

United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey partners with over 300 agencies impacting 1.75 million individuals and recognizes that to fully serve our community and advance our work; advocacy is a vital component. Our public policy agenda, issues and priorities are aligned with our Impact agenda – breaking the cycle of poverty by transforming the lives of children, families and communities throughout our diverse region.

We advocate for policies that help to ensure youth succeed in school, and families achieve stability because research shows that children succeed when their parents and caregivers succeed. United Way has the expertise and relationships to develop meaningful and lasting cross-sector solutions to community challenges. Through the generosity of donors, United Way is able to support and bridge gaps in financial support for public sector programs.

### **EDUCATION: Helping Children and Youth Achieve Their Goals**

#### **Goals:**

- Increase school readiness
- Ensure students read at grade level by third grade
- Success in middle grades and on-time high school graduation
- Encourage overall educational experience which prepares young adults to obtain employment in today's economy.

#### **UWGPSNJ Supports:**

- Ensuring all children have access to consistent, high quality, and affordable early learning and all families are trained on parenting skills and child development.
- Promoting research-based parent and community engagement programs to reduce non-academic barriers to learning throughout the school years.
- Employing targeted interventions and early warning indicators in order to identify truant students and students at risk of dropping out and provide those students with tailored school, family and community supports to complete high school.
- Supporting an adequate and equitable system of funding for pre-K to 12 public schools in Pennsylvania

### **FINANCIAL STABILITY: Promoting Financial Stability and Independence**

#### **Goals:**

- Family-sustaining employment
- Access to income supports for those who need it
- Grow savings and assets

#### **UWGPSNJ Supports:**

- Encouraging policies and investments that support sector-based workforce partnerships that identify promising growth sectors and matching education, training and workforce development efforts
- Income support policies which supplement lower-wage earners' income while removing barriers that diminish families' progress toward financial stability. We also help individuals and

families meet their basic needs – food, shelter and safety. We support the following state and federal policies to preserve and improve:

- The federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) as well as New Jersey State EITC
- Child Tax Credit
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program
- Emergency Food and Shelter program
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy families (TANF)
- Individual Development Accounts
- Strong consumer protection laws to protect residents against predatory lending.

### **HEALTH: Creating Healthy Communities**

#### **Goal:**

- Improve access to healthcare, including mental health for treatment and prevention

#### **UWGPSNJ Supports:**

- Ensure that changes to our healthcare laws improve on existing healthcare coverage, and reduce health disparities and costs.
- Protect access to vital health care programs including Medicaid and support the reauthorization of Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- Ensuring older adults have access to home and community-based supports in order to maximize their choice to age in place.

### **Strengthening/Building Capacity of Non Profit Sector**

#### **Goal:**

- Enhance the nonprofit sector's capacity to serve
- Encourage philanthropy, volunteering and innovation

#### **UWGPSNJ Supports:**

- Policies that encourage philanthropy and volunteerism to advance the common good.
- The full value of existing federal tax incentives, including the charitable deduction
- Statewide 2-1-1 system to serve as the central source of information and referral for Health and Human Services, and to coordinate health and human service needs resulting from emergencies or natural disasters with state and local emergency management agencies.
- Laws and regulations that affect the operation of nonprofit help, rather than hinder the critical work done by charities and foundations every year.

**Stay update to date and join United Way in advocating for these priorities for our community. Visit <http://www.unitedforimpact.org/ways-to-engage/advocate> .**