

Improving lives in Vanderburgh, Warrick & Spencer Counties

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 6, 2015

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United Way of Southwestern Indiana Announces 3rd Annual SPRING INTO CARING FOOD DRIVE

United Way of Southwestern Indiana plans for their 3rd Annual Spring Into Caring Food Drive. This is a week-long event April 20-24 to bring awareness to the issue of hunger in our area. United Way's 2-1-1 Information and Referral Service connects people to the help they need. United Way's 2-1-1 answered over 13,000 calls for help in 2014 and found a top request continues to be help with finding food. *"With food being a top request for help, we are answering a real need in our community and giving individuals, companies and organizations an easy way to get involved and help those in need."* states, Carol Brade-Clarke, President of United Way of Southwestern Indiana.

United Way is partnering again with Atlas Van Lines and Tri-State Food Bank, which supplies food to food pantries and meal sites around the region. Last year, with the help of many businesses and groups, they collected enough food for nearly 40,000 meals for the community. Individuals and organizations are encouraged to conduct food drives during the week and on Friday, April 24 they can bring the collected goods to the collection site at United Way's office at 501 NW 4th Street. United Way is wanting to fill a trailer full of food to be delivered to the Tri-State Food Bank on Monday, April 27. There will be volunteer opportunities available to assist the Tri-State Food Bank with sorting the food collected for distribution.

All interested parties interested in participating can contact Amanda Newman at United Way at 812-421-7483 or anewman@unitedwayswi.org.

FACT SHEET

- United Way's 2-1-1 Information and Referral Service is a central point of contact for people needing assistance in Crawford, Dubois, Knox, Perry, Pike, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Spencer, Posey and Gibson Counties.
- United Way's 2-1-1 answered over 21,000 calls in 2013, with the number one request for help being the need for food.
- Many people may not realize they are eligible for food stamps (SNAP). Therefore, the state of Indiana is working with the Indiana 2-1-1 partnership to screen callers, who may be eligible but not receiving food stamps (SNAP) benefits, to access this program.
- According to the USDA, 16.7 million children under the age of 18 in the United States live in households that are unable to consistently access enough nutritious food needed for a healthy life.
- In the United Way of Southwestern Indiana service area of Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Spencer counties, it is estimated that 34,000 people do not have enough to eat.
- In Vanderburgh County, 15.5% of people live in poverty.
- Since 2000, Indiana's poverty rate has risen 52%.
- 57% of EVSC students are on free or reduced lunch.
- According to a Brandeis University study, children who live in food insecure homes have poorer overall health status.
 - They are sick more often and more likely to have ear infections, higher rates of anemia and miss school more often and are less prepared.
 - These children also have more mental health, emotional and behavioral issues.
 - Lack of food impedes cognitive development and leads to higher rates of school failure which results in a poorer return on educational investment and weakened workforce productivity when children reach the age of employment.
- Tri-State Food Bank Supplies food pantries and feeding site in the region and served 54,000 households in Vanderburgh County alone.