

LIVE UNITED

United Way of Northwest Illinois, Inc.

Serving Jo Daviess, Stephenson, & Carroll Counties



RFP Education

For Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Board Approved: November 6, 2020

The United Way of Northwest Illinois aspires to be the critical link which brings together our diverse communities to build stronger, healthier and more sustainable communities as cost effectively as possible.

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Funding Announcement

United Way of Northwest Illinois (UWNI) announces availability of funding for the one-year period of July 2024- June 2025. Funding will be awarded on an annual basis, continuation after one year based on agency/program performance and available dollars. Investment decisions will be based on the results of a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) Process. Anticipated total annual available funding for Community Impact Initiatives is based on the annual campaign.

This RFP does not commit UWNI to award funding, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to enter into negotiations. UWNI has the right to reject or accept any or all proposals or part of any or all proposals, or to cancel this RFP in whole or in part. UWNI has the right to require additional information from one or more applicant, to negotiate with one or more applicant, and/or to accept any proposal or proposals without negotiations. UWNI has the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor discrepancies in proposals and minor deviations from RFP requirements. The successful applicant(s), if any, shall be selected based on UWNI's sole discretion in its determination of best value in terms of services provided, qualifications, and cost. At its sole discretion, UWNI may also choose to discontinue a program based on available funding or need, or a change in UWNI prioritization.

Eligibility Requirements

- Be located in and primarily serving residents of Carroll, Jo Daviess, and Stephenson Counties
- Be a not-for-profit organization (a 501c3 designation is NOT required)
- Be incorporated or chartered under appropriate local, state or federal statutes;
- Abide by federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination and anti-terrorism;
- Have an active, locally based, volunteer board of directors that meet regularly;
- Makes policy decisions and holds election of officers;
- Have an administrative structure with defined lines of responsibility, a mission statement and bylaws;
- Be financially stable, perform a regular budgeting process and be able to submit IRS Form 990 and all written communications from auditor including Management Letter comments and reports on internal control deficiencies (or Review level financials statements if the Organization is not audited by an independent auditor);
- Have current license, certification and permits if applicable;
- Be able to demonstrate effectiveness of its programs/services or activities through measurable outcomes as defined in this RFP.

Requirements of the UWNI Grant Recipients include the following:

- Identify, implement, and if necessary, build a data system for collection and reporting of outcome indicators and demographic data
- Develop a process for sharing of data related to outcome measures
- Become knowledgeable with the Community Impact model and processes
- Collaborate with school districts to establish agreements related to obtaining kindergarten readiness assessment data of participating early childhood centers/children

- Provide regular updates to the United Way Community Impact committee regarding initiative progress
- Explore new innovative improvement approaches as they become available
- Deliver program/services as outlined in the Community Impact funding application
- Identify itself as a UNWI funded partner with logo and name on signage at all service locations, on stationary, newsletters, pamphlets, public communications and press releases
- Submit 6 month progress reports to UWNl

Use of Community Impact Model

The UWNl believes that large-scale social change comes from better cross-sector coordination rather than from the isolated intervention of individual organizations, therefore the UWNl utilizes a Community Impact model to address community needs. Utilization of this model must be shown in the grant request. Research shows that successful community impact initiatives typically have five conditions that together produce true alignment and lead to powerful results:

1. Common Agenda - community impact requires all participants to have a shared vision for change, one that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.
2. Shared Measurement Systems - Collecting data and measuring results consistently on a short list of indicators at the community level and across all participating organizations not only ensures that all efforts remain aligned, it also enables the participants to hold each other accountable and learn from each other's successes and failures.
3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities - community impact initiatives depend on a diverse group of stakeholders working together, not by requiring that all participants do the same thing, but by encouraging each participant to undertake the specific set of activities at which it excels in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others.
4. Continuous Communication - Developing trust among nonprofits, corporations, and government agencies is a monumental challenge. Participants need several years of regular meetings to build up enough experience with each other to recognize and appreciate the common motivation behind their different efforts. They need time to see that their own interests will be treated fairly, and that decisions will be made on the basis of objective evidence and the best possible solution to the problem, not to favor the priorities of one organization over another.
5. Backbone Support Organizations - The backbone organization requires a dedicated staff separate from the participating organizations who can plan, manage, and support the initiative through ongoing facilitation, technology and communications support, data collection and reporting, and handling the myriad logistical and administrative details needed for the initiative to function smoothly.

