



For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Karyn Ruhl

United Way of Metropolitan Chicago
312-906-2291 (direct)
karyn.ruhl@uw-mc.org

LIVE UNITED Neighborhood Network Launches in West Chicago

*Enhanced social services for West Chicago residents by
United Way and WeGo Together For Kids*

(CHICAGO, IL) [DATE] . In partnership with WeGo Together for Kids, a community collaboration of more than 40 local partners, United Way of Metropolitan Chicago (UWMC) has launched its second LIVE UNITED Neighborhood Network in the West Chicago community. The Neighborhood Network model concentrates and integrates services in education, income and health within a community to achieve maximum impact and lasting change.

The Networks also serve individuals and families from a central hub, usually a school or community center. Building on the strengths of existing services in the community, United Way adds financial investments, staff, and programmatic partners to more closely coordinate services and measures impact on goals like educational attainment, financial security and healthier children. West Chicago is the second community to partner in a Network and the first in the suburbs. United Way has operated a Neighborhood Network in Brighton Park, on Chicago's southwest side, since April of 2013.

West Chicago is a vibrant and changing community, shared City Mayor Ruben Pineda, but like all communities, we have our challenges. We're excited to work with United Way to better integrate and enhance an already diverse set of services for our families.

Among those challenges are poverty rates, an increase in childhood obesity, and the need for more mental health services.

The initial resources we'll be able to bring to West Chicago include an additional mental health clinician, parent liaisons to connect families to services and new financial stability programming, said Wendy DuBoe, President and Chief Executive Officer at United Way. One of the strengths of the Neighborhood Network model is that there are programs with proven successes that make sense across many neighborhoods, and more customized strategies to address to unique issues.

WeGo Together For Kids is the lead partner within the West Chicago LIVE UNITED Neighborhood Network, facilitating the day-to-day coordination of partners, programs and services within West Chicago, including after-school programs, programs to support health and wellness and access to basic needs to name a few. United Way will provide capacity-enhancing resources, including financial support, strategic guidance, issue advocacy, a volunteer network and access to corporate partners. Metropolitan Family Services provides fiscal oversight for the Network.

The LIVE UNITED Neighborhood Network is part of United Way's community-impact plan launched in 2009. A departure from their traditional program-funding model, United Way's work focuses on creating lasting social change through three approaches: targeted interventions in education, income and health . the building blocks to self-sufficiency . in 58 communities of greatest need; basic needs support for the six-country region

and highly focused and integrated services in neighborhoods. United Way plans to operate 10 Neighborhood Networks by 2020.

The LIVE UNITED Neighborhood Network is hosting a community block party at Lemay Middle School on Tuesday, August 19, from 4:30-7:00pm that will include food, music, community booths providing information on programs and services. West Chicago Community members are also invited to take part in a community art project during the event. The event will be emceed by Christian Farr of NBC5.

For more information please visit www.LIVEUNITEDchicago.org or contact Karyn Ruhl at 312.906.2291 or karyn.ruhl@uw-mc.org

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About United Way of Metropolitan Chicago

United Way of Metropolitan Chicago is part of a network of nearly 1,800 community-based United Ways in 45 countries and territories. Locally, the United Way of Metropolitan Chicago (UWMC) support system includes North-Northwest United Way, United Way of DuPage/West Cook and South-Southwest Suburban United Way. UWMC serves as the backbone organization generating coordinating resources across funders, service providers, government and civic leaders to delivery large-scale, measurable and sustainable impact across our region. Additional information is available at <http://uw-mc.org/>

About WeGo Together for Kids

The mission of *WeGo Together for Kids* is to address the health, safety and well-being of students and families through a collaborative, coordinated and comprehensive approach for West Chicago schools and community www.wego33.org/wegotgether

About Metropolitan Family Services DuPage Center

Metropolitan Family Services DuPage, started more than 80 years ago, is a family service/mental health agency serving some of DuPage County's most vulnerable children and families. Whether through early childhood education, parent education, family therapy, youth mentoring, psychiatric and mental health services for all ages, or services for older adults and their caregivers, Metropolitan "mpowers" individuals and families to learn, to earn, to heal and to thrive. www.metrofamily.org.