

## United Way Impact Areas: Overview

By focusing on four key building blocks - education, financial stability, health, and basic needs - we are ensuring that families have what they need to thrive in Mower County. United Way support offers a 'full-circle' effect for Mower County. A strong economy depends on the good health of its citizens. Healthy people may be better able to work and secure higher levels of education, which contributes to personal wealth and regional prosperity. And when basic needs are met, we all prosper.

<b>Impact Area</b>	All
<b>Goal</b>	Healthy communities = strong communities
<b>Reality</b> <i>Source: County Health Rankings</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and environmental factors account for more than 80% of all health outcomes</li> <li>• Mower County is ranked among the least healthy counties in Minnesota             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ranked 73<sup>rd</sup> out of 87 for health outcomes (length and quality of life)                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length = 55/87</li> <li>• Quality = 81/87</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ranked 69<sup>th</sup> out of 87 for health factors (social and environmental determinants)                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health behaviors = 57/87</li> <li>• Clinical care = 64/87</li> <li>• Social and economic factors = 67/87</li> <li>• Physical environment = 62/87</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Our Efforts</b>	<p>Social determinants of health guide strategic investments in four impact areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Financial Stability</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Basic Needs</li> </ul> <p>Funded programs and initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36 programs coordinated externally by 22 local nonprofits</li> <li>• 7 programs coordinated internally by United Way</li> <li>• Several community coalitions United Way leads or is part of</li> </ul>
<b>Our Impact</b>	23,890+ social service interactions recorded with Mower County residents in 2022





Access to quality education is vital to child development, lifelong learning, and regional economic growth. United Way understands that barriers exist in our community that impact one's ability to obtain quality education, so we continually strive to address these issues by ensuring equal opportunities exist for all.

<b>Impact Area</b>	<b>Education</b>	
<b>Goal + Outcomes</b>	<p>Improve lifelong learning and development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address social, emotional, mental, and physical barriers to success for all learners</li> <li>• Ensure all learners will be challenged to achieve their academic potential</li> <li>• Encourage all learners to explore areas of personal interest and prepare for post-secondary education or career</li> <li>• Support and enhance parents and mentors in their role as primary influencers of our learners</li> </ul>	
<b>Mower Reality</b> <i>Source: MN Compass</i>	<p>3rd grade students achieving reading standards: 35.9%</p> <p>8th grade students achieving math standards: 29.6</p> <p>High school students graduating on time: 71.9%</p>	
<b>Our Efforts</b>	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p>Twin Valley Boy Scouts Hormel Historic Home LIFE Mower County Parenting Resource Center ServeMinnesota United Way of Mower County</p>	<p><b>Program</b></p> <p>Austin Scoutreach Autism Friendly Austin Initiative Our Place Recreation Center Partnering with Parents Minnesota Reading Corps Success by Six</p>
<b>Examples of Impact</b> <i>Year: 2022</i>	<p>84 third graders boosted reading proficiency to grade level</p> <p>235 adults participated in parent education classes</p> <p>228 children participated in youth education programming</p>	
<b>Story</b>	<p>"A parent recently contacted our organization to express gratitude for making an impact on, not only her child's life, but also her own. She stated that through the years of guidance, mentoring, and skill building that CARS has offered her, she has been able to advocate and support her child in ways she otherwise would not have known. Most recently, she was successfully able to manage an IEP meeting at the school without assistance and the school was very impressed with her organization and knowledge. She feels strongly that these skills are thanks to supports that our programming has offered her over the years. Her child has made incredible successes in both school and in life. He is applying for the CEO program at the High School and is looking into college classes to attend over the summer. He has also maintained a job at Qdoba since July and is making great strides as an employee there. He has been impacted by our programming and will continue to be into the future." - Autism Friendly Austin Initiative</p>	





United Way empowers people to become financially independent so that our entire community can thrive. Those living in financially unstable homes frequently struggle when it comes to other foundational basic needs. Without a stable income, people can find themselves falling behind rather than moving forward.

Impact Area	<b>Financial Stability</b>	
Goal + Outcomes	Provide individuals with the knowledge and skills to earn a living wage and gain financial stability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase access to basic needs for employment</li> <li>• Increase access to education and or job training</li> <li>• Increase financial literacy skills</li> </ul>	
Mower Reality <i>Source: MN Compass</i>	Individuals in poverty: 12.7% Children in poverty: 19.8% Seniors in poverty: 8.5% Childcare cost as percentage of average income: 23.5% (10% increase)	
Our Efforts	Organization Apple Lane Child Care Center Cedar Valley Services Cedar Valley Services Independent Management Services Parenting Resource Center St. Olaf Wee Learning Center Workforce Development	Program Child Care Scholarships Community & Supported Employment Competitive Placement Financial Coaching Catherwood Child Care Scholarships Child Care Scholarships Workforce Success
Examples of Impact <i>Year: 2022</i>	191 low-income families were able to afford childcare through scholarship opportunities 91 unemployed individuals were placed in jobs and coached by career navigators 96 community members participated in financial literacy programs	
Story	<p>"The United Way grant with Mower County has been an immense help to MM and their family upon their release. I work with customers who are coming out of Minnesota Correctional Facilities (MCF), and they often have very immediate financial needs. I began working with MM when they were at an MCF making monthly contact to develop an employment, and training upon release. MM has a strong work ethic, and a desire to take the trainings that WDI has put together. Upon their release, the United Way grant played a crucial role in MM's success because the Pathway Home grant, that he was in, unfortunately was out of funds. Without supportive services, MM would not have been able to attend training. MM's wife was the sole provider of transportation, and we were able to utilize the United Way grant to fund fuel cards while MM was in welding training, and subsequently when they started pursuing jobs. Since MM took the welding training provided by WDI he was able to obtain employment as a welder at \$20/hour with the opportunity for salary increases within the year. MM and their family expressed deep gratitude for the ability to take part in these trainings, and taking some stress of their financial burdens at a time when MM was pursuing work." - Workforce Development</p>	





