



Annual Report 2022



United Way
of Missoula County

2022: A Year of Collaboration and Change

In 2022, United Way of Missoula County continued to demonstrate that a mission-driven and unifying organization, devoted to excellence and working with diverse partners, can change our community for the better.

We know that solutions to deeply entrenched community problems lie in helping our most vulnerable neighbors today – while also advancing upstream solutions that prevent problems from happening in the first place. Our United Way focuses on that two-pronged approach, day in and day out. Whether it's putting a Dolly Parton's Imagination Library book in the hands of a young child, or reaching out a hand of help and hope to a neighbor thinking about suicide, or creating innovative solutions to our community's child care crisis, or finding shelter and housing for our unhoused neighbors, or strengthening the nonprofit sector, or helping homeowners make their property safer from wildfire, or providing resources for people struggling with substance use disorder – United Way programs change and save lives every day.

We do not do this work alone. We are proud of our strong and mutually supportive partnerships with nonprofits, businesses, government, the faith community, health-care organizations, educators, and the donors who make our work possible. As our community rebounds from the COVID-19 pandemic, these partnerships are even more important.

The year 2022 was not without its challenges: The slow financial recovery from COVID, continued economic uncertainty, donations that fail to keep pace with demand for services, and the disappearance of American Rescue Plan Act funding, which sparked so much good in our community. While some of these challenges are beyond our control, in 2023, we are redoubling our efforts to tell—in every possible venue—United Way's compelling story of effective, impactful work. We ask for your help in spreading this message.

Last year we also lost one of our strongest advocates and dearest friends, Mayor John Engen, a longtime generous supporter of our work. Two months prior to his death, we were proud to present John with Missoula's highest honor for community service: the Sue Talbot Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service. We continue to be inspired by John's unwavering vision of a Missoula that offers equity, hope and opportunity for everyone.

Thank you for helping us realize that vision, and for helping our United Way build a better, stronger, healthier community for us all.



Mike Nugent, President



Susan Hay Patrick, Chief Executive Officer



DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

In 2022, we celebrated the delivery of our 250,000th Dolly Parton's Imagination Library book. More than 2,600 local kids in Missoula and Mineral counties are signed up for this book-gifting program that promotes early childhood literacy. Through the program, children up to age 5 receive a new, age-appropriate book each month, mailed directly to their homes at no cost to the family.

Imagination Library fosters a love of reading in young children, promotes early language and literacy development, and encourages parents to read to their children from a young age, ultimately setting children up for academic success and lifelong learning.



Sign up a young child for Imagination Library today

ZERO TO FIVE MISSOULA COUNTY

Zero to Five Missoula County aims to ensure that every child is nourished by the experiences and support they need to arrive at school ready to thrive. Our commitment to diversity, parent and caregiver involvement, our partnerships with K-12 and university educators, and our innovative child care solutions that engage local government, business, and child care sector have long-lasting benefits for individuals, families, and our community.

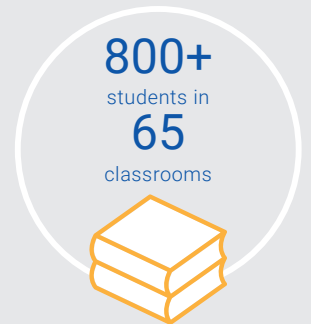
Zero to Five's innovative projects are producing results. **In 2022:**

More than 800 children across 65 classrooms were assessed for their social and academic readiness skills in our fourth annual **Kindergarten Entry Assessment**. The KEA offers a new way to understand our community's needs and disparities through the lens of kindergarten readiness. It helps identify what life factors, from age 0-5, impact readiness in our community.

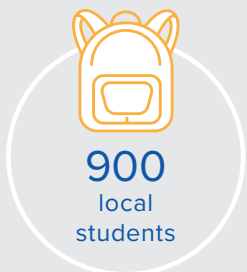
The **Parent Leadership Training Institute** celebrated the graduation of its first cohort of parent leaders. PLTI, a national model with a 30-year track record of impact, equips parents with civic knowledge and communication skills to advocate and effect change for their families and community.

