts targeting elementary school-aged children and continue pursuing drop-out prevention efforts among middle and high school-aged children.
- Support collaborative approaches that build external and internal assets in youth and prevent risky behavior.

**Community change:** Roanoke Valley youth are matched with caring volunteers who establish ongoing, supportive relationships as mentors, tutors, or in other roles.

#### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support efforts to develop an integrated system to find, recruit, match, train and manage volunteers to serve as tutors and mentors to children in the Roanoke Valley, and provide early and ongoing support to students who need relationships and support.
- Support programs that help establish long-term relationships between youth and caring adults who can offer direction and guidance.

**Community change:** Parents and family members of students in the Roanoke valley actively support children's education and help connect their children with appropriate support services.

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Encourage collaboration among existing programs that help equip parents with information and tools with which to support their children's education.
- Develop and implement a public awareness campaign that emphasizes the value of graduating from high school to success in life and the benefits of connecting children to appropriate support services, including adult mentors.
- Encourage employers to adopt family-friendly policies and practices that enable parents to participate in teacher conferences and other school functions and are supportive of student success.

# **INCOME**

## **Vision:**

Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley become economically stable through understanding their financial needs as well as maximizing and managing income and other resources toward greater self-sufficiency.

## **Goal:**

Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley have improved economic self-sufficiency through improved employment and other economic opportunities, sound financial management of their own resources and through access to important support services.

**Long-term Outcome 1:** Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley have effective access to employment and other economic opportunities

**Community Change:** Improve the quality and coordination of programs that train and connect residents to existing jobs.

### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support research of best practices in other communities to develop practical model for Roanoke Valley.
- Support mapping of existing resources for training, counseling and placement.
- Work with other funders to encourage and support collaborations that effectively connect residents seeking employment to sources that have identified specific current job opportunities.

**Community Change:** Encourage and support micro-enterprise training and creation.

### **Proposed United Way strategy:**

- Fund efforts to develop and expand programs that encourage and support micro-enterprise training and creation.

**Long-term Outcome 2:** Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley increase their ability to manage personal finances effectively.

**Community Change:** Coordinated, ongoing education program to help people understand how to manage their finances more effectively, and utilize resources in the community to help them do so.

### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Work with others in the community to identify criteria and standards for quality financial literacy programs to insure both quality and consistency in those programs, including customized programs for different constituencies, circumstances and life events.
  - Conduct research – federal reserve, etc.
- Identify and evaluate existing resources, utilizing those standards in making funding decisions
  - Comprehensive list of resources – including less formal resources, such as service providers who currently or could provide financial literacy training.

- Provide support for a coordinated program to educate residents to manage finances. For example:
  - Utilize grassroots resources - Peer-to-peer, trusted community leaders, churches, community organizations, etc.
  - Early education utilizing programs working with children
  - Targeted to employed as well as unemployed residents
  - Encourage employers to provide employees access to financial literacy training.
  - Customized to reach different populations
  - Possibly identify entry opportunities in terms of "life events" (age, personal financial crises, etc.)
  - City, banks and community organizations working together
  - Include education on credit cards, exploiting lending practices
  - Identify success stories, mentors, role models
  - Encourage funded agencies to participate in financial literacy program
  - Consider supporting efforts to require direct deposit of benefit program proceeds

The coordinated program should be customized to reach different populations utilizing peer-to-peer approaches, employer programs for their employees, and other innovative methods.

**Long-term Outcome 3:** Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley have effective access to support systems that help them become more self-sufficient.

**Community Change:** Community institutions work cooperatively to help stabilize individuals and families during crises, meet their basic needs and help them move to self-sufficiency

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support services that assist individuals and families in acute crises to access services that help meet their basic needs and stabilize their situation through housing, support services and case management.
  - Includes support services that prevent homelessness by reducing the occurrence of evictions, disconnected utilities
- Support comprehensive services that guide individuals and families towards self-sufficiency by enhancing coordination among service providers, bridging of services and case management.
- Increase community access to information and resources that can assist families by focusing on innovative strategies that encourage coordination of a variety of organizations that support the ability of families to meet their basic needs.
- Support programs that allow caregivers of aging family members to seek or maintain employment by accessing quality, affordable adult day care services.
- Support opportunities for persons with disabilities to gain employment and increase their independence.

# HEALTH

**Vision:** All people in the greater Roanoke Valley community work together to value and pursue health and wellness contributing to a Healthy Roanoke.

**Ultimate Goal:** Greater Roanoke Valley residents become healthier as regularly measured by broadly understood and accepted key health indicators.

