



UNITED WAY OF NORTHERN  
SHENANDOAH VALLEY

# COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2020-2023



United Way of Northern  
Shenandoah Valley



United Way of  
Front Royal-Warren County

Dear Community Members,



Your local United Ways, United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley (UWNSV) and United Way of Front Royal-Warren County, bring people, organizations and resources together to improve community well-being. We have played a critical role in the Northern Shenandoah Valley region.

Acting as the community's fundraiser, local United Ways conduct an annual fundraising campaign within area workplaces and among individual, foundation and corporate donors to secure funds to support a range of local health and human service programs. We also provide critical leadership, training and technical assistance to not-for-profit organizations through our coalition-based efforts, the mobilization of volunteers, and advocacy work. In order for these activities to achieve their desired effect – improved community well-being – it is essential to develop an accurate view of the needs of the local community.

The first Community Needs Update was published in 2010 in response to increased service demand, decreased resources and economic conditions which created stress on our service delivery system. Donor demands for accountability, transparency and results required a relook at how we distribute donor support. UWNSV recognized the need to make difficult choices, maximize efficiency and focus on the needs that matter most to ensure community impact. Since then, and every three years, UWNSV assesses demographic and social trends in order to update priorities and target contributed funds to the needs that matter most to the people of the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

The 2020-2023 Community Needs Assessment is the work of many community partners and key community stakeholders. The Community Impact Committee of the United Way NSV decided to continue to expand the scope of the needs assessment to include a variety of community issues that had not been studied in as much detail in the past and worked hard to ensure that the report was accurate, thorough and a useful tool for more than just United Ways to use moving forward. Although previous needs assessments have always included Warren County data, we were excited to be able to work closer with representatives from United Way Front Royal-Warren County to ensure better regional participation, so that we could have a better grasp of the needs of our community as a region. Additionally, the 2020-2023 report includes a summary of how United Way impact grants have been invested since the last Community Needs Update: 2017-2020. United Way dollars make a long-lasting impact in our community and have addressed significant needs within our community.

We'd like to thank the United Way Board of Directors for their support; the Impact Committee, led by Richie Crim – Director, Academic Computing Technology with Shenandoah University; the Community Needs Assessment Steering Committee; United Way Partner Agencies and Valley Health for their commitment to this process. A full list of all contributors to the Community Needs Assessment is listed in the methodology section.

It's our vision that this report would not just sit on a shelf, but would be used as a means of communication and discussion throughout our community. We hope that identified gaps in services are met with regional cooperation and partnership among regional governments, businesses and nonprofits. Our community has always prided ourselves on coming together in times of need and we hope this report will lead to great partnerships and collaborations.

Nadine M. Bullock-Pottinga  
President/CEO  
United Way Northern Shenandoah Valley

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We were nearly complete with the 2020-2023 Needs Assessment when the COVID-19 pandemic hit not only our community and nation, but worldwide, changing the world as we see it dramatically. As I sat down to re-visit and finalize a document that was largely developed “pre-covid,” I was struck by something—it was that everything and nothing have changed all at the same time.

### **Our Commitment to ALICE®:**

In the 2017-2020 needs assessment we introduced you to ALICE®. A few months after that, we released—in partnership with the other United Ways in Virginia—the 2017 Virginia ALICE® report. ALICE®, a United Way acronym which stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, represents the growing number of individuals and families who are working, but are unable to afford the basic necessities of housing, food, childcare, health care and transportation. Through a series of standardized measurements United Way is quantifying the size of the workforce in each county and city in Virginia that is struggling financially, and the reasons why. These measurements provide a broader picture of financial insecurity than traditional federal poverty guidelines.

Our United Way resolved to rally around this population in every way we possibly could, directing United Way impact grants, advocacy efforts and volunteer efforts to meeting the needs of the ALICE® population. Our commitment to working families was solidified by the data that was gathered for the 2020-2023 needs assessment. It became obvious that the more than 40% of our community who struggle to afford basic necessities, despite being employed, needed our United Way to continue to advocate for them in every way possible.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not changed this. Not only has the pandemic not changed our resolve to serve the ALICE® population, it has strengthened our commitment to shining a spotlight on the struggles they endure and how we can support solutions that support them. When we needed them most, ALICE® workers were there during the pandemic. They are our nurses, hospital workers, janitors and cleaners, delivery drivers, police and fire fighters, cashiers at the grocery store and a variety of other “essential” workers that could not stay at home, but instead, were keeping what was left of our economy running.

The rapid spread of COVID-19, the illness caused by the novel coronavirus, is exposing critical shortcomings in our economy and in our systems of health care and education. No one is immune to its direct or indirect effects, but ALICE® families are particularly vulnerable to hardship from both illness and economic disruption. Current economic measures do not capture the experience of this population. In this unprecedented time, it is imperative that we use the ALICE® measures to fully understand the impact of COVID-19 on U.S. workers and their families. A recent study by Data for Progress shows that 41% of people who lost jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic are already struggling to cover basic costs. These 41% are ALICE®, the ones we’ve been fighting for long before a pandemic and the ones we will continue to fight for every day.

New data from the December 2019 round of the Urban Institute’s Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey of nonelderly adults showed that despite the nation being at the tail end of its longest economic expansion on record, many hourly and self-employed workers were already struggling to make ends

meet before the outbreak. "The high levels of material hardship among hourly and self-employed workers reflect their precarious financial situations and limited protection in an emergency. Nearly one-third of hourly and self-employed workers had family incomes below twice the federal poverty level or about \$25,000 for a single adult and just over \$50,000 for a family of four in 2019. Only about 6 percent of salaried workers had incomes that low."<sup>1</sup>

"After our lives go back to normal, so will theirs: working hour by hour for no benefits and too little pay, unless we lift our voices in outrage. It shouldn't take a pandemic for us to take notice that millions of people can't afford a single sick day. But now that we have, it's time for change."<sup>2</sup>

Changing lives is at the heart of what we do – from our beginnings almost 75 years ago to now. We partner with hundreds of individuals and organizations that share a collective vision for what is possible. Through our work, we are improving the odds for ALICE® families and children, today and for generations to come, no matter the crisis.

*We look forward to the release of the 2020 ALICE® report in the summer of 2020. We will use that updated data to help us fully understand the challenges this community faces as well as develop additional responses that may go above and beyond what's contained in this document.*

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<sup>1</sup> Urban Institute, Urban Wire, Even Before the Coronavirus Outbreak, Hourly and Self-Employed Workers Were Struggling to Meet Basic Needs, March 20, 2020, [https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/even-coronavirus-outbreak-hourly-and-self-employed-workers-were-struggling-meet-basic-needs?cm\\_yen=ExactTarget&cm\\_cat=UIU+-+3.24.2020&cm\\_pla=VPL+6665+for+List+179&cm\\_ite=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.urban.org%2Furban-wire%2Feven-coronavirus-outbreak-hourly-and-self-employed-workers-were-struggling-meet-basic-needs&cm\\_ainfo=&utm\\_source=+urban\\_newsletters&utm\\_medium=news-UIU&utm\\_term=URBAN\\_COVID19&fbclid=IwAR27bbD6kcSX5S3CLVOfxUBBV-M6TwbMnWimSjH24Da7fb156Q5gS-WFlp4](https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/even-coronavirus-outbreak-hourly-and-self-employed-workers-were-struggling-meet-basic-needs?cm_yen=ExactTarget&cm_cat=UIU+-+3.24.2020&cm_pla=VPL+6665+for+List+179&cm_ite=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.urban.org%2Furban-wire%2Feven-coronavirus-outbreak-hourly-and-self-employed-workers-were-struggling-meet-basic-needs&cm_ainfo=&utm_source=+urban_newsletters&utm_medium=news-UIU&utm_term=URBAN_COVID19&fbclid=IwAR27bbD6kcSX5S3CLVOfxUBBV-M6TwbMnWimSjH24Da7fb156Q5gS-WFlp4)

<sup>2</sup> Huffington Post, Stephanie Land, It Shouldn't Take A Pandemic For Us To Care About Working People And The Poor, March 30, 2020, [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/covid-19-pandemic-working-poor\\_n\\_5e7e3cf5c5b6256a7a29d937?guccounter=1&guce\\_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLnMvYbS8&guce\\_referrer\\_sig=AQAAAGsMxG8629WyyY6krOEAYc1WepF15MCPQZJSz7lqP-so-1PSG995QkJ8bqqEXGlgpOaf\\_LlbMrZDi7x8M3YmaagJ\\_2dtGh7a189gDa76LlnL32Tz0jKzcco8vpadDN1PquYZduM-YAEv3a-fHzl7xOxCbTOA2J3z1CqFByTIN2d\\_](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/covid-19-pandemic-working-poor_n_5e7e3cf5c5b6256a7a29d937?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLnMvYbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAGsMxG8629WyyY6krOEAYc1WepF15MCPQZJSz7lqP-so-1PSG995QkJ8bqqEXGlgpOaf_LlbMrZDi7x8M3YmaagJ_2dtGh7a189gDa76LlnL32Tz0jKzcco8vpadDN1PquYZduM-YAEv3a-fHzl7xOxCbTOA2J3z1CqFByTIN2d_)

## INTRODUCTION

### United Way NSV Mission & Vision

Since 1946 the United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley has worked to impact the community human care needs that matter most to the people of Clarke, Frederick, Page and Shenandoah counties, and the City of Winchester. We convene the people and organizations necessary to create solutions to our region's most pressing challenges. We collaborate with effective partners. We serve as the catalyst for community change. We bring together the voices, expertise and resources needed to define, articulate and create community impact in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

Our mission is to increase the organized capacity of people to care for one another.

Our vision is to be the leader in fostering powerful partnerships to impact the human care issues that matter most to the people of our community.

