

# LIVE UNITED



**Routt County United Way**

## **2021 IMPACT GOALS**

Advancing the Common Good in Routt County



Routt County United Way

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### GIVING CHILDREN A STRONG START

We all benefit when every child from the earliest age has a strong developmental start. RCUW funds programs that improve developmental opportunities for lower-income, at-risk children. We seek to address the following challenges:

- Access to affordable, quality preschool and childcare
- Access to other early childhood development programs that promote literacy, kindergarten preparation or parenting skills
- Childhood food insecurity
- Childhood mental health
- Need for more and better qualified preschool teachers

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN ROUTT COUNTY FACTS

- At any given time there are only 40 slots for infant child center care in Routt County for approximately 450 babies. (Family Development Center)
- 90 to 100% chance of developmental delays when children experience 5 to 6 risk factors. (Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University)

### ROUTT COUNTY UNITED WAY SUCCESSES

- RCUW has provided more than \$1.2 million to early childhood education since 2000
- 97% of 4 year-olds in Routt County who are attending early learning programs are ready for Kindergarten (First Impressions of Routt County)

*A two-parent household with two preschool age children were like many families struggling to make ends meet. Then the father was diagnosed with some physical and mental illnesses. He lost his ability to drive or help to take care of his children. The family went from two incomes to one, and now has additional stressors. Discovery Learning Center was able to offer the family a substantial Routt County United Way scholarship so that both children are able to attend schooling five days per week. Both children were developmentally younger than their chronological age when they began preschool, but after a year of attendance, both children have caught up to their peers.*





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## YOUTH SUCCESS

### PROVIDING YOUTH A SAFE, HEALTHY, NURTURING ENVIRONMENT

Transitions are sometimes tough for young people, particularly at-risk youth. RCUW seeks to fund programs and initiatives that will support the successful transition of elementary school students into middle school, of middle school students into high school and of high school students into adulthood. Challenges that we will look to address are:

- Literacy at grade level
- Financial literacy or work/life readiness
- Food insecurity
- Mental health support and suicide prevention
- Bullying prevention and support for diversity
- Access to alcohol, tobacco, vaping and other drugs
- Need for student engagement and/or parental support
- Healthy behavioral boundaries
- Appropriate use of technology

### YOUTH IN ROUTT COUNTY FACTS

- 68% of Routt County High School students admit to have used alcohol (2017 Health Kids Colorado Survey, Routt County Report)
- 21% of those living in Northwest Colorado believe that drugs can help manage teen stress (2018 Rise Above Colorado Youth Survey)
- Youth that are involved in extracurricular activities including service and civic engagement are less likely to engage in risky behaviors. 52% of youth reported to be involved in one or two extracurricular activities (2018 Rise Above Colorado Youth Survey)

### ROUTT COUNTY UNITED WAY SUCCESSES

- RCUW programs touches 70% of the youth in Routt County
- Provide additional opportunities for youth to be engaged: Boys & Girls Club, Partners of Routt County, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps to name a few.

*"It takes a village to raise a child, and in this case, our family's village is Partners in Routt County. The Partners program has matched my two children with amazing, caring and dedicated adult mentors. Partners strives to help me become a more effective parent by providing valuable and necessary workshops and trainings dealing with various aspects of a child's growth and issues faced as a parent. I am a single mother of two amazing resilient children that were adopted through the foster care system in our community. With support from Partners, my children have created lifelong friendships, relationships, work ethics and social skills needed for a successful transition into adulthood. Thank you!" – A Mother*





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## FINANCIAL STABILITY

### IMPROVE THE FINANCIAL STABILITY OF ALL RESIDENTS IN NEED

With 30% of Routt County households living below the county self-sufficiency standard, many individuals and families struggle to make ends meet. Lack of savings or insurance may make other adults or families vulnerable to unanticipated, adverse circumstances. Financial self-sufficiency may be difficult to achieve or maintain for people who have poor mental health or who experience physical or emotional abuse. Programs that seek to achieve the following will be considered:

- Build financial skills and social/emotional resiliency through adult education or counselling in such areas as household financial management, mental health and well-being, suicide prevention, family relationships, or workplace readiness
- Reduce food insecurity
- Enable seniors to live in their homes longer if they wish
- Prevent domestic violence or abuse
- Improve family stability

### FINANCIAL STABILITY IN ROUTT COUNTY FACTS

- 1 in 3 households fall under the self-sufficiency wage standard in Routt County. A family with two adults and two school-age children would need to earn \$78,755 per year to cover basic expenses in Routt County, more than \$50,000 above the federal poverty bench march for a family of four (Colorado Center on Law and Policy)
- 77% of families with children under the age of 6 have both parents in the workforce (First Impressions)

### ROUTT COUNTY UNITED WAY SUCCESSES

- In 2020, our partnership with FamilyWize saved 83 individuals over \$6,800 in prescription costs
- When 84 Routt County residents didn't know where to turn, they called the 2-1-1 hotline for 24/7 free and confidential human service referrals

*Jane is more than 90-years old and has been receiving Meals on Wheels lunches four days a week for close to five years. The volunteer delivery drivers have grown to know and care about her, and Jane enjoys seeing her regular lunch-time visitors. Meals on Wheels not only provides her with a low-cost nutritious meal, but her family members and neighbors that care about her know that our volunteer driver will report back if anything seems amiss with Jane. The sense of well-being provided for Jane and her loved ones through Meals on Wheels is priceless.*



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## MENTAL HEALTH & CRISIS SERVICES

### PROMOTE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH & CRISIS SERVICES

Colorado has a higher prevalence of mental health issues and lower rates of access to care, with an overall ranking of 47th in the nation. As elevation increases by county, statistics of mental health crisis's and suicides increase. Routt County has one of the highest suicide rates in the state and a shortage of mental health care providers, averaging 280:1. Routt County United Way promotes access to mental health and crisis services to educate what resources are available and to intervene when crisis's happen. We support programs that seek to achieve the following:

- Build programs in our school systems that educate youth on mental health
- Promote and build emotional and mental health stability and suicide prevention
- Help those in the community with severe mental health issues access the higher level of care required to be able to return to a healthy level of functioning

### MENTAL HEALTH IN ROUTT COUNTY FACTS

- In 2020, the number of suicides nearly doubled in Routt County (Colorado Center for Health & Environmental Data)
- The average cost for a single therapy session with a private provider in Routt County is \$60-\$200 (Mind Springs)
- Since 2008, Routt County has been designated by the federal government as a health service shortage area, meaning there aren't enough providers to serve all the people who need care

### ROUTT COUNTY UNITED WAY SUCCESSES

- Elementary schools in Hayden and South Routt have access to mental health professionals at no cost to families while teaching kids and families how to find resources for their mental health well-being
- Our immigrant and limited English-speaking population has 24/7 access to interpretation services via phone, in person, or Zoom

*With support from RCUW, Advocates of Routt County has drastically expanded its Social Change program, composed of innovative educational workshops, awareness campaigns, events, and special projects. Being afforded the opportunity to dedicate a staff member to developing and executing these efforts has resulted in Advocates producing a full suite of six interactive educational presentations to serve schools, colleges, businesses, community groups, and more across Routt County. The social change program also allows Advocates to locally participate in national campaigns like Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) and Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) through an array of community outreach efforts, both in-person and online.*