Purpose of Funding

UWNl's focus areas are rooted in an extensive review of the academic literature around the issues of early childhood development, school readiness, and early grade reading. A number of national initiatives, those of United Way Worldwide (UWW) and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, have focused on 3rd grade reading skills as a critical intervention point in school success. The literature is clear: failure to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade is directly linked to long-term academics challenges, non-adaptive behaviors, and failure to complete high school. Simply stated, until 3rd grade children are learning to read; after 3rd grade they are reading to learn. Without solid reading skills children will struggle in all of their academic efforts.

High Quality Early Learning Programs: Research shows that qualified and appropriately compensated personnel, small group sizes and high adult-child ratios, language-rich environments, developmentally appropriate “curricula”, safe physical settings, and warm and responsive adult-child interactions all lead to improved child outcomes. These improved outcomes benefit our communities as a whole as education is a cornerstone for success in school, work and life. The benefits received from investing in early childhood education extend far beyond the benefit to the child and impact our 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. This is why United Way of Northwest Illinois is committed to funding partners work collectively towards data driven solutions in this area.

Target Area Requirements

Applicants may apply for funding in one or all of these areas.

1. Every child has access to a high quality early learning environment

This target area is intended to identify high-quality early learning programs that prepare all young children for success in school.

- Early care and learning programs should be on the State of Illinois ExceleRate/Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). All applicants must state what level they are currently at on the QRIS.
- Children enrolled in the program should be assessed through the use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ/ASQ-SE) including the Social-Emotional Questionnaire at the beginning and ending of the school year. Referrals must be made to Child and Family Connections and the Freeport School District for children with identified delays.
- Student learning should be assessed through the use of the research-based approved tool Teaching Strategies Gold.

NOTE: For programs who currently do not utilize the ASQ/ASQ-SE or Teaching Strategies Gold, stipends may be provided for materials purchase, and training.

QUALITY EARLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT- REQUIRED OUTCOME MEASUREMENTS

<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total unduplicated # of children enrolled in programming 	<p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average # of hours children attend program per week
<p>Is anyone better off? (number)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of unduplicated children who meet the Teaching Strategies Gold “widely held expectations” in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Social-Emotional)Peer Interaction • (Language) Use of expanding expressive vocabulary • (Cognitive)Persists • (Literacy) Uses emergent reading skills • (Literacy) Writes name • (Mathematics) Connects numerals with their quantities 	<p>Is anyone better off? (percent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of unduplicated children who meet the Teaching Strategies Gold “widely held expectations” in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Social-Emotional)Peer Interaction • (Language) Use of expanding expressive vocabulary • (Cognitive)Persists • (Literacy) Uses emergent reading skills • (Literacy) Writes name • (Mathematics) Connects numerals with their quantities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of unduplicated children who score below the cutoff score for their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of unduplicated children who score below the cutoff score for their Ages

Ages & Stages Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE) level.	& Stages Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE) level.
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2. All families are stable and maintain nurturing home environments

We know that family stability is the foundation for all academic success. Within this target area, applicants must demonstrate the ability to increase family self-sufficiency; the ability of the parents to access resources and services in the community; and the ability to build parental leadership skills that translate into improved relationships between the child’s school and the parent.

FAMILY STABILITY

<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total unduplicated # of parents served • Total # of sessions offered (including regular meetings, special events, etc.) 	<p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total unduplicated number of parents/caregivers who successfully complete at least 80% of program sessions
<p>Is anyone better off? (number)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of unduplicated parents who “Agree” with the statement “I learned about a program or resource in my community that would be good for me and my family” (from survey) 	<p>Is anyone better off? (percent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total percent of unduplicated parents who “Agree” with the statement “I learned about a program or resource in my community that would be good for me and my family” (from survey)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of unduplicated parents who are actively engaged in skills to enhance their child’s development Answering “Agree” to survey question: *I plan to try a different way/learned a new way to engage with my child’s school or teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of unduplicated parents who are actively engaged in skills to enhance their child’s development Answering “Agree” to survey question: *I plan to try a different way/learned a new way to engage with my child’s school or teacher • Total unduplicated percent of parents who report they are reading to their child 3 or more times per week (from survey)

3. All children have access to literacy based programs that have been proven to increase reading skills, which are important to their success in school and work.