### United Way Regional Needs Assessment Purpose & Goals

The United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley plays an important role as our community's impact partner. We strive to foster powerful partnerships to impact critical human care issues and ensure a high level of accountability. As community needs and donor interests change, it is important that our United Way stays current in its mission to increase the organized capacity of people to care for one another.

In 2000, increased service demand, decreased resources and economic conditions created stress on our service delivery system. Donor demands for accountability, transparency and results required a relook at how we distribute donor support. UWNSV recognized the need to make difficult choices, maximize efficiency and focus on the needs that matter most to insure community impact.

Since then and every three years, UWNSV assesses demographic and social trends in order to update priorities and target contributed funds to the needs that matter most to the people of Northern Shenandoah Valley.

#### **Needs Assessment Goals:**

1. Develop an understanding of the current human care condition and trends in the Northern Shenandoah Valley and our place within a state and national context.
2. Create a resource that nonprofit organizations, foundations, businesses and others will use for program planning, grant writing, strategic planning, training and other activities.
3. Gauge where the community feels that needs are being met, where gaps in service may exist and where United Way NSV and surrounding United Way's should consider investing donor dollars.

## METHODOLOGY

The overarching goal of the 2020-2023 Community Needs Assessment was to identify and measure critical needs related to Education, Income, and Health & Wellness to better focus United Way efforts, as well as the efforts of the whole community, to create positive change.

Drawing on past research, as well as the work of other United Ways across the country, we focused the assessment on Education, Income, and Health & Wellness as the core building blocks that, together, contribute to a better quality of life.

### Needs Assessment Process/Timeline

- Valley Health Community Health Needs Assessment (January 2019-December 2019): United Way NSV participated in the Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by our partner Valley Health System. This CHNA served as the primary source of data and analysis for the United Way Regional Needs Assessment.
- United Way Board of Directors Community Impact Committee (February 2019): Community Impact Committee met to identify the goals and objectives for the United Way Regional Needs Assessment, identify community members for a steering committee and discuss how to best integrate the Valley Health Community Health Needs Assessment with the education and income/financial stability sections.
- Steering Committee Identified (August 2019-September 2019)
- Steering Committee Meetings (September 2019): Reviewed previous needs assessments and established goals and objectives for the 2020-2023 needs assessment.
- Data Collection (September 2019-December 2019): Data was collected from multiple sources and compiled into one comprehensive document.
- Steering Committee Meeting (January 2020): Members reviewed a draft of data collected and made suggestions for further data collection.
- Community Forums (February 2020): Review forums were held in Winchester, Woodstock and Front Royal. Forums asked participants to review and validate data as well as rank priority needs.
- Steering Committee (February 2020-April 2020): Drafted key findings and strategic priorities for each data set.
- United Way Community Impact Committee Meeting (May 2020): Reviewed suggestions for key findings and strategic priorities from steering committee. Made recommendations for implementation strategies.
- United Way Board of Directors Meeting (June 2020): Reviewed comprehensive Community Needs Assessment data, key findings, strategic priorities and implementation strategies, and voted to finalize.

## Contributing Members

### **United Way Board of Directors Impact Committee:**

Richie Crim – Shenandoah University (Committee Chair), Adrienne Bloss – Shenandoah University, Chris Rucker – Valley Health System, Tammy Gasper – Shenandoah Memorial Hospital, Michelle Thomas – Shenandoah Valley Westminster Canterbury

### **Community Needs Assessment Steering Committee:**

Ed Daley - United Way Front Royal/Warren County; Bogdan Daraban - Shenandoah University; Sharon Elliott - Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging; Julia Fielding – Blue Ridge Habitat for Humanity/Housing Coalition; Sharen Gromling - Our Health; Linda Holtzaple - Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging; Steven Schetrom - United Way Front Royal/Warren County; Alex Schweiger - Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission; Jeremiah Shifflett - Lord Fairfax Community College; Diane Shipe – Retired, Our Health Board, Clarke County Resident; Carla Taylor - Shenandoah County Social Services; Mary Welch-Flores - Valley Health Systems; Bonnie Zampino - Virginia Career Works

### **Data Contributors:**

AbbaCare, Inc., Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, Blue Ridge Habitat for Humanity, CHOICES, Healthy Families NSV, Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area, Northern Shenandoah Valley Substance Abuse Coalition, Our Health, Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging, Shenandoah County Chamber of Commerce, Shenandoah County Social Services, United Ways of Virginia – ALICE® Report, Valley Health System, Virginia 211, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Western Virginia Continuum of Care (CoC), Winchester City Sheriff's Office, Winchester City Social Services

### **Winchester Community Forum (February 11, 2020):**

A Farm Less Ordinary - Greg Masucci; Aids Response Effort - Oscar Cerrito Mendoza, Mandy Underwood, Katie Vance; Blue Ridge Area Food Bank - Kim Johnson; Blue Ridge Habitat for Humanity - Jeffrey Kenney; Blue Ridge Legal Services, Inc. - Jennifer Locke; Catholic Charities Diocese of Arlington - Sherri Longhill; Catholic Charities St. Lucy Food Project - Jeanne Jackson; Community Foundation of the Northern Shenandoah Valley - Kim Herbstritt; Concern Hotline - Rusty Holland & Charly Franks; Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton (VA-10), Winchester District Office - Lana Westfall; Department of Veteran Services - Andre Miller; Faithworks - Robert O Boulter (Bob) & Sandra Webster; Frederick County Public Schools - Tyler Thompson & Angie White; Frederick County Economic Development Authority - Patrick Barker; Frederick County Social Services – Tamara Green; Horizon Goodwill Industries - Tara Broschart; Lord Fairfax Community College - Jeremiah Shifflett & Sarah Eaton; Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area - Mark Sieffert; Hispanic Coalition – Diana Patterson; Lord Fairfax House - David Porter; Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission - Alex Schweiger; NW Works - Melody Crossway & Brady Smith; People Incorporated of Virginia - Brandi Day; PRK Drilling & Blasting, Inc. - Nicole Klebieko; Shenandoah University - Keith Jones Pomeroy; Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum - Dawn Devine; Sinclair Health Clinic - Katrina McClure; St Paul's on the Hill, Winchester - W Robert (Bob) Lovan; The Laurel Center - Cindy Marzullo; Timber Ridge School/CAC - John Lamanna; Top of Virginia Regional Chamber – Cynthia J. Schneider; Valley Health System - Tracy Mitchell & Elizabeth Savage; Virginia Career Works - Ashley Moslak; Virginia Employment Commission - Kathy Kalisz; Volunteers of America Chesapeake - Danielle Cullers; WATTS - Robyn Miller; Winchester Area NAACP - Gwen Borders-Walker; Winchester Day Preschool - John H. Tyson; Winchester Police Department - Kelly Rice; Winchester Public Schools - Natalie Gerometta & Judy

McKiernan; Winchester Social Services - Amber Dopkowski; Youth Development Center (YDC) - Rebekah DeHaven

**Woodstock Community Forum (February 10, 2020):**

Blue Ridge Legal Services, Inc. - John Whitfield, Council on Domestic Violence for Page Co., Inc. - Debbie Dart & Robin Stevens, Faithworks - Robert O Boulter (Bob), Family Promise of Shenandoah County - Sherry Arey & Diane Pence, Grandparents As Parents (GAP) - Shelia Helsley, Response – Lynn McKee, Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter - Sheila Orndorff, Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging - Jimmy Roberts, Shenandoah Community Foundation - Michael Funk & Marla Boulter, Shenandoah Community Health Clinic - Pam Murphy, Shenandoah County Parks & Recreation - Teresa Funkhouser, Shenandoah County Public Schools - Mark Johnston, Shenandoah County School Board/Shenandoah Education Foundation- Karen Whetzel, VEC/Veterans Programs - Chris Basch

**Front Royal/Warren County Community Forum (February 18, 2020):**

Blue Ridge Educational Center - Paula Conrow, Blue Ridge Educational Center- April Strosnider, Blue Ridge Legal Services - Jennifer Locke, CCDA - Sherri Longhill, Concern Hotline - Rusty Holland, Front Royal Police Department - Kahle Magalis, Habitat For Humanity - Jessica Priest Cahill, Healthy Families NSV - Sara Schoonover-Martin, Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry - Jean Jackson, Phoenix Project - Tammy Sharpe, Salvation Army - Matthew Tidman, Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging - Linda Holtzapple, Warren County Social Services - Michelle Smeltzer, The Laurel Center - Leslie Hardesty, United Way Board of Directors (Front Royal/Warren County) – Ed Daley, Warren Coalition - Christa Shifflett, Warren County Sheriff - Robbie Seal

## Primary Data

- Partner Agency Interviews (conducted in conjunction with Valley Health)
- Community Forums
  - Winchester (Clarke County, Frederick County, Winchester City)
  - Woodstock (Shenandoah County, Page County)
  - Front Royal (Warren County)

## Secondary Data

Secondary Data sources are cited throughout.