Zero to Five was awarded a \$416,000 grant from the Montana Department of Health and Human Services to launch a new shared-services child care network— **Missoula Child Care Advantage**. Classrooms in the former Cold Springs school will be renovated for the network's pilot location, which will significantly increase available child care slots in Missoula in the short term and help stabilize the child care sector over time.

And 25 professionals completed the inaugural **Early Learning Fellows** program, which builds a network of emerging leaders among professionals from diverse organizations who work with young children and families, creating a better-informed and connected early childhood system.



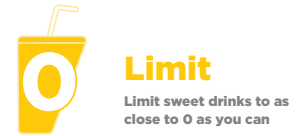
BACK-TO-SCHOOL BACKPACKS



In 2022, working principally through Family Resource Centers at local elementary, middle and high schools, United Way provided 900 local students with new, free backpacks filled with school supplies, giving students and their families one less worry as they prepared for a successful school year. By providing the tools they need to learn, we can make a real difference in the lives of at-risk students and help set them up for success.

5-2-1-0 LET'S MOVE! MISSOULA

Promoting healthy habits among school-aged children is essential for the community's overall health. Encouraging them to consume fresh food, engage in physical activity, and limit their screen time and intake of sugary beverages improves long-term health. By prioritizing these habits, communities can support children's health and well-being, ultimately leading to a healthier future. During "Midday Move," volunteers lead students in lunch-break activities at their respective schools. Teachers and staff report that students are more engaged after time spent with these volunteers and that students enjoy having play-time leaders. The Midday Move currently operates at Hawthorne, Lowell, and Russell elementary schools and is a cornerstone of 5-2-1-0.



PROJECT TOMORROW MONTANA

In 2022, our countywide suicide prevention initiative collaborated with city, county, and public school partners to update materials, resources, and training curricula; provided monthly suicide prevention training; and supported the national roll-out of 9-8-8, the new National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Community collaboration is critical in suicide education, prevention, and recovery. By working with diverse organizations, as well as individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives, we create a supportive environment that promotes mental wellness, identifies and promotes successful prevention strategies, and reduces the stigma surrounding suicide. In addition to ongoing suicide prevention training, Project Tomorrow Montana distributed dozens of gun locks through our Give Us A Minute campaign.

Project Tomorrow also sponsored Missoula Pride, providing resources, a "Question/Persuade/Refer" suicide prevention training, and walking in the Pride parade. Through this collaboration with The Center, Project Tomorrow reached community members who face an increased risk of suicide. Additionally, Project Tomorrow helped plan the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's annual Out of the Darkness Walk to raise funds and awareness to promote suicide prevention.



Request your own gun lock here:
<https://bit.ly/3GSpnPE>

MISSOULA SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER CONNECT

MSUDC is a network of partnerships advancing support for those struggling with substance use disorders. Employing a comprehensive approach that includes prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support can help individuals overcome addiction and lead healthy, fulfilling lives. In 2022, MSUDC regularly gathered more than 75 individuals representing 35+ organizations, in addition to convening a quarterly Leadership Roundtable.

Action committee members spent much of the year identifying gaps in services and determining work plans to address them, with goals identified for 2023. Additionally, MSUDC created a Peer Support Specialist network, developed a Peer Support brochure both for potential employees and employers, collaborated with Montana's Peer Network to offer two trainings regarding Peer Support Services, and began foundational work to establish a Recovery Friendly Workplace initiative.



REACHING HOME



United to address homelessness in Missoula.

United Way continues our leadership role in ending homelessness. This work has expanded through deeper collaborations and increased partnerships. We continue to serve as the primary private-sector funder and logistician for the Temporary Safe Outdoor Space for unhoused Missoulians, which moved from private to public land in 2022 and from tents to 30 hard-sided wall shelters with electric heat to help residents withstand the cold winter. Nearly half of all residents who have stayed at the TSOS are no longer homeless, having moved into stable housing or reunited with family.

