

United Way of Marathon County is narrowing its focus on the critical issues of education, income and health. Along the way, there are specific strategies and goals we will follow in the journey to create lasting change in our community.



WHY EDUCATION:

We all win when our children succeed in school, graduate, find work and become productive adults.

- According to the Center for Social Justice, if primary caregivers provide infants (0-3 years) with opportunities for optimal brain development, children will have a significantly better chance of success in adulthood.
- Studies have shown that early intervention programs for at-risk youth provide long-term social benefits and significant taxpayer savings.

WHY INCOME:

Everyone in our community needs to be able to support themselves, which means getting a job, managing money wisely, owning or renting a home, and saving for the future.

- A single working adult with one pre-schooler and one school aged child needs to earn \$16.36 per hour to reach the self-sufficiency standard.
- The ability for families to earn a living wage is increasingly difficult and basic needs service providers are seeing more individuals seeking assistance than ever before.
- Multiple studies link children growing up in poverty to reduced personal achievement later in life.

WHY HEALTH:

Health is strongly linked to education and income. Good personal health allows children to learn better and adults to lead happy and productive lives.

- According to the *Wisconsin County Health Rankings Report*, obesity is a strong contributing factor in various health problems including heart disease, diabetes, and stroke. In Wisconsin, 26.6% of residents are considered obese.
- Reports show that drug and alcohol misuse result in excessive health care costs, absenteeism and job turnover, accidents, and crime.
- A publication of the National Institute of Justice reports that 22% of women and 7% of men in the United States have experienced physical domestic violence at some point in their lives.

WHY SUPPORT SERVICES:

More people than ever are finding themselves in need of help. At the same time, other residents are willing to help those that are struggling.

- There is a need for a centralized, accessible and current database of information that can be accessed by organizations and by individuals seeking help.
- Volunteerism is important to the success of many organizations and events in our community. Providing information about opportunities helps both the organization and the resident who wants to give back.

www.unitedwaymc.org

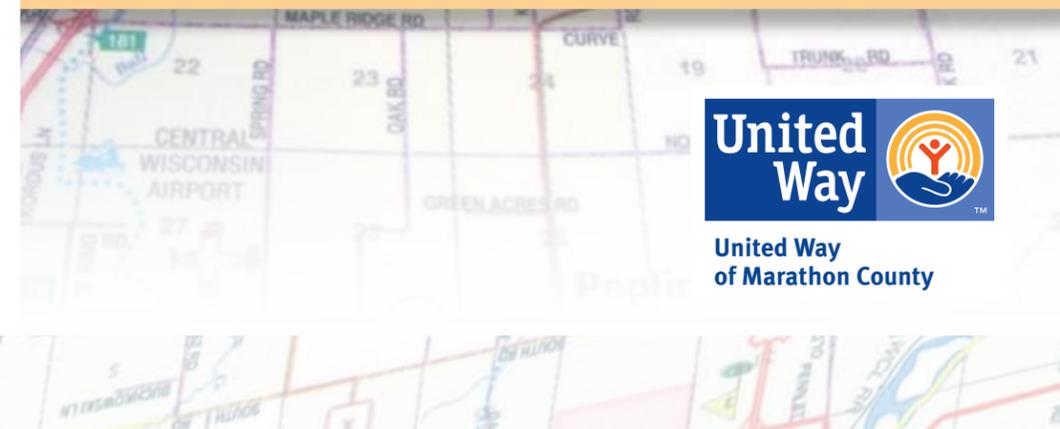
GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
LIVE UNITED™

This Road Map was developed in 2008-09 after a focus group process involving over 100 community members and thousands of hours. The focus group report, "Strategies for a Better Tomorrow" is available at www.unitedwaymc.org or at the United Way office, 137 River Drive, Wausau. The 2011 RFP is based on this work, further research and the input from additional focused groups held during 2010.

Design by SUN Printing
updated 4-10



ROAD MAP FOR CHANGE



OUR FOCUS ON HEALTH

- Improving Health and Wellness

OUR FOCUS ON INCOME

- Improving Families' Ability to Meet Basic Needs

OUR FOCUS ON EDUCATION

- Supporting Children in the Early Years
- Helping At-Risk Youth Develop & Achieve their Potential

EDUCATION

VISION: Our community works together to ensure children develop to their full potential and are inspired & equipped to become positive contributing members of the community.

STRATEGY:

- Educate parents on the milestones and their role in helping their children achieve them, utilizing a variety of innovative methods and techniques.
- Lead or support community collaborations of providers and community leaders to work together to ensure resources are available to support investment of children in early years.
- Ensure access to quality affordable child care is available to families.

STRATEGY:

- Connect at-risk youth with mentors or other role models who can help them see the value of achieving educational goals.
- Create/expand coordinated school and community opportunities which attract and expand participation of youth with at-risk factors.

GOAL:

- Families have the support they need to assist their young children to achieve optimal development.

GOAL:

- Youth with at-risk factors achieve educational goals and have the help they need to become positive contributing members of their community.

INCOME

VISION: Families and individuals are financially secure and stable in meeting their basic needs with hope & confidence for their future.

STRATEGY:

- Increase ready access to food programs through greater collaboration, innovative delivery and expanded resources.
- Explore and encourage programs which provide more affordable housing options so people can obtain safe and stable housing.
- Provide shelter options for people who are homeless.

STRATEGY:

- Expand financial education so that residents manage their finances more wisely.
- Provide programs that remove barriers for people to hold a job and earn a livable wage. (language, GED, soft-skills, etc.)

GOAL:

- People have the financial literacy necessary to better meet basic needs with limited resources.
- People have jobs that provide a living wage.

GOAL:

- People have jobs that provide a living wage.
- More low & medium income residents have and maintain affordable accessible housing.
- People who do not have access to permanent housing have access to temporary shelter.

HEALTH

VISION: Residents have the resources, knowledge and support necessary to effectively meet their physical and mental health needs.

STRATEGY:

- Support successful prevention, intervention and treatment programs for targeted audiences involved with or at risk of domestic violence.

GOAL:

- Domestic abuse declines and people have support and treatment when they are faced with issues relating to domestic abuse.

STRATEGY:

- Ensure access is available for mental health counseling so families have the support they need to function and overcome challenges.
- Expand informational programs which educate and motivate people to improve wellness and reduce obesity.

GOAL:

- People have improved health.

STRATEGY:

- Educate the public about the dangers and consequences of substance abuse and how to prevent it.

GOAL:

- Substance abuse declines because people have knowledge and motivation to keep them from becoming substance abusers.

SUPPORT SERVICES

VISION: Individuals in our community access resources and volunteer opportunities.

STRATEGY:

- Provide information and referral to community resources through trained information specialists and a comprehensive database.
- Connect individuals and groups to volunteer opportunities that provide needed assistance to area organizations and the community.

GOAL: Individuals and families will increase the number of hours they volunteer and have an increased knowledge of and use community resources.