- 2-1-1 VIRGINIA
- American Immigration Council
- Bipartisan Policy Center
- Center for Immigration Studies
- Center for Housing Policy
- Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Commonwealth of Virginia
- County Health Rankings
- Economic Policy Institute
- Enterprise Community Partners
- Federal Reserve of Richmond
- Feeding America
- George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services
- Housing Virginia
- Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University
- Kids Count Data Center
- Meals on Wheels America
- National Bureau of Economic Research
- National Center for Homeless Education
- The National Institute for Literacy
- National Low Income Housing Coalition
- Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission
- Opportunity Index
- People, Inc – Community Needs Assessment
- Princeton University
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Stat Chat VA
- U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics
- U.S. Census Bureau
- U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration
- Virginia ALICE® Report

- Virginia Coalition of Housing and Economic Development Researchers
- Virginia Department of Education
- Virginia Department of Health
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- Valley Health Community Health Needs Assessment
  - Community Health Survey (Valley Health CHNA)
  - Key informant interviews with community and organizational leaders (Valley Health CHNA)
  - Community Response Sessions (Valley Health CHNA)
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- Virginia Employment Commission
- Voices for Virginia's Children
- Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service
- Winchester Medical Center

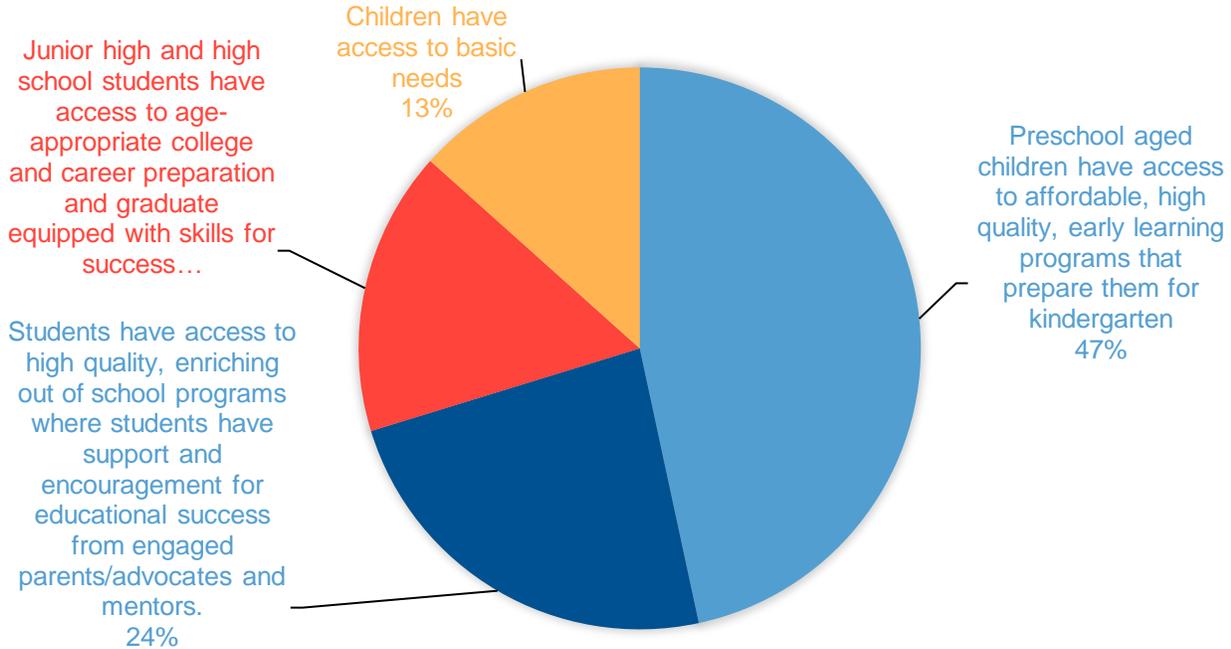
## SUMMARY OF INVESTMENTS (2017-2020)

The 2015-2020 United Way NSV Strategic Plan, adopted by the Board of Directors on May 12th, 2015 and updated annually, called for United Way NSV to “align community impact strategy with the identified community needs.” The 2017-2020 Community Needs Assessment indicated two primary ways to achieve this: strategic partnerships and community Impact grants.

1. **Strategic Partnerships:** Identify strategic partnerships with community organizations and nonprofits that have the capacity to deliver the scope of services needed to make a significant impact on identified community needs.
  - Align community impact strategies with partners that are meeting one of the identified critical needs.
  - Utilize partnerships to respond to immediate and critical community needs not previously identified through a community needs assessment.
  - Mobilize United Way NSV corporate partners and volunteers to respond to priority needs through volunteer engagement projects.
  
2. **Community Impact Grants:** Prioritize United Way resources on the needs that matter most to the people of the Northern Shenandoah Valley. Those giving to the United Way Community Impact Fund have the assurance that their gifts cover a broad but focused spectrum of identified needs in the community, rather than just supporting one particular program or agency. The results from these investments are closely monitored by trained volunteers. Investments in the United Way Impact Fund are monitored, leveraged, focused and achieve outcomes.
  - Monitored - A diverse group of trained volunteers invest money into programs that report how they use money to improve lives.
  - Leveraged - United Way and funded programs leverage United Way funding in services that prevent additional costly services, and bring additional funding into our community.
  - Focused - United Way only funds programs that are successfully, efficiently filling a need for local residents in the areas of Education, Income, and Health.
  - Outcomes - The Impact Fund guarantees that your donated money is changing lives. Programs must show the long-term outcomes they are achieving.

On April 11th, 2017, the United Way Board of Directors reviewed and adopted the 2017-2020 United Way Regional Community Needs Assessment and recommended and approved the following priorities for action.

## Investing in Our Children (Education):



### Objective: Children have access to basic needs

#### Strategies:

- Partner with organizations that are meeting basic needs of students with a school-based approach.
  - *Bright Futures* – United Way NSV partners with Bright Futures—Frederick/Winchester, a nonprofit organization that helps schools connect student needs with resources that already exist in the community.
    - Mobile Feeding Bus – Provided funds to be able to outfit a donated vehicle in order to deliver meals to underserved communities in the summertime.
    - Bright Futures Food Drives – In partnership with our Society of Emerging Leaders, we provide food to Bright Futures to distribute through their weekend food-pack program.
- Utilize partnerships to connect financially unstable families with the resources to promote financial stability.
  - *Valley Assistance Network* - The Valley Assistance Network (VAN) is a program of United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley created to help families navigate community resources and create a path to financial stability.
- Mobilize United Way NSV corporate partners and volunteers to respond to basic needs through volunteer engagement projects.
  - *Project Connect* – Project Connect is Winchester’s one-stop, free resource fair. Participants can receive assistance from more than 65 service providers, all under the same roof—what often takes months to accomplish can be completed in one day.
- Invest in programs that:
  1. Provide basic needs support to children and families in crisis.

- *Child Safe Center* – provides child abuse assessments, trauma screenings and mental health treatment services for abuse victims and their non-offending caretakers at both the Winchester and Shenandoah County locations.
  - *Community Care & Learning Center* - provides high-quality care and enriching activities for 28-30 children ages 2 1/2 to 12 in Shenandoah and Page counties with priority enrollment given to working parents who have struggled to find dependable, safe childcare.
  - *Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter* – supports the management of Centralized Housing Intake (CHI) and helps establish a coordinated entry process in order to respond more quickly and effectively to the calls received.
2. Help children who face neglect or abuse.
- *Child Safe Center* - provides child abuse assessments, trauma screenings and mental health treatment services for abuse victims and their non-offending caretakers at both the Winchester and Shenandoah County locations.
3. Promote positive parenting and healthy child development.
- *Child Safe Center* - provides child abuse assessments, trauma screenings and mental health treatment services for abuse victims and their non-offending caretakers at both the Winchester and Shenandoah County locations.
  - *Healthy Families NSV* - supports the Car Seat Safety Project and Cribs for Kids Service Project.
  - *Healthy Families Shenandoah County* – provides free, in-home health and wellness screenings, and education to families who are ALICE or in poverty and lack the transportation needed for medical and prevention services.

**Objective: Preschool aged children have access to affordable, high-quality, early-learning programs that prepare them for kindergarten**

Strategies:

- Engage in a public awareness/education campaign on the importance of quality, early childhood education.
  - *Winchester City Pre-K Sustainability Committee & Frederick County Pre-K Advisory Council* - This committee includes community representatives, school representatives, family members and members of the preschool staff. There are several purposes of this council. One is to share information about the current preschool program and the success of the students. Another is to brainstorm ideas for family and community engagement opportunities. Everyone on the council will bring different experiences and perspectives which can only enhance our program. Lastly, we will be planning for the sustainability of preschool should the VPI+ grant not be renewed at the conclusion of the 2018-19 school year.
  - *Dolly Parton Imagination Library* – United Way NSV is the fiscal agent for the Page County DPIL. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a 60-volume set of books beginning with the children's classic *The Little Engine That Could*. Each month a new, carefully selected book, will be mailed in your child's name directly to your home. Best of all it is a FREE GIFT. There is no cost or obligation to families.
- Invest in programs that:
  1. Provide tuition assistance for families unable to afford a quality preschool education.

- *Community Care & Learning Center* - provides high-quality care and enriching activities for 28-30 children ages 2 1/2 to 12 in Shenandoah and Page counties with priority enrollment given to working parents who have struggled to find dependable, safe childcare.
  - *Fremont Street Nursery* – provides six enrichment programs in order to provide high-quality childcare to low-income and single-parents, new caregivers and at-risk youths.
  - *Heritage Child Dev Center* - provides scholarships to families who could not afford a quality preschool education.
  - *Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter* - supports the management of Centralized Housing Intake (CHI) and helps establish a coordinated entry process in order to respond more quickly and effectively to the calls received.
  - *Winchester Day Nursery* – provides scholarships to families who could not afford a quality preschool education.
2. Promote high quality learning programs that prepare children for kindergarten.
- *Fremont Street Nursery* - provides six enrichment programs in order to provide high-quality childcare to low-income and single-parents, new caregivers and at-risk youths.
  - *Heritage Child Dev Center* - provides scholarships to families who could not afford a quality preschool education.
  - *Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum* – supports scholarships for summer camp programs.
  - *Shenandoah Education Foundation (DPIL)* - supports the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which provides a free book to registered children every month until they turn 5, upon which they receive a graduation book.
  - *Winchester Day Nursery* – provides scholarships to families who could not afford a quality preschool education.
3. Provide early intervention services that create a healthy beginning for young children.
- *Child Safe Center* - provides child abuse assessments, trauma screenings and mental health treatment services for abuse victims and their non-offending caretakers at both the Winchester and Shenandoah County locations.
  - *Healthy Families NSV* – supports the Car Seat Safety Project and Cribs for Kids Service Project.
  - *Healthy Families Shenandoah County* – provides free, in-home health and wellness screenings and education to families who are ALICE or in poverty and lack the transportation needed for medical and prevention services.
  - *Fremont Street Nursery* - provides six enrichment programs in order to provide high-quality childcare to low-income and single-parents, new caregivers and at-risk youths.
  - *Winchester Day Nursery*– provides scholarships to families who could not afford a quality preschool education.

