FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I’M NOT SURE WHAT UNITED WAY DOES.
United Way of North Central Florida (UWNCFL) is a local health and human services organization. We work to serve those living in Alachua, Bradford, Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy and Union counties. We are a part of a larger worldwide organization known as United Way Worldwide. We are one of 1,400 independent local United Way organizations across the country.

We are governed by our own local Board of Directors and led by our local President and CEO. We are not managed, controlled or directed by United Way Worldwide. We are North Central Florida’s single largest funder of human services and non-governmental funder of education initiatives. Since 1957, we have raised nearly $100 million for programs that demonstrate a lasting impact in the community and help to change people’s lives for the better.

I GET PRESSURE TO CONTRIBUTE. DO YOU ENDORSE THIS?
Absolutely not. Giving to UWNCFL is strictly voluntary. Your gift does make a difference, and we want you to make an informed and willing decision when you give.

WHO DECIDES HOW MUCH MONEY EACH PROGRAM RECEIVES?
Community Investment Council volunteers - people who live and work in our community - spend thousands of hours researching, visiting and discussing how best to invest your gift to United Way agencies. These volunteers participate in extensive reviews of program plans, budgets and agency fiscal responsibility. Approximately, 82 percent of United Way of North Central Florida’s Community Investment Fund goes to health, education and financial stability. Approximately, 18 percent goes towards immediate needs, such as emergency food and shelter.

I DON’T NEED TO GIVE LOCALLY, BECAUSE I ALREADY SUPPORT A NUMBER OF NATIONAL CHARITIES.
While we all have our favorite charities, United Way of North Central Florida is your community solutions provider and is uniquely positioned to both identify current and emerging needs in our area and provide targeted solutions. We help a range of programs and services that help our entire community for the better.

MY SPOUSE OR PARENTS ALREADY GIVE, SO I DON’T NEED TO.
United Way depends on the generous support of everyone in the community. Many couples choose to give at both workplaces because they want to participate with their coworkers. It’s also a great way to support your individual company’s efforts in building community. By everyone doing their part, we can continue to provide critical services to those in need. Additionally, combined gifts of $1,000 or more are recognized as Leadership donors.

Special Thanks to Our Academy Sponsors
UNITED WAY DONATIONS SUPPORT CHURCH-RELATED ACTIVITIES.
United Way funds only health and human service programs, not religious activities. United Way does fund programs provided by agencies that offer a wide range of services including some that are affiliated with local churches. However, these programs are supported because they meet a critical community need and are not religious in nature or approach.

HOW IS UNITED WAY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS?
No other single organization meets the broad range of needs addressed by United Way. United Way goes beyond fundraising by researching the needs of the community and bringing the right resources and people together to solve tough local issues. It works with business, government and partner agencies to develop regional health and human service policies and strategies. It funds programs that are meeting people's needs today, and we are working on innovative solutions for lasting change. United Way monitors the performance of grant-funded projects and reports results to donors. It also recruits volunteers for nonprofit agencies and provides volunteer resources. And to top it off, United Way makes it easy for everyone to get involved.

WHY GIVE TO UNITED WAY?
You make a difference. You are making an investment that benefits the entire community, not just one program, issue or population, and this leads to a stronger, more sustainable place to live and work. It is a smart investment. United Way provides expert management of donor investments and brings the right people, ideas and resources together to solve the most pressing needs of our community and finds innovative solutions for lasting change. United Way leverages your contribution by combining it with others and strategically invests in results-driven programs and initiatives to maximize the impact we have in the community. It is easy and convenient. With online pledging, payroll deduction and donor designations it is easy to give back in a way that matters to you. Spreading your giving throughout the year makes it easier to increase your giving while still staying within your budget.
WHAT IF I DON’T THINK I CAN AFFORD TO GIVE?
By using United Way’s payroll deduction plan, you can invest a small amount each pay period, and see it add up to a significant gift by year’s end. Your investment combined with thousands of others will have a real, measurable impact in the community. Skipping just one latte a week can add up to more than $180, which could provide legal services and eviction prevention in order to avoid the trauma of homelessness for one household.

WHY CHOOSE UNITED WAY’S COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND?
Making significant progress on community-wide problems requires a community-wide effort. Resources of nonprofit service providers are most effectively used if they are aligned and collectively deployed. Contributing to the Community Investment Fund supports an effort of “collective impact,” with your dollars being strategically allocated to a variety of organizations, programs and partnerships that work together toward better health, education and financial stability of our residents. We know that community issues don’t stand alone. Financial stability of a family depends on education, and health relates to both financial stability and education. The problems are interrelated and it makes sense that the solutions are interrelated. Through the Community Investment Fund, the contributions of thousands of individual donors become a force for change in the community.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?
Your contributions fund large scale local collaborations, and specific programs focused on the most significant community needs in the areas of education, health and financial stability in North Central Florida. Your contributions to the Community Investment Fund stay within our six-county service area. For a complete list of United Way's currently funded programs, please visit our website.

CAN I GIVE DIRECTLY TO MY FAVORITE AGENCY?
Our donor choice program allows designations to our three impact areas, as well as any 501(c)3 in the state of Florida.

WHAT ELSE DOES UNITED WAY DO besides FUND AGENCY PROGRAMS?
In addition to raising and investing dollars, United Way brings together community stakeholders, contributors and agency partners to create collaborative and innovative approaches to help solve community issues. United Way also coordinates a variety of initiatives and programs such as B.O.O.S.T. (Better Out of School Time) and the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. United Way also serves as fiscal agent for UFCC (University of Florida’s Campaign for Charities), administers Emergency Food and Shelter program funding and is the lead agency for the North Central Florida Alliance for the Homeless and Hungry’s Continuum of Care (CoC).

HOW DO PEOPLE GET HELP FROM UNITED WAY?
United Way funds and supports more than 30 programs throughout North Central Florida that help people every day. A list of these programs and our partner agencies can be found on our website. People looking for assistance should contact 2-1-1 for free referral services or visit www.unitedwayncfl.org/211.