



# IMPACT AREA TOOLKIT

## MESSAGING GUIDE

October 2024

# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The United Way brand depends on all of us working collectively to appear as a unified network.

While our offerings vary across local United Ways, we all share a commitment to mobilizing communities to action around our four key impact areas: Healthy Community, Youth Opportunity, Financial Security, and Community Resiliency. Although our work is multifaceted, it's important to express our impact in clear, concise, and compelling ways.

As a set of 5 one-page reference sheets, this guide offers concrete examples of bite-sized impact messaging, appropriate for short-form communications like email, social media, and one-on-one conversations.

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# **IMPACT AREA TALKING POINTS**

# IMPACT AREA TALKING POINTS

From advancing healthy community, youth opportunity, and financial security to strengthening local resiliency, United Way mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive.

## **Healthy Community**

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We improve access to nutritious food and quality health education and services, so people have the resources they need to lead healthy lives. Together, we can improve health and well-being for all.

## **Youth Opportunity**

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We create pathways for young people to reach their goals, from early childhood education to college and career success. Together, we are helping young people realize their full potential.

## **Financial Security**

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We connect people to education, tools, and job training so they have financial freedom and peace of mind. Together, we can create a stronger financial future for every generation.

## **Community Resiliency**

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We help communities prepare for, prevent, and respond to challenges, from crisis support and disaster relief to environmental protection. Together, we can address urgent needs today for a better tomorrow.

The background is a solid blue color. On the right side, there are several concentric circular lines in shades of blue and white, creating a sense of depth and movement. The lines are curved and appear to be part of a larger circular design.

# **HEALTHY COMMUNITY CONVERSATION STARTERS**

# HEALTHY COMMUNITY CONVERSATION STARTERS

The messages below clearly and concisely convey the challenges we address in our impact areas.

You can adapt and apply these examples in short-form communications, like social media, email, and one-on-one conversations.

## Healthy Community – Summary

- United Way takes action as a community to improve health and well-being for all.
- We connect people to resources they need to lead healthy lives, like nutritious food, health education, and quality care.

## Topic: Health and Insurance Access

- Regardless of culture, language, or income, every member of our community deserves to be as healthy as possible. By engaging community partners, United Way helps all people get the care they need, in ways that work for them and their families.
- Fees, fear, misinformation, or discrimination should not cost people their lives. By opening access to quality coverage and care, United Way advances health and well-being for all.

## Topic: Maternal and Child Health

- Many health risks for mothers and children can be prevented with good care, nutrition, and education. United Way connects families to comprehensive resources so they can thrive during pregnancy and children's early years.
- When quality care is hard to find or afford, preventable issues can become life-threatening for children and families. By investing in maternal and child health, we help families build strong foundations from the start.

## Topic: Nutrition and Food Security

- Healthy food is one of the foundations of a thriving community. That's why United Way addresses the root causes of hunger to make good nutrition a reality for all.
- When families struggle to put food on the table, it affects every aspect of their lives. United Way works to ensure that everyone can afford groceries, because no one should have to choose between healthy meals and monthly bills.

## Topic: Healthy Spaces and Physical Activity

- Everyone deserves a safe place to play and stay active. That's why United Way supports community spaces where people of all ages and abilities can embrace an active lifestyle.
- Pollution and toxins – in our air, water, soil, or buildings – pose serious health risks. Together with communities, United Way strives to ensure everyone has healthy spaces to live, learn, and work.

## Topic: Chronic and Infectious Disease Awareness and Prevention

- With the right preparation and response, we can limit the toll of disease on individuals and communities. Through education and early detection, United Way mobilizes communities to action so those affected can survive and thrive.
- Health should never be determined by postal code or income. United Way expands access to resources and care, so everyone has what they need to prevent and manage health conditions.

## Topic: Mental Health Support

- Mental health is just as important as physical health, yet too many people struggle to get help. United Way works with communities to break through stigma and build support for mental health.
- Resilient communities prioritize mental and emotional well-being. United Way partners with local organizations to expand access to mental health resources for all.

## Topic: Substance Misuse Recovery and Prevention

- Substance misuse can devastate individuals, families, and communities. But with the right help, it's possible to heal. That's why United Way supports compassionate, judgment-free programs that focus on prevention, treatment, and long-term recovery.
- By investing in community-led solutions, United Way helps create stronger support networks and resources for those affected by substance misuse.

The background is a solid red color. On the right side, there are several concentric circular lines in a lighter shade of red, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text is positioned on the left side of the image.

# **YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CONVERSATION STARTERS**



# YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CONVERSATION STARTERS

The messages below clearly and concisely convey the challenges we address in our impact areas.

You can adapt and apply these examples in short-form communications, like social media, email, and one-on-one conversations.

## Youth Opportunity – Summary

- Every child deserves the chance to reach their full potential. United Way clears the path to success, from early childhood through college and career.
- United Way supports childcare, early learning, education, enrichment, and family engagement to give every young person more opportunities to thrive.

## Topic: Childcare and Early Childhood Education

- The first years of life shape a child's future. Engaging families, policymakers, professionals, and communities, United Way helps prepare children for lifelong success.
- Quality early education opens up a world of possibilities. United Way supports quality childcare training for teachers and caregivers so every child can explore and grow.