**Objective: Students have access to high quality, enriching out-of-school programs where students have support and encouragement for educational success from engaged parents, advocates and mentors.**

Strategies:

- Invest in programs that:
  1. Ensure the availability of quality before and after-school care for school-aged children and youth.
    - *Big Brothers Big Sisters of Harrisonburg & Rockingham* – provides a Big Brothers/Big Sisters' school-based mentoring program in Shenandoah County.
    - *Big Brothers Big Sisters Northern Shenandoah Valley* – supports a new School-to-Work program to help Littles aged 15-18 years old discover their aptitudes in the workplace and learn what opportunities are available in the workforce in our community.
    - *The Kids Club (formerly Boys & Girls Club NSV)* – provides breakfast for children during summer for families experiencing food insecurity.
    - *Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum* – supports scholarships for summer camp programs.
  2. Provide early dropout prevention, and continue drop-out prevention efforts among middle and high school-aged children.
    - *Big Brothers Big Sisters of Harrisonburg & Rockingham* - provides a Big Brothers/Big Sisters' school-based mentoring program in Shenandoah County.
    - *Big Brothers Big Sisters Northern Shenandoah Valley* - supports a new School-to-Work program to help Littles aged 15-18 years old discover their aptitudes in the workplace and learn what opportunities are available in the workforce in our community
  3. Support collaborative efforts that help children read, build external and internal assets in youth, and prevent risky behavior.
    - *Reading Road Show - Gus Bus* – provides structured learning activities, shelf-stable food bags and book checkout services to the children and families of Page and Shenandoah counties.
    - *Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum* – supports scholarships for summer camp programs.

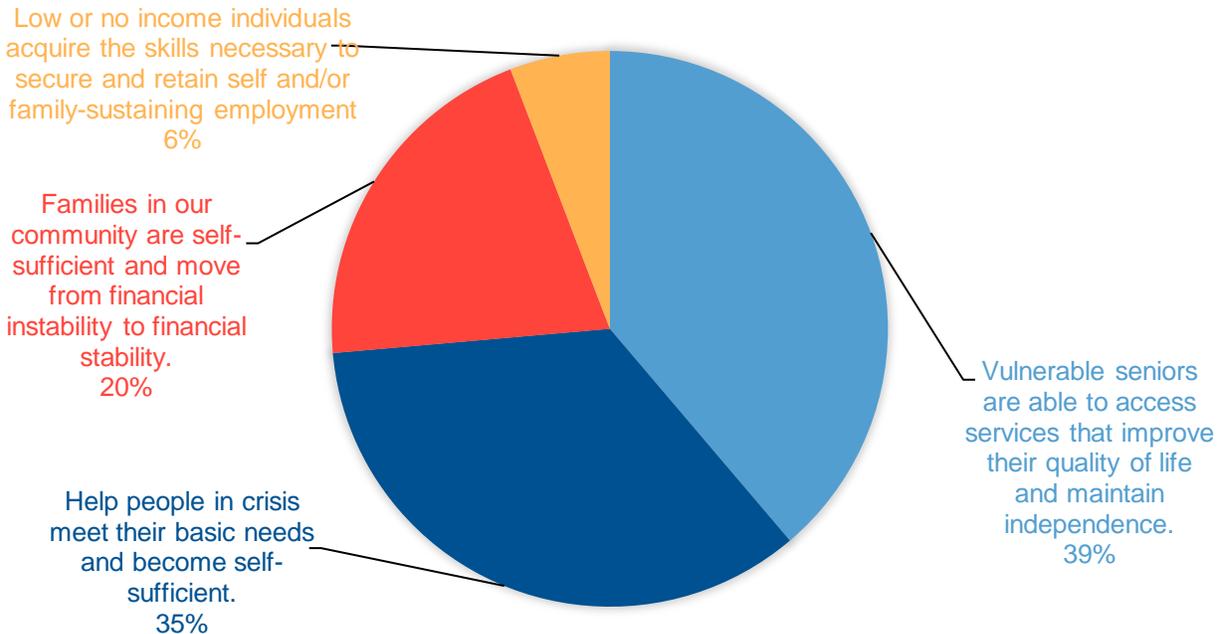
**Objective: Junior high and high school students have access to age-appropriate college and career preparation and graduate equipped with skills for success.**

Strategies:

- Support regional efforts to educate and promote a variety of career paths and post-secondary education options.
  - *Aspire Program* - a summer program for Winchester City Schools that targets rising high school students who failed at least one class and could be classified as “at-risk.”
  - *Virginia Employment Commission and Virginia Career Works* – United Way NSV partners with Virginia Career Works Centers which direct numerous workforce initiatives partnering with business, education, economic development, and other community and faith-based organizations to thoroughly understand the current labor market and to develop innovative solutions to address broad regional workforce issues.
  - *Top of Virginia Regional Chamber Workforce Committee* – United Way NSV has participated on the TVRC Workforce Committee. The committee works to educate and

- make available to Chamber members the opportunities for them to grow and develop their workforce by accessing the community resources. The Chamber collaborates with the education community, workforce development agencies, EDA's and other resources.
- Invest in programs that:
    1. Advance learning and career development
      - *Clarke County Education Foundation* – funds CCEF's existing Kajeet SmartSpot® devices which allow students to connect to the internet.
      - *Big Brothers Big Sisters NSV* - supports a new School-to-Work program to help Littles aged 15-18 years old discover their aptitudes in the workplace and learn what opportunities are available in the workforce in our community.
      - *Big Brothers Big Sisters of Harrisonburg & Rockingham* - provides a Big Brothers/Big Sisters' school-based mentoring program in Shenandoah County.
    2. Provide leadership and workforce development opportunities.
      - *Big Brothers Big Sisters NSV* - supports a new School-to-Work program to help Littles aged 15-18 years old discover their aptitudes in the workplace and learn what opportunities are available in the workforce in our community.
      - *Big Brothers Big Sisters of Harrisonburg & Rockingham* - provides a Big Brothers/Big Sisters' school-based mentoring program in Shenandoah County.

## Promote Financial Stability and Independence (Income/Financial Stability)



**Objective: Families in our community are self-sufficient and move from financial instability to financial stability.**

Strategies:

- Partner with local business and agencies to assist families in financial education.
  - *BB&T*
  - *Blue Ridge Housing Network*
  - *Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath)*
  - *United Bank*
  - *Virginia Cooperative Extension*
  - *Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA)*
  - *Wells Fargo*
- Partner with the local Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program to promote the opportunity for free tax preparation and tax credits.
  - *Valley Assistance Network (United Way Worldwide – My Free Taxes)*
  - *People Incorporated – VITA Taxes services*
- Create opportunities for families to move from financial instability to financial stability by investing in programs that:
  1. Provide case management support to assist families in finding permanent, safe and affordable housing.
    - *Blue Ridge Legal Services* - provides free legal assistance to low-income residents of NSV.

- *Blue Ridge Housing Network* - support clients with funding for security deposits and/or first month's rent to help homeless families secure housing as well as providing financial assistance to cover rent or utility bills during a temporary financial crisis.
  - *CHOICES* - supports victims of domestic violence to become financially stable.
  - *Faithworks* - supports the emergency financial assistance program (Pay it Forward) available to families experiencing temporary crisis.
  - *Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter* - supports the management of Centralized Housing Intake (CHI) and helps establish a coordinated entry process in order to respond more quickly and effectively to the calls received.
  - *The Salvation Army* – supports the food costs to serve three meals a day to residents and the community, as well as to fund utility assistance for low-income families and to fund bus tickets to provide residents with the transportation necessary to become more self-sufficient.
2. Partner with programs that enable older adults to live as independently as possible.
- *Adult Care Center* - supports a dementia-specific information and referral arm of the Adult Care Center that will help families' access resources they currently need or may potentially need down the road as they care for a loved one with dementia.
  - *Blue Ridge Habitat for Humanity* – supports the critical home repair program in Winchester, Frederick County and Clarke County.
3. Reduce barriers to sustainable employment and financial stability such as transportation, childcare, literacy, lack of skills, etc.
- *A Farm Less Ordinary* – funds the delivery and distribution of more than 3,500 lbs. of fresh, organically grown produce to families in need in Clarke County.
  - *CHOICES* - supports victims of domestic violence to become financially stable.
  - *Horizon Goodwill* – supports the Get Onboard! Job Readiness Program.
  - *Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area* – expands computer classes and supports citizenship/naturalization test preparation courses.
  - *Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter* - supports the management of Centralized Housing Intake (CHI) and helps establish a coordinated entry process in order to respond more quickly and effectively to the calls received.
  - *The Salvation Army* – supports the food costs to serve three meals a day to residents and the community, as well as to fund utility assistance for low-income families and to fund bus tickets to provide residents with the transportation necessary to become more self-sufficient.

