

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### **What is United Way?**

United Way is a local movement of volunteers, advocates, partners, and donors committed to advancing the common good by mobilizing our community around education, income, and health. Together we are ensuring youth enter and graduate from school prepared for work and life, families are achieving financial stability and independence, and individuals are healthy and have adequate access to health care services. United Way's focus is on the building blocks for a good quality of life to ensure society will continue to progress and our children will have a better future.

### **What is the role of United Way in our community?**

United Way advances the common good by creating opportunities for a better life for all. Our focus is on education, income, and health, because these are the building blocks for a good quality of life. United Way is a unique convener recruiting people and organizations across the community who bring passion, expertise, and resources needed to get things done. Because we can't do it alone. It takes the whole community working together to create real, positive change. And, there's a lot a community can do to be part of that change. You can give your money, your voice, and your time to get things done. Because we all benefit when kids graduate, families are financially stable, and people are healthy. These benefits ripple out to the whole community.

Your local United Way staff works in partnership with knowledgeable, trained volunteers representing the diversity of our community. A volunteer Board of Trustees sets policy and strategic direction. Various committees make program-funding recommendations, oversee financial practices, and provide guidance on operational issues. Our volunteer network is the key reason our administrative and fundraising costs are among the lowest of any charity, and why more of your contribution goes directly to helping people.

### **Who does United Way of Greater Toledo serve?**

In Lucas, Wood, and Ottawa counties, United Way serves people who need help, want to volunteer, need assistance from organized labor, or want to help. Although program funding is determined by local volunteers and may differ from county to county, your United Way is committed to helping ensure every person has access to the building blocks for a good life:

- Education – preparing children to enter and graduate from school
- Income – promoting financial stability
- Health – improving people's health and wellness

### **Why should I give to United Way vs. another charity?**

When you give to a specific charity, you support a local organization and its purpose. When you give to United Way, your gift becomes part of a collective effort. These initiatives are held accountable and proven to make the biggest impact through the *United Way Agenda for Change*, measuring progress through successful outcome measurements. United Way has the invaluable ability to convene strategic partners who are passionate about improving people's lives and strengthening our entire community. Your gift to United Way allows you to accomplish more than you can alone or through a single charity.

Although undesignated gifts to the *United Way Agenda for Change* are the best way to create the most impact, you have the opportunity to choose how your contribution is invested by designating your gift to any local health and human service nonprofit 501(c)(3) or another United Way. Designating your gift through United Way allows you the convenience of payroll deduction. In addition, United Way's administrative costs are at 15 percent—well below the national recommendation of 35 percent from the Better Business Bureau and many other nonprofits.

### **Who benefits from my United Way gift?**

When you support United Way, our entire community is strengthened because more children are succeeding in school and staying away from dangerous activities; more families are able to find affordable, stable housing; more people have access to healthy choices; and more opportunities are available in our community.

You or a family member may have already used a United Way-supported program without realizing it. In fact, people from all backgrounds benefit from United Way collaborations, like disaster services, scouting programs,

youth mentoring programs, food and shelter assistance, out-of-school activities, tutoring, and many more services provided by United Way-funded programs and collaborations.

**Who determines how contributions to United Way are spent?**

Knowledgeable, trained volunteers from across our community – people much like yourself – carefully evaluate and select the programs and initiatives to receive funding. These programs are funded by your United Way contribution and must meet outcome measurements. (In order to be eligible for United Way funding, programs must help the community achieve the goals in the *Agenda for Change*, provide health and human services, and be locally operated with 501(c)(3) status.) The recommendations for funding are then reviewed and approved by United Way’s Board of Trustees. After selection, these programs are closely monitored to make sure they produce positive, measurable results.

**How much of my gift is used for overhead?**

Fifteen cents of each dollar raised by our United Way is used for fundraising and administration costs. It is our commitment that all gifts to United Way are invested wisely in programs improving lives in our community.

In fact, Charity Navigator, America’s premier charity evaluator, awarded United Way of Greater Toledo with a three-star rating for sound fiscal management.

**Is my gift tax deductible?**

United Way of Greater Toledo is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) eligible to receive tax deductible gifts. You should discuss the tax deductibility of your gift with a tax professional. Please keep a copy of your United Way gift or pledge card for your tax records.

**How is my local United Way related to United Way Worldwide and other United Ways?**

United Way Worldwide (UWW) is the global organization dedicated to leading the United Way movement. UWW provides support to more than 1,300 local United Ways through guidance, training, development, research, and national advertising. However, UWW has no input on how a local United Way invests community contributions. Your gift to United Way is autonomous and stays local helping people in our community.

In exchange for UWW’s services, United Way of Greater Toledo makes an annual payment to UWW that is equal to one percent of the dollars raised annually. This is paid by earnings on and contributions to an endowment-like fund known as the Board Designated Fund. No donor dollars contribute to UWW annual fees.

**How can I become more engaged with United Way?**

Every day ordinary people are accomplishing extraordinary things by giving, advocating, and volunteering. Running a United Way workplace campaign is a great way to get more involved through giving, inspire your co-workers to become engaged with United Way, and to make a big impact in our community. Visit [www.unitedwaytoledo.org/give](http://www.unitedwaytoledo.org/give) to learn more or to give.

The United Way *Volunteer Center* connects volunteers to projects in our community to meet local needs and create lasting change in education, income, and health. From tutoring opportunities to joining a local nonprofit board, we have hundreds of volunteer opportunities available. To view local volunteer opportunities that fit your interests, schedule, and location, visit our website at [www.unitedwaytoledo.org/volunteer](http://www.unitedwaytoledo.org/volunteer), email [volunteer@unitedwaytoledo.org](mailto:volunteer@unitedwaytoledo.org), or simply dial 2-1-1.

In addition, you can advocate for the causes that matter to you most. To view United Way’s most significant issues and lend your voice, visit [www.unitedwaytoledo.org/advocate](http://www.unitedwaytoledo.org/advocate). To receive regular updates on opportunities to lend your voice, sign up for action alerts at [www.unitedwaytoledo.org/advocate/takeaction](http://www.unitedwaytoledo.org/advocate/takeaction).

**How can I get help for someone I know?**

By simply dialing 2-1-1 anyone can be connected 24 hours a day, seven days a week to community resources for basic needs. Staffed by trained specialists, this free, confidential, bilingual, and anonymous helpline is made possible through contributions to United Way. United Way 2-1-1 gets people connected to resources that can improve their lives in both the short term and long term.