It is critical to help young children be ready for school by working with them to develop early literacy and learning skills. Because strong reading skills form the basis for learning in all subjects, it is important to ensure all children have access to books and that parents/caregivers understand the importance of reading to their child from birth.

Children who have been read to at home come to school with important early literacy skills that better prepare them to learn to read and write. Applicants serving children 0-5 must utilize research based best practices to improve the number of students who enter kindergarten ready to learn as identified by key criteria including parent & teacher surveys and data collection from Teaching Strategies Gold. Applicants that serve children 5 and older must also utilize research

based best practices and work with the child’s local school district to identify a English/Language Arts growth goal that can be measured through a standardized test at the school.

GRADE LEVEL READING

<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total # of unduplicated children served 	<p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of unduplicated children served
<p>Is anyone better off? (number)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total unduplicated number of parents who report they are reading to their child 3 or more times per week (from survey) 	<p>Is anyone better off? (percent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total unduplicated percent of parents who report they are reading to their child 3 or more times per week (from survey)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For children under 5 years of age: Number of students that meet the widely held expectations as it relates to age appropriate literacy skills. • For children over 5 years of age: Number of students that reach their growth goal as outlined by the school district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total % of students that reach widely held expectations in pre-literacy skills according to Teaching Strategies Gold • % of children that reach their personalized ELA goal as outlined by the school district and measured by an approved assessment (MAP, AIMSWeb, and others pre-approved by United Way CI Meeting)

Application and Submission Information:

1. UWNl requires applicants for this RFP to apply electronically through uwnwil.communityforce.com
2. Program Specific Instructions: *Proposals will include the following:*
 - A. Organizational Information: Provide organizations current mission and structure, scope of current services, and describe how all these all contribute to the ability of the organization to conduct program requirements and meet program expectations. Describe the programs current relationship with community collaborations, and how the organization plans to facilitate community impact.
 - B. Project Staffing: What is the staffing of the program/activity including staff qualifications and professional development needs?
 - C. Project Narrative: This section provides a comprehensive framework and description of all aspects of the proposed project using the following headers:
 - a. Introduction –Highlight the overarching problem to be addressed and the contributing factors
 - b. Program Support – provide a brief description of the program/activity, including the utilization of the collective impact model to address the target area requirements
 - c. Target population – describe the specific needs or present condition of the target population. Include the area to be served, age group, racial background, household income, and county of residence of participants.

- D. Work Plan: Describe the activities or steps that will be used to meet the target area requirements. Use a time line that includes each activity and identifies responsible staff.
 - E. Evaluation: Describe what constitutes success/results for the individuals you serve, including the specific tools and methods used to track results. Include the time intervals that are measured. Describe assessment tools that will be utilized for both indicators of success and outcome measurements. Describe how the program intends to reach target population.
 - F. Budget Narrative: Please include in your budget any expenses related to evidence-based curriculum purchase, training/certification, data collection tools, etc. Total anticipated budget is based on funds available.
3. Letters of support – Please include letters of support from partners demonstrating their willingness to enter into a Linkage Agreement with the recipient to participate in this project. The Linkage Agreement is to be submitted to the UWNI at the time of application. The Linkage Agreement should confirm actual contractual agreements and should clearly describe the roles of the contractors and any deliverables.
4. Submission Dates and Times – The application is due March 10th at 4:00 P.M.
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| February 10, 2024 | RFP available online https://uwnwil.communityforce.com/ |
| As requested | RFP Informational Session & Community Impact Introduction. |
| March 10 th , 2024 | Grant proposal due at 4:00P.M. |
| March 10 th , 2024 | Linkage agreement due |
| March-April, 2024 | Committee Review |
| June/July, 2024 | Funding Award Announced |
| December 31 st , 2024 | 6 month progress report due (each year funded) |
| July 31 st , 2025 | Annual Report Due (each year funded) |

UWNI reserves the right to postpone or alter the dates set forth in the timetable and will give notice on the agency website:

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