**Objective: Vulnerable seniors are able to access services that improve their quality of life and maintain independence.**

Strategies:

- Promote volunteer assistance to help seniors and engagement of seniors as volunteers.
  - *United Way NSV Day of Caring* – United Way NSV works with partner agencies serving seniors to help identify projects that can be completed for volunteers.
  - *Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)* – United Way NSV partners with SCSEP, which is a community service and work-based job training

program for older Americans. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors.

- Invest in Programs that:
  1. Provide services for seniors that improve in-home services, care transitions/coordination, home modifications/assistive technology, housing and transportation.
    - *American Red Cross* - helps fund the Disaster Cycle Services program to alleviate human suffering in times of disaster.
    - *Blue Ridge Habitat for Humanity* – supports the critical home repair program in Winchester, Frederick County and Clarke County.
    - *Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging* – provides the local cash match for one of the four vans applied for in the FY 19/20 Department of Rail and Public Transportation Van Replacement Grant.
  2. Reduce food insecurity among seniors.
    - *Highland Food Pantry* – funds the Special Delivery Project, which reduces food insecurity among senior citizens by providing bags of nutritious food to identified persons-at-risk each month.
    - *Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging* – provides the local cash match for one of the four vans applied for in the FY 19/20 Department of Rail and Public Transportation Van Replacement Grant.
    - *The Salvation Army* – supports the food costs to serve three meals a day to residents and the community, as well as to fund utility assistance for low-income families, and to fund bus tickets to provide residents with the transportation necessary to become more self-sufficient.
  3. Support caregivers of vulnerable seniors.
    - *Adult Care Center* - supports a dementia-specific information and referral arm of the Adult Care Center that will help families’ access resources they currently need or may potentially need down the road as they care for a loved one with dementia.
    - *Dementia Matters* – provides quality training to individuals serving as caregivers for family members living with dementia and to give them the tools to better understand the world their loved ones are living in now.
    - *Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging* – provides the local cash match for one of the four vans applied for in the FY 19/20 Department of Rail and Public Transportation Van Replacement Grant

**Objective: Low or no-income individuals acquire the skills necessary to secure and retain self and/or family-sustaining employment**

Strategies:

- Invest in Programs that:
  1. Connect residents seeking employment to current job opportunities.
    - *Horizon Goodwill* – supports the Get Onboard! Job Readiness Program.
    - *Literacy Volunteers Area Winchester* – expands computer classes and supports citizenship/naturalization test preparation courses.
  2. Support opportunities for people with disabilities to gain employment and increase their independence.

- *A Farm Less Ordinary* – funds the delivery and distribution of more than 3,500 lbs. of fresh, organically grown produce to families in need in Clarke County.

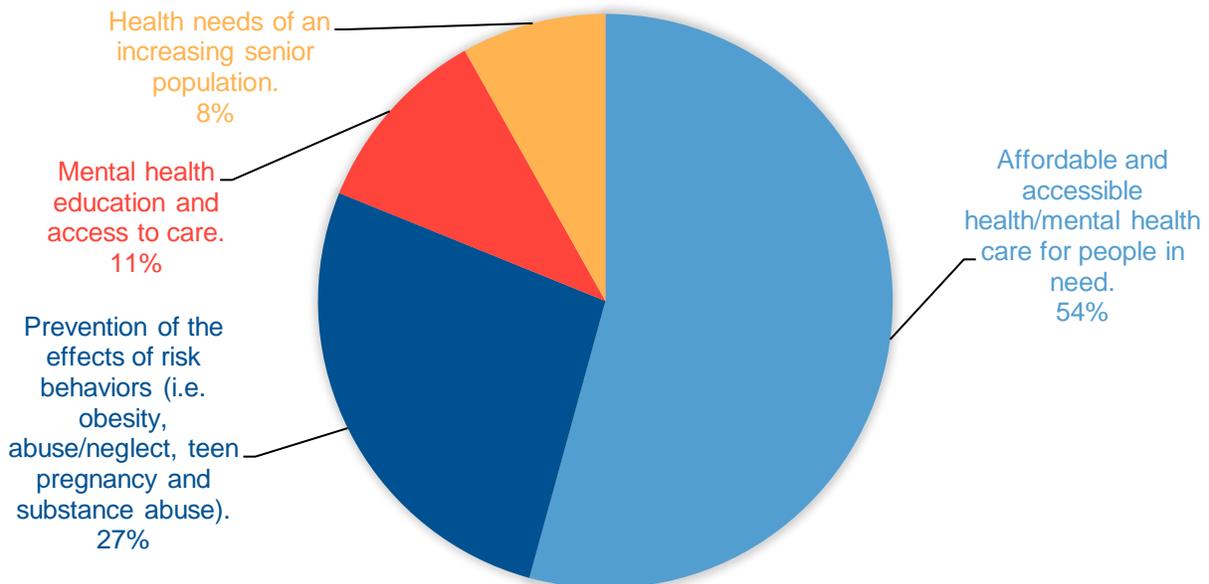
**Objective: Help people in crisis meet their basic needs and become self-sufficient.**

Strategies:

- Encourage coordination among organizations helping families meet basic needs and work towards self-sufficiency.
  - *Housing Coalition of the Northern Shenandoah Valley* – United Way NSV and Blue Ridge Habitat for Humanity founded in partnership the Housing Coalition of the Northern Shenandoah Valley. The Housing Coalition seeks to create the environment within the community to ensure everyone’s housing needs are met and that everyone has the opportunity to live with dignity and hope.
  - *Project Connect* - Project Connect is Winchester’s one-stop, free resource fair. Participants can receive assistance from more than 65 service providers, all under the same roof—what often takes months to accomplish can be completed in one day.
  - *Valley Assistance Network* - The Valley Assistance Network (VAN) is a program of United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley created to help families navigate community resources and create a path to financial stability.
  - *Photos with Santa* – A United Way NSV event, Photos with Santa offers free photos with Santa during the Holiday Season, a time when many families are struggling to make ends meet.
- Invest in programs that:
  1. Help individuals and families in crises to access information and services to meet their needs.
    - *The Laurel Center* - supports the 24/7 emergency shelter.
    - *Family Promises of Shenandoah County* – provides support services to homeless families in crisis.
    - *Page One* – assists low-income families of Page County with emergency financial needs, such as fuel and electricity.
    - *The Salvation Army* – supports the food costs to serve three meals a day to residents and the community, as well as to fund utility assistance for low-income families, and to fund bus tickets to provide residents with the transportation necessary to become more self-sufficient.
    - *WATTS* – provides safe, reliable bus transportation of homeless guests to temporary shelter locations.
  3. Assist individuals and families in acute crises to access services that help meet their basic needs and stabilize their situation (housing, transportation, utility assistance and food insecurity).
    - *A Farm Less Ordinary* – funds the delivery and distribution of more than 3,500 lbs. of fresh, organically grown produce to families in need in Clarke County.
    - *AIDS Response Effort* – provides assistance for transportation, daycare and utilities in conjunction with case management services to area ALICE families who due to governmental program guidelines do not qualify for other assistance programs.

- *Blue Ridge Habitat for Humanity* - supports the critical home repair program in Winchester, Frederick County and Clarke County.
- *Blue Ridge Housing Network* - support clients with funding for security deposits and/or first month's rent to help homeless families secure housing, as well as providing financial assistance to cover rent or utility bills during a temporary financial crisis.
- *Faithworks* - supports the emergency financial assistance program (Pay it Forward) available to families experiencing temporary crisis.
- *Family Promise of Shenandoah County* – provides support services to homeless families in crisis.
- *LFCC Education Foundation* – supports the food pantry, started with last year's impact grant funding, by utilizing funds to purchase food for their pantry that help meet the needs of low-income and food insecure students at the college.
- *Page One* – assists low income families of Page County with emergency financial needs, such as fuel and electricity.
- *Highland Food Pantry* – provides personal care and feminine hygiene items to clients.
- *The Salvation Army*– supports the food costs to serve three meals a day to residents and the community, as well as to fund utility assistance for low-income families, and to fund bus tickets to provide residents with the transportation necessary to become more self-sufficient.

### Build Healthier Communities (Health)



**Objective: Families and individuals are able to access quality and affordable health care which includes: physical, dental, mental health and wellness.**

### Strategies:

- Partner with organizations to reduce barriers to access by covering co-pays for physical, mental health and wellness services.
  - *FamilyWize* - United Way Worldwide partners with organizations like FamilyWize to provide prescription drug discount cards to the community. These savings cards are being distributed through United Way NSV, partner agencies and other organizations in the area for people with no or limited prescription drug coverage. There is no cost to families for this discount card and there are no enrollment or eligibility requirements.
  - *Project Connect* - Project Connect is Winchester's one-stop, free resource fair. Participants can receive assistance from more than 65 service providers, all under the same roof—what often takes months to accomplish can be completed in one day.
- Invest in Programs that:
  1. Help individuals improve and maintain their physical, oral and mental health to contribute to a better overall social wellbeing.
    - *AbbaCare, Inc.* – provides free pregnancy testing, pregnancy counseling/education, prenatal vitamins, and diagnostic ultrasounds for low-income women and families without insurance and who have not yet qualified for Medicaid through the Early Pregnancy Care Stopgap Program.
    - *AIDS Response Effort* - support efforts to expand public awareness about services offered.
    - *Blue Ridge Hospice* – supplements the continuation and further development of the Grief and Loss Support Services Program which provides grief counseling, support groups, educational workshops, children's grief programs, telephone outreach and resource materials, while developing new programs designed to support those who have experienced a loss in hospice care, as well as anyone in our community affected by death, dying and grief.
    - *Concern Hotline* - provides community trainings focused on recognizing suicidal behaviors, initial intervention with potentially suicidal individuals and understanding how to assist someone experiencing suicidal thoughts or actions.
    - *Dental Clinic NSV* – provides dental services to individuals without insurance or that cannot pay for services and to provide dental screenings during the Healthy Living Events in exchange for a healthy food voucher.
    - *LFCC Education Foundation* – provides mental health evaluation and therapy/counseling services to students.
    - *Page Free Clinic* – provides dental equipment and partially fund a dentist to expand dental services to Page County residents who are uninsured and/or ALICE families.
    - *Sinclair Health Clinic (formerly Free Medical Clinic NSV)* – provides direct patient care of up to 200 ALICE families in Winchester, Frederick and Clarke counties by a primary care clinician.
    - *Shenandoah County Community Health Clinic* – provides 40 hours per week of counseling services for students in Shenandoah County Schools by a professional counselor.