In 2022, our Housing Solutions Fund helped more than 200 individual households attain or stay in housing, providing approximately \$90,000 in direct aid to pay rent, security deposits, application fees, reunification expenses, and similar costs.

Also in 2022, key nonprofit, public-sector and community leaders serving on the Reaching Home Leadership Roundtable participated in messaging training to better communicate the challenges and successes of working on the issue of homelessness



MISSOULA NONPROFIT CENTER

In 2022, our Missoula Nonprofit Center provided 115 member organizations with significant information and growth opportunities, helping area nonprofits build networks and develop new capabilities that will enable them to better serve the community. In 2022, MNC conducted a thorough wages and benefits survey of more than 100 Missoula County nonprofits. The compiled results were turned into an in-depth two-part report that was disseminated to hundreds of nonprofit professionals to help guide hiring and retention practices in a challenging labor market. MNC also created a comprehensive media contact list for members to assist in their communications and media outreach, and hosted the 2022 Philanthropy Day celebration, presenting awards to outstanding nonprofit staff and their supporters and celebrating the Missoula nonprofit community.

**MISSOULA
NONPROFIT
CENTER**



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WILDFIRE READY MISSOULA

Recognizing that wildfire occurring in Missoula is a “when,” not an “if,” Wildfire Ready Missoula helped 10 homeowners in the Clinton-area Wallace Creek drainage complete mitigation projects to make their properties more fire-resilient. This innovative partnership with Missoula County’s Office of Emergency Management also completed additional work in Turah and in the Lincoln Hills section of Missoula’s Rattlesnake neighborhood. These efforts are essential to protect communities and reduce the impact of wildfires in the wildland-urban interface.



JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

We continue championing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion for all in our community. We were the fiscal sponsor of “Be the Change – Resilience Through Equity,” a well-attended community-wide JEDI summit in the fall of 2022. We now fiscally sponsor and play a leading role in developing a new community plan to advance equity in all policies, services, and resources in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors in Missoula County. Our board-staff Live United Committee ensures that we embed equity in all of our programs and policies. We also proudly serve as the fiscal sponsor of the Montana Black Collective Missoula and TransVisible Montana



United Way also supported the following programs and projects this year through fundraising events and other opportunities

Am Theatrical	Hope Rescue Mission	Montana Natural History Center
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention	Humane Society of Western Montana	Mountain Home Montana
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Montana	Missoula Aging Services	Poverello Center
CASA of Missoula	Missoula Community Foundation	Ronald McDonald House Charities of Western Montana
Downtown Missoula Partnership	Missoula Food Bank & Community Center	Tamarack Grief Resource Center
Five Valleys Land Trust	Missoula Interfaith Collaborative	University of Montana
Home ReSource	Missoula Paddleheads	YWCA Missoula
Homeward	Montana Boy Scouts	Zootown Arts Community Center
	Montana Food Bank Network	

OUR MISSION

United Way of Missoula County's mission is to harness the caring power of community to improve conditions in education, health, and financial stability – the building blocks of a good life. Our programs, initiatives, and partnerships address the systemic, underlying problems in health, education, and financial stability that prevent community members from thriving. We are committed to justice, equity and inclusion in all of our work.

Building a stronger community Opportunity and Capital Emergency Fund recipients

This year we supported the following organizations with either an Opportunity or Capital Emergency Fund grant:

United Way of Missoula County's Opportunity and Capital Emergency Funds – each replenished annually to \$20,000 – enables UWMC to fund compelling and mission-relevant projects within the area's nonprofit community (Missoula, Mineral and Ravalli counties).

Soft Landing Missoula
The Center
Stroke Onward
FAST Fund - University of Montana student emergency assistance

Missoula County-Bear Tracks Bridge dedication event and Powwow
Arts Missoula- First Peoples Market on Main
YWCA Missoula

Please visit MissoulaUnitedWay.org for complete financial information



Give a gift today

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**United Way
of Missoula County**

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Thank you!

Your gift is helping—here's how.