**Long-term Outcome #1:** All people in the greater Roanoke Valley have the opportunity to pursue and promote health and wellness through their lifestyle choices, appropriate utilization of healthcare resources and support for others.

**Community Change:** Community institutions and individuals are working cooperatively to educate people in the Roanoke Valley to improve knowledge about the benefits of good lifestyle choices and to utilize appropriate healthcare resources.

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support identification of specific key indicators to measure health status for residents in Roanoke Valley.
- Identify strategies to support and sustain a process for regularly updating a comprehensive community health assessment, and for convening meetings for sharing information on community health issues and for identifying priorities for action.
- Support identification of the specific knowledge that the public needs to enable appropriate choices
- Support and endorse interactive educational programs that will lead to increased knowledge and awareness of the following:
  - utilization of healthcare resources and assist the public in understanding:
    - the appropriate site of care for their condition, and how to effectively access that care
    - appropriate use of drugs for their condition
    - appropriate use of technology for their condition
    - the patient role in healthcare decision making
  - the components and benefits of a healthy lifestyle
  - the components and benefits of preventive care
  - the dangers and consequences of risk taking behaviors

Educational efforts should be collaborative, customized to reach specific population segments, with diverse delivery methods (such as worksites, faith based communities, peer-to-peer communication, etc.)

**Long-term Outcome #2:** The greater Roanoke Valley community provides accessible and affordable healthcare and an environment that promotes health.

**Community Change:** Community institutions and individuals in the Roanoke Valley collaborate to make affordable healthcare more accessible.

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support targeted efforts to provide and expand appropriate access to effective healthcare utilizing evidence-based methods to address documented barriers to access.
- Encourage increased collaboration and cooperation among healthcare providers through periodic meetings for improving access to affordable health care and an environment that promotes health (see above information sharing meetings).
- Support practical local efforts to reduce out-of-pocket costs for healthcare for the uninsured and under-insured, particularly those with a focus on preventive care.
  - One example is promotion of prescription discount cards

- Support efforts to maximize utilization of existing opportunities to reduce healthcare costs.
- Encourage innovative collaborative approaches that allow people to access a wide-range of services that are needed to improve their health and well-being.
- Support programs that provide coordinated case management.

**Community Change:** Continue to support effective services that make affordable healthcare more accessible to people.

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support and expand services for individuals diagnosed with mental health issues to access counseling and treatment services as well as prescriptions that promote their mental well-being
- Support follow-up services for individuals and families who have been diagnosed with health conditions and illnesses requiring regular care and maintenance.
- Provide affordable counseling and support services that help children, youth and families improve relationships and prevent or reduce incidences of family violence (e.g. spousal, partner, elder, and child abuse).
- Provide opportunities for caregivers to increase their knowledge of ways to care for those who are aging, have disabilities and/or serious health issues and how to utilize the community resources available to meet their special needs.
- Assist and support nonprofessional caregivers of individuals who are aging, have disabilities and/or serious health issues

**Community Change:** Community institutions and individuals work cooperatively to provide an environment that promotes health and wellness.

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support efforts to identify strategies to create a culture of wellness in the Roanoke Valley
- Work with the business community, as well as public and nonprofit sectors to create a culture of wellness and expand access to services and programs that support a healthy lifestyle.
  - Possible approaches include encouraging employers to adopt policies that support healthy lifestyles for their employees, recognizing employers who adopt such policies and support of public policy changes.
- Work with government to incorporate healthy lifestyle considerations into infrastructure investments
- Encourage programs funded by United Way to incorporate healthy lifestyle activities into their programs.
- Promote volunteerism to support healthy lifestyle activities of community members.
- Increase collaboration among local funders to support health related issues in the Roanoke Valley

**Long-term Outcome #3:** Residents of Roanoke Valley receive the crisis and intervention services necessary for their health and wellness.

**Community Change/Intermediate Outcome:** Community institutions work cooperatively to assist individuals and families experiencing a crisis related to physical and mental health.

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support services for those struggling with substance abuse issues to overcome their addiction and become self-sufficient members of society.
- Support services for those in crisis due to an untreated or undertreated mental health problem.
- Support programs that assist individuals to develop resiliency, learn coping skills and strengthen their connections within their community to help them adapt to daily stresses.
- Support strategies that build healthy home environments for individuals and families such as those preventing incidences of domestic abuse.
- Support programs that increase access to affordable and nutritious food for individuals and families in the Roanoke Valley.
- Assist in meeting basic needs such as food, shelter and addressing personal care and healthcare needs of older adults.