- *Shenandoah County Dental Clinic* – provides one day of dental care monthly to uninsured children and adults with incomes below the ALICE threshold.
- 2. Assist individuals by providing transportation solutions for appointments.
  - *Wheels for Wellness (formerly Faith in Action)* – provides non-emergency medical transportation.
  - *Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging* – provides the local cash match for one of the four vans applied for in the FY 19/20 Department of Rail and Public Transportation Van Replacement Grant

**Objective: Children and Youth have access to emergency and ongoing mental health and counseling services.**

Strategies:

- Invest in Programs that:
  1. Expand youth mental health psychiatric services, counseling services, day treatment services and case management services.
    - *Concern Hotline* - provides community trainings focused on recognizing suicidal behaviors, initial intervention with potentially suicidal individuals and understanding how to assist someone experiencing suicidal thoughts or actions.
    - *Child Safe Center* - provides child abuse assessments, trauma screenings and mental health treatment services for abuse victims and their non-offending caretakers at both the Winchester and Shenandoah County locations.
    - *The Laurel Center* - supports the 24/7 emergency shelter.
  2. Educate administrators, teachers and other school staff on how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations.
    - *Concern Hotline* -- provides community trainings focused on recognizing suicidal behaviors, initial intervention with potentially suicidal individuals and understanding how to assist someone experiencing suicidal thoughts or actions.
    - *Child Safe Center* - provides child abuse assessments, trauma screenings and mental health treatment services for abuse victims and their non-offending caretakers at both the Winchester and Shenandoah County locations.
    - *Infant & Toddler Connection* – provides funding for two employees to receive their Infant Mental Health endorsement.
    - *The Laurel Center* - supports the 24/7 emergency shelter.

**Objective: Reduce substance use/abuse and all its devastating consequences on individuals, families, and communities.**

Strategies:

- Utilize partnerships to raise awareness about substance use and addiction.
  - *SBIRT/Unite Us* – George Mason University and Valley Health (see page 27-28 for a full description of this program and partnership)
  - *Project Connect* - Project Connect is Winchester’s one-stop, free resource fair. Participants can receive assistance from more than 65 service providers, all under the same roof—what often takes months to accomplish can be completed in one day.

- Invest in Programs that:
  1. Prevent substance abuse among youth.
    - *Clean, Inc.* – helps implement the Children of Divorce Program which helps children build coping skills to deal with problems to prevent them from turning to substance abuse.
    - *Page Alliance for Community Action* – assists with the costs of random drug screenings for student athletes and drivers at the two Page County high schools in order to deter youth in Page County from using substances.
  2. Provide a full range of drug and alcohol treatment programs focused on a person's specific needs, regardless of their ability to pay.
    - *Northern Shenandoah Valley Substance Abuse Coalition* - provides funding to continue the Peer Support Specialist Program which provides assistance and support to those suffering with addiction.

**Objective: Prevent and respond to domestic violence.**

Strategies:

- Invest in Programs that:
  1. Promote healthy environments as well as programs that support victims of domestic violence by helping them and their families find services, safety and stable housing.
    - *CHOICES* - supports victims of domestic violence to become financially stable.
    - *The Laurel Center* - supports the 24/7 emergency shelter.

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM INVESTMENTS (2017-2020)

### Integrated Service Delivery

One of the goals of the 2017-2020 investment summary was to improve the quality, coordination and cooperation of programs that work to stabilize individuals and families during crises, meet their basic needs and help them move to self-sufficiency.

The goal in 2017-2020 was to:

1. Support research of best practices in other communities to develop a practical model for integrated service delivery.
2. Support comprehensive services that guide individuals and families towards self-sufficiency by enhancing coordination among service providers, bridging of services and case management.

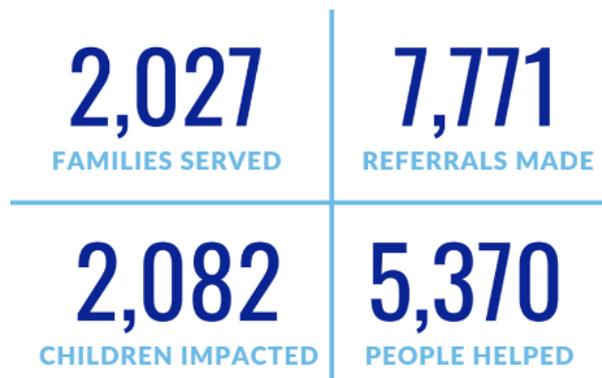
### Valley Assistance Network:

After completing the 2017-2020 Community Needs Assessment, we had a vision to use a collective impact approach to develop a new integrated service delivery model. This approach would be the seamless delivery of services such as enrollment in income supports, direct service programs, case management, workshops, etc. as a one-stop approach to increasing financial stability in low-income, working families. We sought to create a place that ALICE® families, who typically do not qualify for social services, could come to in order to seek assistance in navigating the complex landscape of community supports.

In October of 2017, Valley Assistance Network (VAN) was soft launched, with a full launch in April of 2018. VAN's mission is to engage community resources to move individuals and families from crisis to financial security. The core service of VAN is a comprehensive Resource & Referral system. Through a coordinated network of services, we help people in crisis access information and resources to stabilize their situation and begin their journey to financial stability.

In just two years, VAN has helped over 2,000 families connect with shelter, clothing, food, medical care, job training and a multitude of other resources to improve their lives.

**OUR IMPACT:** VAN Program outcomes October 2017 – April 2020



- 80% of clients served by VAN are part of the ALICE® population

- 70% are female-headed households
- Housing insecurity is by far the number one reason families contact VAN
  - 8 in 10 families are homeless or at risk of being homeless
  - In 2019: 280 households reported being homeless at intake, including 421 children

The top referrals are:

1. Housing assistance/eviction and homelessness
2. Rent & utility assistance
3. Health care
4. Food

In phase two of the program, we offer the tools and resources to help families become self-sufficient, and ultimately, financially secure. Financial Education and Coaching programs equip people with the tools and skills they need to get better paying jobs, keep more of what they earn, and save for their future. Clients have access to an array of services by the Network's partners such as budgeting, credit counseling and free tax preparation.

Key Features for the Community:

- Reduces the challenges and barriers to accessing multiple services
- Eliminates redundancy, decreases wait times for clients seeking help
- Streamlined intake and eligibility requirements to make referrals easier
- Increases income through VITA and EITC

Key Functions of VAN:

- Makes all services (Government, nonprofit) more efficient and effective
- Enhanced information sharing to provide a better client experience
- Fills a needed gap in our community by providing a central point of entry
- Promotes self-sufficiency and economic mobility

It's clear by the results of over two years of work that VAN fills a critical role within in the community and with our corporate partners. We have never been more equipped to serve as the centralized hub for access to community support systems – and that was clear when COVID-19 hit. In the first six weeks of the outbreak, VAN fielded more than 150 requests for people seeking help with rent, utilities, food and other critical needs. We quickly mobilized and moved to a mobile call center. Utilizing technology, we worked with key partners to get resources into the hands of families who needed it most. We helped hundreds of families stay in their homes and keep the lights on.

Our work with VAN needs to continue to evolve, including figuring out a way to increase capacity. Volunteers have largely driven our capacity to serve more families. Keeping costs low, we employ 1.5 staff to run this extensive operation. Our volunteers help fill a needed role in order to serve the needs of an expanding clientele. In order to recruit more volunteers and expand our efforts, VAN will need to establish a larger base of operations in order to accommodate the increase demand. In

addition to an increase in space and volunteer services, is the need for improved technology in order to quickly and efficiently respond to the needs of the clients VAN serves. We hope to be able to expand our program offering to enhance budget vouching, financial education and potentially offer more programs like tax preparation services.

### **Connect NSV Network powered by Unite Us®:**

In addition to integrated service delivery, a consistent point of feedback from our partner agencies was the frustration in the lack of communication and coordination among service providers. Many agencies reported not knowing what services other agencies offered and how to refer clients to those agencies. Additionally, we found that many agencies were serving the same clients but weren't able to coordinate service delivery efforts around those clients. It became clear that United Way could help provide a way for agencies to coordinate service delivery in a more integrated and effective way.

In the summer of 2019, Connect NSV was developed through a relationship with a company called Unite Us® through the support of a collaborative effort between George Mason University and Valley Health. Connect NSV is a coordinated referral network that seamlessly connects community members to services while allowing service providers to communicate in real time about their shared clients' care and track outcomes together.

Connect NSV, a regional care coordination network started by United Way NSV, was created as part of a five-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Connect NSV utilizes an evidence-based practice known as Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) to identify substance misuse in the community and offer early intervention and treatment for people at risk. The network works to connect providers across sectors to ensure that all community members can get the care they need, whether medical, social or mental/behavioral.

Connect NSV is powered by Unite Us, a technology company that builds coordinated care networks of health and human service providers. The company empowers both medical and social service providers to work together, integrating health and social care. With Unite Us, providers across sectors can send and receive secure referrals, track every person's total health journey, and report on tangible outcomes across a full range of services in a centralized, cohesive, and collaborative ecosystem. This social infrastructure helps communities transform their ability to track outcomes, improve health and measure impact at scale.

