

How Your United Way Works

Our Mission: To lead, sustain, and nurture a unified, effective response to community needs.

Your Sioux Empire United Way.

Our mission is to lead, sustain, and nurture a unified, effective response to community needs. In other words, Sioux Empire United Way brings people and resources together to meet the needs of our community. We identify the most critical needs in our community and then bring the people and resources together to develop the best solution. We unite the entire community's resources by conducting an annual fund drive, and then allocate those funds to best fulfill our local community needs.

Meeting the Needs of the Sioux Empire.

In 1929 when this organization was founded, its purpose was primarily to combine the annual fundraising appeals of several human services agencies into a single campaign. We still carry on this strong tradition of fundraising in the community. Of the dollars we raise, 99% stay local – another reason why people feel so good about donating to Sioux Empire United Way.

In addition, over the years we have become a community solutions provider by identifying unmet needs in our community and allocating resources to meet those needs. Some examples of this are our daycare initiative in the 80's, after-school programs in the 90's, childhood literacy in the 2000's, and kindergarten readiness and school-based mental health services in the 2010's.

Sioux Empire United Way Benefits Everyone.

Whether they realize it or not, almost everyone in the Sioux Empire benefits! By allocating funds to 80+ programs administered by 40 United Way funded agencies, we estimate that 1 in 3 individuals are helped each year.

You, your family, your friends, or your neighbors may not need these services today, but it is comforting to know that if you need help it will be there!

How We Monitor Local Needs.

Our staff and board have relationships with local community leaders in government, education, business, healthcare and more, who are concerned and knowledgeable about human service needs in our community. We also conduct local community needs research and utilize focus groups, surveys, and studies done by local agencies and universities, etc., to help determine gaps in service.

How Your United Way Works continued

How We Help Improve the Quality of Life in the Sioux Empire.

Gifts made through Sioux Empire United Way make a difference in the lives of countless people right here at home because money that is raised locally stays local. Gifts to us are used by 40 local agencies to combat many of the toughest problems facing thousands of people living and working in the Sioux Empire. By funding agencies and programs and developing community initiatives, Sioux Empire United Way is providing the resources necessary to make sure that the services are there to support anyone in our community who needs a helping hand.

Sioux Empire United Way Donors.

Everyone does their share to help reach the United Way goal. From children in school who give through our “Coins for Kids” fundraiser, to small and large businesses and their employees, to our government employees and retirees, each year we are able to meet our goals and provide for those in need.

Your United Way also benefits greatly from the generosity of volunteers. Nearly 1,000 people volunteer each year, the majority of those help raise and allocate the money. Because of this incredible volunteer workforce, our United Way consistently has one of the lowest overheads of any United Way in the nation.

Our Daily Operations.

Sioux Empire United Way is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors who helps set policy and direction for the organization. The organization’s daily operations are managed by a staff of 9. The staff work with a volunteer workforce of over 1,000 local people. Over the course of a calendar year, staff and volunteers focus on the following:

- Recruiting, training and supporting volunteers
- Reviewing agency applications for funding
- Making funding recommendations
- Setting a campaign goal
- Developing campaign strategies and materials—pledge cards, report forms
- Creating marketing message and materials—video, brochures
- Assisting companies and volunteers with UW campaign rallies and events
- Communicating with donors and volunteers through mailings, newsletters, e-mails

How Your United Way Works continued

How We Keep Overhead Costs Low.

Our aim is to invest as much money as possible into the agencies we work so hard to support. We do this by utilizing volunteers (like you!), seeking donations for goods & services when possible, partnering with our business community, and maintaining efficient office operations. Sioux Empire United Way overhead continues to be less than 10%. This means that more than 90% of every dollar you give goes where it is needed most—to services helping people in the Sioux Empire. We are very proud of that. We have one of the lowest administrative costs of any United Way that raises over \$1 million dollars.

How We Achieve Accountability.

Donations made to our United Way are carefully administered and accounted for. Volunteer auditors review all campaign pledges. Our Board of Directors has a sub-committee dedicated to monitoring our organization's accountability standards providing numerous checks and balances. Our financial statements are audited annually.

All agencies who receive funding from our United Way are also required to have a financial audit of their internal records conducted annually to ensure accountability. Community volunteers are trained to carefully review each member organization's finances when they decide how much funding to distribute.

Where the Money Goes.

Your generosity makes it possible to support over 80 human service programs designed to improve lives across the Sioux Empire. We focus our efforts on the impact areas of Children, Vulnerable Adults, and People in Crisis to concentrate our efforts where it matters most.