"Listen to the mustn'ts, child.
Listen to the don'ts.
Listen to the shouldn'ts,
the impossibles, the won'ts.
Listen to the never haves,
then listen close to me...
Anything can happen, child.
Anything can be."

-Shel Silverstein

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
LIVE UNITED™ United Way
United Way of Greater Rochester

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD...
AND WHAT RESEARCH TELLS US ABOUT THE CHILDREN AND PARENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY:

From gestation to age five is a critical time for the development of children.

More than one-third of Rochester City School District kindergarteners are entering school with one or more problems that put them at risk for poor school performance.

Even the smallest amount of lead in their blood negatively affects children's functioning and behavior.

In 2007, 426 Monroe County children under age six were newly identified with dangerous blood lead levels.

Poor children are more likely to be in poor health, die during childhood, score lower on academic tests, be retained in a grade, drop out of school, have out-of-wedlock births, experience violent crime and be poor in adulthood.

40% of Rochester's children under age five live in poverty.

Children raised by stable caregivers are more likely to reach developmental milestones than those who aren't.

Annually, about one in five births in Rochester is to a teenage girl.

Children born at a healthy birth weight are best positioned for good physical and emotional health.

In the city of Rochester, 10.7% of babies were born at low birth weight.

Child abuse and neglect is strongly related to juvenile delinquency, adult criminality and violent criminal behavior.

Child abuse and neglect reports in Monroe County are increasing. In 2007, 6,948 reports were made.

Exposure to violence in early childhood has far-reaching developmental, behavioral and emotional consequences.

16% of Rochester City School District kindergarteners have witnessed violence in their neighborhoods.
11% have witnessed violence in their homes.

BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE: EARLY CHILDHOOD

Research has shown that children who receive the best possible start in life are more likely to achieve their full potential.

Research also shows that far too many Rochester children have the odds stacked against them right from the very beginning. The likelihood of their growing up healthy and succeeding in school is slim.

And that means we have to improve the conditions that affect our children in their most critical years—birth to age five.

ABOUT THE BLUEPRINT PROCESS

United Way of Greater Rochester is working to advance the common good by making measurable change in our community. Our mission is to magnify and focus the power of community resources to address our most pressing social needs. The blueprint process represents a new approach for how we will invest the resources that support our work on behalf of the community. Any combination of these resources may be invested with the intent of making long-term, sustainable change:

GIVE

United Way makes a financial commitment to a particular program focused on community needs.

ADVOCATE

United Way serves as a convener, advocate and champion for issues identified by the blueprint process. This may result in a public policy initiative or simply convening community leaders for dialogue.

VOLUNTEER

United Way acts as a catalyst for identifying volunteer needs to advance a strategy and mobilizing volunteers to carry out the work.

GOAL: EVERY CHILD IN OUR COMMUNITY WILL HAVE THE BEST POSSIBLE START IN LIFE

OBJECTIVES & INDICATORS OF SUCCESS / STRATEGIES / IMPLEMENTATION

United Way investments may be financial support, advocacy on issues, mobilizing volunteers or a combination of all three. Wherever we can, we will fund programs that are "evidence-based" (proven to work based on extensive research and effective, long-lasting results).

IMPROVED PARENTING

- Increase parent knowledge and parenting skills
- Increase positive parenting practices
- Increase parental social support
- Reduce percentage of substantiated child abuse reports
- Increase percentage of children whose behavior is appropriate for their age and level of development

PARENT EDUCATION

Give kids better prepared moms and dads through parenting programs. Parenting programs help strengthen parents and lead to appropriate nurturing and guidance.

EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

The Incredible Years
Aims to reduce young children's aggression and behavior problems as well as build their parents' skills.

Parents as Teachers
Helps parents understand how their children are developing and teaches them critical parenting skills.

Nurse-Family Partnership
Matches specially trained registered nurses with low-income moms expecting their first baby.

INCREASED SCHOOL READINESS

- Increase percentage of children whose behavior is appropriate for their age and level of development
- Increase use of high-quality child care and early childhood education
- Increase number of children with special needs receiving screening and referral

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Help children to be completely ready to learn when they enter kindergarten.

RESOURCE INVESTMENTS

Advocate for access to high quality child care and education for low-income families.

Mobilize volunteers to give of their time toward early childhood efforts.

Where there is significant government investment in child care subsidies, no investment of United Way dollars is expected.

IMPROVED CHILD & MATERNAL HEALTH

- Increase percentage of children whose behavior is appropriate for their age and level of development
- Increase number of women and children screened and referred for services
- Increase use of needed services by women and children
- Reduce prominent health and developmental risk factors

EARLY DETECTION & ACCESS TO SERVICES

Recognize, diagnose and treat medical conditions before they become serious.

EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

Primary Mental Health Project
Screens children for problems that interfere with learning.

Child-Parent Psychotherapy
Provides treatment for children who have been traumatized by domestic violence, child maltreatment or maternal depression.

Interpersonal Psychotherapy
Aims to decrease depression in adults and adolescents.

MORE EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

- Increase coordination among agencies
- Increase level of parent satisfaction with service

SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENT

Offer better integration of services for young children and their families, and make it easier to take advantage of those services.

RESOURCE INVESTMENTS

Knowledge Management
Create opportunities and systems to share best practices and advance the field of expertise.

United Way's Synergy Fund
Provides funding to agencies considering working together so they can better achieve their collective mission.

Please visit liveunitedrochester.org for the entire Blueprint for Change and more information on how you can help your community.

YOU CAN HELP EVERY CHILD IN OUR COMMUNITY HAVE THE BEST POSSIBLE START IN LIFE...

GIVE.

The work outlined in the Blueprint for Change: Early Childhood is entirely supported by contributions to the Community Fund.

Your gift to United Way's Community Fund joins with the generosity of your friends, family and co-workers to ensure the necessary resources are there to make a real difference to members of our community in need. It supports student readiness and success, resources for families in crisis and helps individuals achieve independence.

Please consider making a gift to the United Way this year and designating either all or part of your donation to the Community Fund. We all benefit when a child succeeds, when families are financially stable and when people are healthy.

ADVOCATE.

Real and sustained change in community conditions requires more than money. It demands advocacy efforts. Some early childhood advocacy opportunities include:

- Advocate on behalf of quality home visitation programs
- Advocate on behalf of access to quality child care for low-income working families
- Advocate for continued funding of 211 centers to ensure increased access to information and referral
- Advocate for lead poisoning prevention programs

VOLUNTEER.

Giving of your time is perhaps one of the most powerful ways to "give." Some early childhood volunteer opportunities include:

- Classroom volunteers in preschools and child care centers
- Child care while parents attend parenting education
- Volunteer tax preparers for CASH program
- Volunteers to knit hats and mittens for child care centers

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Questions, comments? Call 585-242-6400 or e-mail donorrep@uwrochester.org or visit liveunitedrochester.org