All Connect NSV community partners are trained to administer the SBIRT standardized screening and to send referrals through the Unite Us platform. No longer restricted to a clinical setting, these SBIRT screenings and referrals are successfully happening within the community at the grassroots level. Partners can engage, respond, and meaningfully track what happens to their clients.

We started with a pilot group of five agencies – Faithworks, Valley Assistance Network, Northern Shenandoah Valley Substance Abuse Coalition, the Dr. Terry Sinclair Health Clinic and Valley Health. In 10 months, the network has grown to 19 agencies with 50 users. It is boasting incredible outcomes: agencies have made 549 in-network referrals, with 238 (43%) of referrals being resolved cases.

Valley Assistance Network (VAN) serves as the coordination center for the Connect NSV network and is a driver in getting new agencies engaged and trained. The Unite Us software allowed VAN and other partners to quickly and efficiently serve hundreds of clients during the first few months of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Current Partners on the Network Include:

1. Abbacare
2. AIDS Response Effort, Inc.
3. Blue Ridge Housing Network, Inc.
4. Catholic Charities Diocese of Arlington
5. ChildSafe Center - CAC
6. F.R.E.E. Foundation NSV
7. Faithworks, Inc.
8. Highland Food Pantry
9. Horizon Goodwill
10. Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area
11. New Eve Maternity Home
12. Northern Shenandoah Valley Substance Abuse Coalition
13. NWORKS, Inc.
14. Shenandoah Compassionate Care
15. The Dr. Terry Sinclair Health ClinicThe Salvation Army - Winchester
16. Valley Assistance Network
17. Valley Health
18. Winchester Area Temporary Thermal Shelter (WATTS)

VAN is also leading the way in performing SBIRT's. To date, VAN has completed just over 350 screenings. One hundred thirty-four people tested positive for possible substance use or depression. Of the 134 who tested positive, nearly 60% (79 people) accepted a referral to Valley Health for a brief intervention and possible services or treatment. This means that 79 people – who did not reach out for mental health or substance use services – were given access to treatment.

## DEMOGRAPHICS (2020-2023)

Demographics is the study of a population based on factors such as age, race and sex, among others. Governments, corporations and non-government organizations use demographics to learn more about a population's characteristics for many purposes, including policy development and economic market research.<sup>3</sup>

### Key Findings

- With the exception of Page County, all jurisdictions can expect to have population increases between 2018-2023.
- Frederick County will have the highest expected population change at almost 12%.
- The average population increase for all jurisdictions is 4.7%.
- Frederick County is listed as one of the Top 20 Fastest growing localities in Virginia.
- The 40-64 age demographic is the largest age group of the region. The 65+ population appears to be the fastest growing age demographic in the region.
- Frederick County had the largest growth in senior population from 2010 to 2018. All jurisdictions with the exception of Page County had increases in population from 2010 to 2018. Shenandoah County has the highest percentage of seniors 65+ of all the jurisdictions, followed closely by Frederick County and Page County.
- The race/ethnicity projections show that the region's white/Caucasian demographic will remain the predominant demographic in the area.
- The Hispanic/Latino population is on track to have the highest percentage increase over time. From 2020 to 2040 it's predicted that the Hispanic/Latino population will increase by 165%.
- From 2020-2040 the Non-Hispanic population will see a 3.4% increase versus the Hispanic population which will see a 165% increase.
- Virginia has a sizeable immigrant community, making up more than 12% of the state's total population. Winchester has the highest number of U.S. citizen by naturalization (4%) and non-U.S. citizens (8%).

<sup>3</sup> Investopedia - <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/demographics.asp>

## EDUCATION (2020-2023)

**Education is a cornerstone for success in school, work and life. It also benefits the whole community: high school graduates have higher earning potential, contribute more to their local economies, are more engaged in their communities and are more likely to raise kids who also graduate on time.**

### Key Findings

- Page County is classified as a childcare desert.
- It's estimated that there are 14,138 children under the age of 5 in our communities and only an estimated 6,923 childcare spots available for them.
- The average cost of infant childcare is \$14,063 per year (an increase of \$3,605 from 2016, 34.4% increase), or \$1,172 per month (an increase of \$300 from 2016); childcare for a 4 year old costs \$10,867 per year (an increase of \$2,910 from 2016, 36.5% increase), or \$663 per month (an increase of \$243).
- 11.1% of Virginians can afford infant care (this is down 24.5% from 2016 when 35.6% of Virginians could afford infant care).
- The percentage of children living in poverty decreased across all geographies when compared to 2015 percentages. Page County and the City of Winchester still had higher percentages of childhood poverty than the state average of Virginia which is at 14%.
- All jurisdictions saw an increase in children enrolled in Free/Reduced Lunch Programs when comparing 2016-2017 data to 2018-2019 data.
- 85% of children in single-headed, female households are considered below the ALICE® threshold or in poverty compared to 70% in single-headed, male households and 27% with two parents in the household.
- Children living below 200% of the poverty level are economically disadvantaged and live in families that struggle to meet basic needs such as, food, housing, utilities, childcare and transportation. Two out of every five children in the Northern Shenandoah Valley classify as economically disadvantaged.
- One out of every 10 people in the City of Winchester say they speak English "less than very well."
- The City of Winchester has approximately 37.6% of their Hispanic population that do not speak English. Clarke County shows a higher percentage (40.5%) of the Asian population that do not speak English.
- All jurisdictions (with the exception of Winchester City) had higher on-time graduation rates than the Virginia average of 91.6%.
- Economically disadvantaged students saw a much lower on-time graduation rate than students in all the jurisdictions.
- For the jurisdictions that provided data, English learners had even lower on-time graduation rates, with the lowest on-time graduation rates seen by students in the homeless population.
- All jurisdictions saw a decrease in postsecondary participation.
- Page County has the highest percentage of high school students who do not receive a diploma. Frederick County and Clarke County have the smallest percentage of high school students who do not receive a diploma. Page, Shenandoah, Warren and Winchester City all had percentages higher than the US and Virginia averages.

## INCOME/FINANCIAL STABILITY (2020-2023)

**When people are able to find decent jobs, provide for their families and save for the future, they and their children are more likely to enjoy healthy lives and succeed in school. Everyone benefits, because financially stable individuals and families lead to a more competitive workforce and a stronger community.**

### Key Findings

- Each jurisdiction, with the exception of Page County, saw a decrease in poverty status. Four jurisdictions (Clarke, Frederick, Shenandoah and Warren) had poverty levels less than the U.S. and Virginia Average.
- Although poverty rates are going down and more people are working, it's interesting to note that the very slight increase or even decline in the median income may be a signal that workers aren't necessarily making more money and could be falling within the ALICE® population.
- The average weekly wage across all private industry sectors in the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Area was \$869 (up from \$773 in 2016), which represents a 12% increase.
- In Virginia, 57% of jobs pay less than \$20 per hour, with about half of those paying between \$10 and \$15 per hour
- Those residents with the least education are more likely to have earnings below the ALICE Threshold.
- Men in Virginia earn at least 42% more than women across all educational levels, and as much as 65% more for those with a graduate or professional degree.
- SNAP benefit participation increased in Page, Shenandoah and Warren Counties, but decreases in Clarke, Frederick and Winchester as compared to 2015 data.
- In Clarke County, almost half of all households receiving SNAP have one or more people in the house that are 60 years and over.
- In Clarke County, 40.2% of households who are receiving SNAP reported having two or more people in the household working in the past 12 months.
- In Frederick, Shenandoah and Warren counties, and Winchester, the percent of food insecure residents above 185% of poverty actually increased between 2014 and 2017. Food insecure people in the 130% to 185% of poverty category increased in Clarke, Page, Shenandoah and Winchester.
- There are census tracts that are identified as food deserts in Frederick County, Shenandoah County, Warren County and the City of Winchester.
- A 2017 report to the Virginia Housing Policy Advisory Council found that Virginia has a shortage of affordable housing, and this has major implications for state policy priorities like workforce development, transportation, education and health.
- The current national shortage of seven million affordable and available homes for renters with extremely low incomes means that only 37 such homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households.
- Nearly every U.S. County lacks an adequate supply (HUD, 2018). As a result, 71% of extremely low-income renters are severely housing cost-burdened, spending more than half of their limited incomes on housing costs, which forces them to cut back on other basic necessities like adequate food, health care and transportation, and also puts them at risk of housing instability.

- The housing cost burden of renters in each county/city was about 50%, meaning half of all renters are spending over the HUD recommendation of no more than 30% of their income on housing costs. This was consistent with the Virginia average of 48.9%.
- Winchester had the highest number of evictions.
- Page, Shenandoah and Warren County had the highest eviction rates of all the localities.
- Western Virginia Point in Time Count Results – Full Region (Cities of Winchester, Harrisonburg, Counties of Clarke, Frederick, Page, Rockingham, Shenandoah and Warren), show a 13% increase in the number of homeless individuals.

