

Glad You Asked! Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I give to Sioux Empire United Way?

United Way is the most effective way to direct your charitable donations to caring and well-run community programs. Volunteers carefully invest your gift in programs that have proven records of providing life transforming services in a cost-effective manner.

How does United Way invest my gift?

Each year, trained volunteers work with our knowledgeable staff to carefully review the management and effectiveness of the agencies funded and use this information to determine funding levels. This information gathered from the review process is focused on results. The four key factors in these results include: program accountability, demonstrated change in people's lives, efficiently and effectively run programs, and programs that are responsive to a changing community.

Why am I not able to designate my United Way gift?

Each year 60+ local volunteers dedicate over 1,000 hours to closely review all of the programs that receive funding from United Way. They visit the programs, look over program and financial details, and specifically determine what United Way should provide in support for the upcoming year. Some programs funded by United Way are well known, while others are not. One thing is constant though — the need for funding. If we allowed designations then some of the lesser known agencies would not get the funding they need. Instead we've found that by giving one gift the entire community benefits!

What if I can't afford to give?

By giving a small amount each pay period through payroll deduction, most working people can afford to contribute. Even a small contribution will help someone who might not otherwise receive help. By giving just \$1 each week, you provide 60 students with oatmeal for breakfast for one week-end or 20 hours of transportation to doctor appointments for the elderly.

What if a member agency asks me to give, too?

United Way contributions fund only services and programs — not buildings or equipment. Still, United Way cannot meet all the financial needs of funded agencies. Due to a potential decrease or loss in government funding, agencies often rely on other funding sources as well as their United Way allocation.

Does United Way only help the poor?

United Way works to benefit the entire community. Examples of broad-based services include: providing free monthly books to kids through Imagination Library, domestic violence prevention and counseling, and family crisis and stability programs. No one knows when a tragedy will strike and when help will be needed. Each of us benefits from living in a peaceful, healthy community.

What if I donate to my church?

United Way funds many church-affiliated programs such as The Community Outreach. Often, United Way funded programs step in where church support stops. In a lot of ways, churches and United Way make a unique partnership where the overall goal is the same: To help local families, to help our community and to change lives for the better.

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Does United Way condone pressure to give?

Giving time or money is a personal matter and completely voluntary. Local employers endorse the United Way campaign because it is highly accountable to contributors and is one of the best ways to meet community needs, but everyone's gift should be voluntary.

My spouse gives, should I give too?

The success of our community's plan to help people and change conditions depends on the generous support of each person. We each have a community responsibility, and United Way makes it possible for each of us to be powerful investors in community change. Consider combining your gift with your spouse to become a Heart Club member. Any combined gift of \$500 or more will be recognized individually at each spouse's company.

Does the Sioux Empire United Way support Planned Parenthood or any agencies that promote abortion?

Sioux Empire United Way does not support Planned Parenthood or any agencies that endorse or make referrals on abortion. There are 1,200 United Ways in the nation, all of which are separate entities. In other communities, United Ways may choose to support Planned Parenthood, but donations to Sioux Empire United Way do not now, and have not in the past, provided any funding for Planned Parenthood.