## Topic: In-School, Afterschool, and Summer Learning

- Learning doesn't stop outside the classroom. Through enriching out-of-school programs, United Way helps young people develop the skills, confidence, and relationships they need to thrive.
- During school breaks, students can experience learning loss and fall behind. United Way invests in year-round educational opportunities to keep young people engaged, inspired, and on track for success.
- In partnership with schools and organizations, United Way provides resources to help more students discover more possibilities, in the classroom and beyond.

## Topic: College and Career Readiness

- Investing in young people today ensures a vibrant tomorrow. United Way supports mentorship, apprenticeships, and skill-building programs to prepare young people for lives of leadership and purpose.
- Together, we can create pathways to success for every young person. United Way connects young people with the resources and opportunities they need to shape bright futures.

## Topic: Family Engagement

- Strong families build powerful communities. United Way fosters collaboration between families, schools, and local partners, so every child has a support system for success.
- A supportive family makes all the difference for students. United Way connects families with the tools they need to nurture every child's curiosity and strengths.

## Topic: Literacy Development

- Strong reading skills open doors to discovery and opportunity. United Way supports literacy initiatives that help children explore their world and build brighter futures.
- Early literacy sets children up for success in life. United Way expands access to literacy resources that can spark imagination and fuel learning for every child.



# **FINANCIAL SECURITY CONVERSATION STARTERS**

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The messages below clearly and concisely convey the challenges we address in our impact areas.

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## Financial Security – Summary

- Everyone deserves the opportunity to earn a living wage. Together with communities, United Way creates pathways to financial security for all.
- We connect people to education, job training, and financial tools, so they can build thriving futures and communities.

## Topic: Adult Education, Job Training, and Career Pathways

- A good job can change everything. United Way partners with employers and educators to open doors to in-demand careers.
- Ongoing education helps workers stay relevant in a changing world. United Way supports adult learners in gaining skills and credentials to succeed in their careers.

## Topic: Financial Education and Coaching

- A strong financial future requires more than a steady paycheck. United Way equips people with tools and guidance today, so they can plan for a thriving tomorrow.
- Through learning and coaching opportunities, United Way prepares people to define and reach their financial goals.

## **Topic: Homelessness Prevention, Affordable Housing, and Homeownership**

- Everyone deserves a place to call home. United Way champions affordable housing solutions for all.
- A safe home is the foundation of a stable life. United Way partners with communities to prevent homelessness and increase access to secure, affordable housing.
- By helping families navigate the path to homeownership, United Way makes long-term financial security a reality.

## **Topic: Small Business Support**

- Small businesses fuel a healthy economy. United Way provides entrepreneurs and business owners with the resources they need to start and sustain successful companies.
- By helping small business owners overcome challenges and contribute to their communities, United Way boosts local economies.

## **Topic: Public Benefits Access**

- Overwhelming processes and paperwork prevent many families from getting support they deserve. By making it easier to access public benefits, United Way helps families build stronger futures.
- Many people are unaware that they're eligible for assistance. United Way connects people to housing, food, and education resources they qualify for, so they can thrive.
- The 211 helpline, supported by United Ways in the U.S. and Canada, is available 24/7. By mobilizing real-time support and local resources, 211 helps people navigate crises and get the assistance they need.
- In the U.S., United Way runs free tax prep services online and in-person, so millions of people can save money and maximize refunds every year.



# **COMMUNITY RESILIENCY CONVERSATION STARTERS**

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The messages below clearly and concisely convey the challenges we address in our impact areas.

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## Community Resiliency – Summary

- From disaster preparation to environmental protection, United Way engages local leaders and neighbors to build stronger communities that can face any challenge.
- We move communities to action, from the moment crises strike through long-term recovery.
- By mobilizing the right people and resources at the right times, we equip communities to navigate urgent challenges today and build a better tomorrow.

## Topic: Crisis Hotline and Support (U.S.)

- No one should face a crisis alone. The 211 helpline, supported by United Ways in the U.S. and Canada, helps people meet emergency and everyday needs.
- Reaching 99% of the U.S., the 211 helpline responded to nearly 16 million calls for support in 2023.
- When people need help with housing, utilities, food, or mental health, 211 is just a call or click away, with support in over 180 languages.

## Topic: Emergency Preparedness

- Preparedness is key to resilience in times of crisis. United Way Worldwide brings local United Way leaders together to equip our entire global network with knowledge and tools to face future challenges head-on.
- United Way coordinates resources at national, state, and local levels, so communities can better prepare for and respond to emergencies. Locally, United Way is involved in strategic planning to prevent future disasters, too.

## Topic: Disaster Relief and Recovery

- When disaster hits, we're here right away and here to stay. We help communities recover more quickly and rebuild long-term.
- Communities are strongest when we stand together. United Way coordinates resources and volunteers to help neighborhoods come back stronger after natural and man-made disasters.
- From raising funds to rallying volunteers, our global network provides local disaster support at the speed of need.
- Each year, global natural disasters claim tens of thousands of lives. We take action to save lives and support long-term community recovery.

## Topic: Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability

- Climate change affects us all, but not equally. United Way works to ensure that every community has the resources to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing world.
- A healthy environment is crucial for community well-being. We support local projects that protect our natural resources and promote sustainability.
- United Way invests in green initiatives that create jobs, improve health, and strengthen communities.
- Solving complex climate challenges calls for diverse perspectives and approaches. We move past fear and politics to find practical solutions that benefit people and the planet.





# FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email [brand@unitedway.org](mailto:brand@unitedway.org)