## HEALTH (2020-2023)

**Good Health is both a community responsibility and a community benefit: it goes beyond personal diet, exercise and the many other individual choices we make. The foundation for a healthy life is in the neighborhoods we have built and environments we inhabit. When people have access to parks, bike paths, safe playgrounds, healthy foods and good medical care, they are more likely to succeed in school, work and life.**

### Key Findings

- Commenting on the contributing factors to poor health status, interview participants mentioned nutrition and diet, low physical activity and exercise, and food insecurity. Many commented on the lack of affordable, healthy food choices in some parts of the community. Obesity among children and youth within the community was reported to be a concern.
- Page County showed a higher rate of limited access to exercise opportunities than the other counties as reported by 2019 County Health Rankings.
- Food deserts – low-income areas more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store in urban areas and more than 10 miles from a supermarket or large grocery store in rural areas – exist in six of the nine counties plus Winchester City in WMC’s primary service area. In the secondary service area, food deserts exist in two of four counties.
- Ninety-eight schools in the WMC community, located in every county except Clarke, had 40% or more of their students eligible for free and reduced-price lunches, indicating risks of poor nutrition and hunger.
- While there has been some growth in providers, the Winchester community is experiencing lower ratio rates when it comes to the number of primary care physicians per 100,000 populations, the number of available dentists, and an increased need for additional mental health providers. The Winchester community is below the Virginia ratio in several counties for these types of providers, according to the County Health Rankings report. Four of six Virginia counties in the service area ranked in the bottom half of all counties in their respective states on “access to care” in the County Health Rankings.
- Six of the nine counties in WMC’s primary service area, plus Winchester City, have higher percentages of uninsured residents than their respective states, according to the U.S. Census. Seven counties overall have higher percentages of uninsured residents than their respective states. Nine of the thirteen counties have higher percentages of uninsured residents than the U.S.
- Concerns about access to care were the most frequently mentioned factor contributing to poor health in key informant interviews.
- Lack of accessible or reliable transportation to health care appointments and a lack of providers who accept new Medicaid and even Medicare patients, were the most frequently mentioned specific access to care issues in interviews, especially for low-income individuals and senior citizens.
- 32% of survey respondents reported not being able to get needed basic primary care due to lack of insurance and 14.4% reported that they could not afford the medical care.
- Participants in interviews believe that low-income housing and poverty were the top issues contributing to poor health status and limited care. Other income-related factors noted include difficulty with securing transportation to medical appointments and homelessness.

- In the survey, low income and financial challenges were reported. For survey respondents who reported not being able to always get the care they needed, affordability and lack of insurance coverage were the reasons most frequently mentioned.
- Nine of the thirteen counties in WMC's community reported poor mental health days higher than their state's average according to the County Health Rankings report.
- There are twelve locations in WMC's community that are designated as a medically underserved area or population.
- The suicide rate in ten of the thirteen counties in the overall service area for which data were available was worse than their respective state's rates, according to the state health departments in Virginia and West Virginia.
- Major concerns mentioned by key informants were the need for more providers to care for children with mental and behavioral health issues. The WMC community has limited resources for this type of community need.
- An additional concern mentioned by key informants was connecting patients with services needed. Wait times are very long for patients to see a clinician.
- A health factor of alcohol use based on binge and excessive drinking placed Clarke and Frederick counties in the second quartile of all Virginia counties, according to County Health Rankings report.
- Substance abuse was a major concern and mentioned frequently by key informant interview participants. It was portrayed as a growing and serious issue.
- Substance abusers are often classified as offenders, and have limited options for seeking treatment.
- In the WMC community, suicide rates were higher than the state averages.

## COMMUNITY IMPACT STRATEGY 2020-2023

### Demographic Priorities

#### **ALICE®:**

Our commitment remains to serve ALICE®. ALICE, an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, is a way of defining and understanding the struggles of households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level, but not enough to afford a bare-bones household budget. For far too many families, the cost of living outpaces what they earn. These households struggle to manage even their most basic needs - housing, food, transportation, childcare, health care and necessary technology. When funds run short, cash-strapped households are forced to make impossible choices, such as deciding between quality childcare or paying the rent, filling a prescription or fixing the car. These short-term decisions have long-term consequences not only for ALICE families, but for all of us. We envision a world where all those who work to keep our local economies running can support themselves and their families. *We look forward to the release of the 2020 ALICE® report in the summer of 2020. We will use that updated data to help us fully understand the challenges this community faces as well as develop additional responses that may go above and beyond what's contained in this document.*

#### **Race, Equity & Inclusion:**

Acknowledging that racial and ethnic disparities persist, that result with disproportionate impacts for people of color in social determinants of well-being, is a foundational component in working towards racial equity within our communities.

We commit to developing a better understanding of the challenges our community faces when it comes to racial inequities. These inequities contribute to the disparities we see in the areas of health, education and financial stability and will continue to hold us back from being a just community where every person is valued equally, receives the full benefit of community belonging and has the opportunity to contribute, unless we address them.

We are committed to addressing these inequities using the following strategies:

1. Listen and learn as we work together to heal, find solutions, and build a more equitable and just community. We don't have all the answers, but we have the opportunity and obligation to actively listen, reflect, learn, act and encourage others to do so as well.
2. Engage in partnership with community-based organizations, following their leadership on how to address issues of institutional racism in our community.
3. Utilize data in order to inform the community and our partners on the issues that disproportionately affect communities of color and how they can be addressed.
4. Develop and support programs and initiatives that address racial inequities.
5. Be a voice for the reforms and community support necessary to bring justice, equality, and equity to our society.

Living United means being courageous and eliminating the disparities that keep certain segments of our community from achieving opportunities for a better life. It means mobilizing the caring power of community to lift those most in need and create communities where no one experiences barriers to living healthy, thriving lives.

## Community Impact Strategy:

We recognize that funding alone cannot solve deeply rooted community problems. Our strategy at United Way NSV is to provide funding to innovative programs that support community-wide goals, but to not stop there by going above and beyond to advocate for community change, convene community leaders around community issues and educate businesses, community leaders and the public at large about how to best support an effort for positive community change.

Our comprehensive impact strategy includes:

- **FUNDING:** Funding innovative programs that support community-wide goals
- **ADVOCACY:** Advocating for the voiceless to ensure policy and program improvement
- **CONVENING:** Collaborating with those who have the passion, expertise and resources to drive change
- **EDUCATING:** Educating businesses, community leaders and the public on critical local issues

## Strategic Priorities:

Our strategic priorities are meant to set a roadmap for the community, our partner agencies, and other strategic partners. At the same time, we pride ourselves on the ability to meet immediate and emerging needs in the community and reserve the right to change, amend or add strategic priorities should the needs of the community change. No one can predict with certainty how the COVID-19 pandemic will impact the needs of the community and we are committed to adjusting our strategic priorities should we need to in order to address ongoing and potentially unforeseen needs.

**Investing in our children (Education):** Helping children and youth achieve their potential.

Goals	Strategic Priorities
<b>Basic Needs:</b> Children have access to basic needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide basic needs support to children and families in crisis. (F)</li> <li>• Help children who face neglect or abuse. (F)</li> <li>• Promote positive parenting and healthy child development. (F, A)</li> </ul>
<b>Early Learning:</b> Preschool aged children have access to affordable, high quality, early learning programs that prepare them for kindergarten.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide tuition assistance for families unable to afford a quality preschool education. (F, A, E)</li> <li>• Promote high quality learning programs that prepare children for kindergarten. (F, A)</li> </ul>
<b>Youth Support Programs:</b> Students have access to high quality, enriching out of school programs where students have support and encouragement from engaged parents, advocates and mentors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the availability of quality before and after-school care for school-aged children and youth. (F, A, C)</li> <li>• Ensure access to age-appropriate mentors and other academic supports. (F)</li> </ul>

**Creating Economic Opportunity for All (Income/Financial Stability):** Helping families in our community become self-sufficient and move from financial instability to financial stability.

Goals	Strategic Priorities
<b>Basic Needs:</b> Support our most vulnerable neighbors by providing them access to basic needs supports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand availability and access to safe, adequate shelter for individuals and families struggling with homelessness. (F, A, C)</li> <li>Ensure availability and access to healthy food and essential personal care items. (F)</li> </ul>
<b>Housing:</b> Families have access to a continuum of housing solutions that provide safe, decent and affordable housing options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the availability of short-term emergency rent and utility assistance with a focus on prevention efforts. (F, A, C)</li> <li>Support programs that provide critical home repairs for qualifying homeowners. (F)</li> </ul>
<b>Employment:</b> Identify & remove the gaps and barriers that currently exist for individuals to enter the workforce and attain and retain family sustaining employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect households with affordable transportation options. (F, A, C, E)</li> <li>Improve access to quality, affordable childcare (see education).</li> <li>Improve literacy and job skills. (F)</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Stability:</b> Create opportunities for families to move from financial instability to financial stability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support a coordinated and integrated comprehensive Resource and Referral System (VAN) that helps connect and navigate people to critical community resources and services. (A, C, E)</li> <li>Provide case management, tools and resources to support families in becoming self-sufficient, and ultimately, financially secure. (A, C, E)</li> </ul>

**Build Healthier Communities (Health):** Helping individuals live quality lives & achieve maximum health and independence.

Goals	Strategic Priorities
<b>Access to Care:</b> All households have easy to access and ample, affordable, high quality, preventative, immediate and follow-up health and dental care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to necessary health care services and those that reduce barriers to receiving and accessing health care services. (F, A)</li> <li>Increase access to affordable, high quality and regular dental care. (F, A, C)</li> </ul>
<b>Trauma Informed Care:</b> Households have access to the necessary supports to address the negative effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), violence and physical hazards; communities support people’s health, safety, and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support an equitable community-wide system of trauma-informed care, provides accessible evidence-based treatments from trained, knowledgeable, and culturally literate specialists in adequate supply. (A, C)</li> <li>Reduce intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and child abuse. (F)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Behavioral Health:</b> Households will demonstrate improved behavioral health by reporting better mental health and a reduction in substance abuse, and reduced stigma that is a barrier to care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure a continuum of services exists to meet behavioral health needs. (F, A, C, E)</li><li>• Provide immediate and adequate access to substance abuse services for those who are in crisis. (F)</li><li>• Expand community awareness and reduce stigma associated with having mental health and substance use disorders. (F, A, C, E)</li></ul>
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