Staying healthy both physically and mentally is essential to living a great life. Without good health, people face roadblocks around employment and education and are unable to become their best selves. Healthy communities are strong communities, so we must work to improve health and wellbeing county-wide.

<b>Impact Area</b>	<b>Health</b>	
<b>Goal + Outcomes</b>	Increase healthy behaviors and wellness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase access to affordable health care</li> <li>• Increase access to non-hospital illness programs/services</li> <li>• Increase access to programs that improve physical and mental fitness</li> </ul>	
<b>Mower Reality</b> <i>Source: MN Compass</i>	Individuals without health insurance: 6.2% There is 1 mental health provider per 740 registered Mower County residents Population without adequate access to food: 10.2% Children with at least one untreated decayed tooth: 16.6% Women affected by domestic violence: 1 in 3	
<b>Our Efforts</b>	<b>Organization</b> Adams Area Ambulance Children's Dental Health Services Children's Dental Health Services Crime Victims Resource Center Independent Management Services LIFE Mower County Nexus-Gerard Family Healing Recovery Is Happening United Way of Mower County	<b>Program</b> Ambulance Service Healthy Teeth Happy Teeth Victim Services Mental Health Special Olympics Mental Health Recovery On A Mission SingleCare
<b>Examples of Impact</b> <i>Year: 2022</i>	1,228 low-income children received free dental care 446 uninsured individuals received low or no cost mental health care 225 individuals were served through a volunteer ambulance service 490 victims of domestic violence were connected with advocacy and support services	
<b>Story</b>	<p>"Throughout this past year, we have worked extensively with a young woman who had been sexually abused by a family member when she was a teen. We provided assistance in understanding the criminal justice system, going over every detail of the charges that were brought against her abuser. We attended every meeting she had with the prosecutor. We provided her with crisis counseling for a period of time and connected her with a therapist. We assisted her with restitution affidavits and the writing of her Victim Impact Statement. We gave her the support she needed as she read her statement aloud in court; we read her mother's statement for her as she was not comfortable reading aloud. Thanks to United Way funding, our client has made great progress in her road to recovery; she is working and going to college. She states, "I wouldn't have made it through this ordeal if it hadn't been for you. You have been so kind, caring, and helpful to both me and my parents, thank you for being with us every step of the way!" - Crime Victims Resource Center</p>	





If education, financial stability, and health are the pillars of a good quality of life, then basic needs are the foundation. Without basic needs, kids struggle to focus in school, adults aren't able to be at work consistently, and reaching everyone's full potential is impossible. Together we strive to stabilize lives.

<b>Impact Area</b>	<b>Basic Needs</b>																																											
<b>Goal + Outcomes</b>	Provide food, clothing, and shelter to stabilize lives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase access to nutritious meals</li> <li>• Increase access to services that allow for independent living</li> <li>• Increase access to shelter</li> <li>• Increase children's access to safe environment</li> </ul>																																											
<b>Mower Reality</b> <i>Source: MN Compass</i>	Households burdened by rental costs: 48.1% Individuals who are food insecure: 1 in 12 adults, 1 in 7 children Households with no vehicle: 6.8% Adults (65+) living alone: 12%																																											
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<b>Examples of Impact</b> <i>Year: 2022</i>	371 children were placed in emergency childcare 15,450 residents received food support 221 individuals received housing support 1,428 seniors received basic needs services																																											
<b>Story</b>	<p>"Gadisa has been working with ILCM to obtain US citizenship since May of 2021. Gadisa's father came to the United States first, became a citizen, and invited Gadisa to leave Ethiopia and come join him in Austin. Gadisa went to high school at Austin High School and is currently attending Riverland Community College. He is now seeking US Citizenship to ensure he can petition for his mother to join them in Minnesota. ILCM's services will not only provide Gadisa with the lifelong benefits of citizenship, but also make it possible to reunite a family that has lived apart for years in pursuit of better opportunities. We estimate that each of our cases impacts an average of three individuals. While this is typically realized in the benefits children obtain from a parent gaining immigration status, Gadisa's case highlights that the work funded by the United Way of Mower County also has the potential to support entire families." - Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota</p>																																											

