

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### *What is United Way?*

United Way is much more than a fundraising organization. United Way is a volunteer organization working to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities. What makes United Way different from other charities is its citizen review of programs and initiatives for funding. Each United Way chooses its funding criteria and priorities to fit the local community.

What is difficult to measure – and impossible to overstate – is the number of people that local United Ways touch in their communities. It doesn't matter how many programs or coalitions United Way has in place, if there are many or just a few people involved in the process. What matters are the health, well-being, and strength of our families, children and communities. That is the ultimate goal of United Way.

### *What does United Way do besides raise money?*

United Way is the catalyst for positive change in our community. We bring donors, community partners, nonprofit organizations, government AND YOU together around one shared vision - to make our community better.

The annual United Way campaign serves two purposes - it raises funds for needed community programs and it provides a forum for people to come together in their workplace to openly discuss community issues.

### *Why should I give to the United Way of the Wabash Valley?*

When you give to the United Way, you are giving directly to the people of the Wabash Valley. Your personal gift of support will help over 100 local health and human service programs, as well as foster new innovative, collaborative programs that meet the ever-changing needs of our community.

As the workplace changes, as the family structure changes, and as technology changes, the dynamics of our community change. United Way is at the forefront of identifying community needs and resources. United Way brings together community leaders and social service providers to address ever-changing community needs. Together we explore alternatives and seek new ways to provide positive solutions.

### *How can I be sure my money will be used wisely?*

United Way holds itself accountable not only for action but also for results. We are driven by the commitment to make a real difference in the Wabash Valley. United Way is accountable to its donors and we ask the program providers to be accountable to United Way. A Fund Distribution Committee comprised of over 110 community volunteers annually reviews program funding requests. A program must show it is effective, efficient and serves a real need in our community in order to receive funding.

*How much should I give?*

Giving is a personal matter based on your desire to help others, your interest in the community, and your own financial ability. "How much" is a personal and voluntary decision. Your gift will be hard at work all year making our community stronger. Every gift, regardless of amount, will impact a person's life.

*I can't afford to give...I live paycheck to paycheck as it is.*

That's understandable. We are all fighting the cost-of-living battle, and it gets harder every year. However, if it's tough on us, imagine what it must be like for the people who depend on our United Way for help.

If one hour's pay per month is too high, consider a lower, more affordable amount. Could you afford 50¢ a week? Doesn't sound like much, but by the end of the year it amounts to \$26! That \$26 could provide quite a few healthy meals to a homebound senior citizen. That \$26 could be the difference between that senior citizen living in his/her own home or moving to a nursing home.

*Why do the United Way member agencies conduct individual campaigns?*

At current levels of giving, United Way of the Wabash Valley cannot meet the needs of all the programs provided by its member agencies.

*How much of my donation actually goes to the agencies?*

Approximately 91¢ of every dollar go directly to fund programs in the Wabash Valley. The remainder is used by United Way to cover administrative costs, as well as provide services to the community. United Way of the Wabash Valley has organized a Day of Caring for the last five years. The annual event encourages people to volunteer for local nonprofit organizations in an effort to get better acquainted with the services the organizations provide, their staff and the clients they serve. The AFL-CIO Community Labor Liaison, Ed Ping, works from the United Way office. He serves the community by helping union membership find help when they are in need and encouraging union membership to help local nonprofits in many ways.

*May I direct where my donation goes?*

Absolutely! You may direct your donation to a specific program, a specific agency, a specific county or a specific United Way. There is an area on the pledge card where you may designate where your donation should be directed. The only requirement is that your designated agency is a member of United Way of the Wabash Valley or is another United Way.

*If I designate my donation to a specific agency, how do I know for sure that agency gets the funds?*

When United Way of the Wabash Valley knows the names of individual donors, we forward the information to each agency. Then the agency in turns sends out a thank you notice. There are some companies which keep the names of their employees very confidential, so United Way cannot forward names, only total dollars designated.

*Why does United Way support agencies affiliated with religious groups?*

United Way funds programs based on their service to the community. If a program is meeting a community need and providing service without bias, it can be considered for funding.

*I prefer to give my donation directly to my favorite charity. Why should I donate to United Way?*

Many people prefer to give directly to their favorite charity but, if everyone gave to only his or her favorite charity, a few popular services would prosper and some lesser known, but equally important, would suffer. United Way volunteers evaluate community needs and allocate funds so critical needs are met and services are not duplicated.

If you donate to the United Way, you have the advantage of using payroll deduction. By having a small donation deducted from your paycheck each pay period, by the end of the year you may find you were able to donate more to your favorite agency than if you had written a check for a one-time donation. Also, many corporations match their employees' United Way donations, so by giving through United Way you are able to double your gift.

*I quit giving to the United Way when they quit supporting the Boy Scouts.*

United Way of the Wabash Valley continues to support the local Boy Scouts. In 2005, nine different scouting programs will receive a total of \$46,240. The Boy Scouts' programs provide structured activities where scout and adult (often a parent) work closely together.

*I quit giving to the United Way because they support the Boy Scouts and the Boy Scouts discriminate against homosexuals.*

United Way funding supports over 100 health and human service programs, of which six are provided by the Boy Scouts; please do not deny the other 96 plus programs your support. United Way cannot process a negative donation, that is, a donor wants his/her pledge to go to everyone except Boy Scouts. A donor may select a specific program or agency to which to designate his/her donation.

*I do not give to United Way of the Wabash Valley because I don't live in Terre Haute and that is where most of the agencies are.*

UWWV serves six counties: Clark (IL), Crawford (IL), Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion, and Vigo. Most of the funded programs serve residents in all of these same counties and, sometimes, even more. Chances are good that you will be helping a co-worker, a neighbor, a friend and/or a customer.

*I don't give because my spouse gives at his/her place of work.*

Even though your spouse supports our United Way, your own individual gift is also important. When your spouse gives his/her gift, it is based on his/her salary. We ask that you consider doing the same, as an individual, by making a contribution based on your wages. Many corporations base their corporate gift on their employees' contributions. With your donation, you may also be increasing the amount your company donates.

*I won't give because I once worked for a boss/company that made it a condition of employment to give.*

United Way of the Wabash Valley feels very strongly that no one should ever be pressured into giving. United Way is based on the concept of people helping people - because they care enough to want to help.

*I know someone who called the United Way office and didn't get help when they needed it.*

United Way does not provide direct client service. We do, however, work in a partnership with Lifeline at. Lifeline is a 24-hour, telephone-based information and referral service. Trained, knowledgeable volunteers answer the phones and will assess what service(s) the caller needs and then provide referrals to the most appropriate organizations in the community.

*I do not give because United Way gives handouts to people who are too lazy to help themselves.*

A child who does not get enough to eat, a handi-capable person learning to live on their own, a family who just lost everything in a house fire, a terminally ill person receiving hospice support...do these sound like lazy people?

Money is not handed out directly to people. United Way donations go to fund programs which support families, children and individuals.