

2022-23 Campaign Talking Points United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties (UWJWC)

#ChangeStartsHere

United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties harnesses the collective impact of twenty-nine local partners to focus on specific, measurable goals and improve the lives of everyone in:

- Birth Through Adult Education: Academic Success & Independence Skills
- Building Financial Stability: Sufficient Income & Essential Supports
- Access to Healthcare: Physical, Mental, & Emotional Well-being & Safety

These three strategic focus areas are vital pieces to a healthy, prosperous life. United Way also mobilizes people and resources to create solutions to critical issues through:

- Early Literacy & Grade-level Reading
- Summership Youth Camp Scholarships
- Holiday Adopt-a-Family
- Community Volunteering
- Disaster Relief & Recovery

Here is why it makes sense to continue to support United Way: The tough work needed to help communities continue to recover from the pandemic is the very work United Way does every day.

- We help feed those facing food insecurity.
- We prepare children for success in school, work, and life.
- We connect those in financial distress with resources to pay bills and stay in their homes.

United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties' Mission

To improve lives by uniting the caring power of community in Johnson and Washington Counties.

The Need

Mental Health*

There is no hiding the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic increased stressors that were already present and brought up new ones. Anxiety, depression, and other mental health illnesses can affect anyone. At United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties, we are committed to putting a light on what can be perceived as “invisible disorders” and work with our community to provide access to vital support services.

- 1 in 5 individuals will experience a mental health diagnosis in any given year and 1 in 17 adults will experience a serious mental illness that will have a profound impact on their life. (Abbe Center for Community Mental Health)
- Mental illness does not discriminate; it can affect persons of any age, race, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. (NAMI-JC)
- More than half of Americans report that COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their mental health. In February 2021, 42.2% of adults in Iowa reported symptoms of anxiety or depression. 25.4% were unable to get needed counseling or therapy.
- 2,647 people in Iowa are homeless and 1 in 5 live with a serious mental illness.
- In February 2021, 42.2% of adults in Iowa reported symptoms of anxiety or depression. 25.4% were unable to get needed counseling or therapy.
- 58% of Iowans between the ages of 12–17 who have depression did not receive any care in the last year.
- 1,821,280 people in Iowa live in a community that does not have enough mental health professionals.

*Mental health data from February 2021. For full citations, visit <https://nami.quorum.us/mhpolicystats/>.



Join Us

Now, more than ever, United Way needs your support to do what we do best in the aftermath of disasters --help communities respond, recover, rebuild, and reimagine for the long term.

United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties focuses on local change. We invest, collaborate, and convene with our neighbors to bring real change to our communities.

Last year, UWJWC invested nearly \$2 million in local nonprofit partner agencies, while maintaining its own community-inspired initiatives to drive lasting change for our neighbors.

With United Way, you do not have to choose one need over another because campaign donations support multiple, big-picture needs. This assistance helps children, individuals, and families get the comprehensive support they need to stabilize home life and move forward to lead positive, productive lives.

United Way is local giving with local impact. The money raised stays local, except for donor-specified designations going to another 501(c)3 charity outside of our region.

Every dollar counts. UWJWC partner agencies rely on their United Way funding to budget and plan their services for the year. Having United Way focus on raising funds, their partner agencies can allocate more of their time to providing services to our neighbors and keeping their overhead costs low.

There are many, valuable nonprofit organizations in our area that you may care about and want to support. United Way provides an opportunity for your gift to be multi-dimensional, supporting a network of care. On average, an individual or family who finds themselves in crisis needs the services of three agencies to become stable. A gift to United Way assures services are available when needed. In addition, United Way affiliation enables agencies to leverage more public and private dollars paired with their United Way funding. This partnership multiplies the effect of your contribution.

Maintaining the community's trust in our efficiency is top propriety for us. Based on the most recent IRS 990, United Way's operating expenses are 16% of total revenue, meaning eighty-four cents of every dollar goes directly to the community or designation. This rate is competitive with the top one hundred nonprofits in the U.S. and well below the industry standard & recommendations from the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance and Charity Navigator. United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties has earned its fifth consecutive 4 Star Charity Navigator rating, the highest possible and only achieved by 17% of all charities evaluated. United Way keeps a close eye on expenses while assuring we have the talent, expertise, and systems to raise and invest resources for maximum impact. UWJWC has also earned the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency.

Help us as we continue to reimagine and rebuild better communities for everyone.

Thank you for creating opportunities and inspiring hope!

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