

United Way Launches Online Resource to Track Health and Prosperity Indicators in the Region

RICHMOND, Va. (Nov. 13, 2018) – United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg is launching an online hub to track data related to poverty, homelessness, teen pregnancies and other key measures in the region. The organization previously released an annual “Indicators of Community Strength” printed report to highlight similar information. The Indicators data will now be updated online throughout the year at www.yourunitedway.org/data.

The collection of information found on the site reflects the organization’s *Steps to Success* framework. Built on a foundation of research, *Steps to Success* identifies nine priority areas on the path to prosperity. These priorities focus on issues and milestones that represent a sequential set of challenges that are best addressed by empowering individuals, families and older adults to reach higher, live better and share in the region’s quality of life. Each *Step* has an accompanying set of key and related indicators, all of which will be tracked through United Way’s new online data tool.

“We examine data and research year-round as we work to create solutions to solve the region’s biggest challenges,” said James Taylor, President and CEO of United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg. “This information allows us to make better decisions and understand precisely which areas need the most help. By housing this information on our website, we are better able to update the data and our analysis of it for people to access throughout the year.”

United Way directly serves the *Steps to Success* priority areas through its various internal initiatives as well as through its support of dozens of regional agencies and nonprofit organizations whose front-line services are aligned with the nine *Steps*. The combined programs serve 11 localities in Greater Richmond, from Goochland to New Kent and Hanover to Dinwiddie.

The following *Steps to Success* data is available on the site:

- *Basic Needs Met: Food Safety, Housing.* Families and individuals must have a safe home with healthy food for everyone who lives there in order to work toward a higher degree of prosperity. Data tracked: Population and children living below poverty thresholds, homelessness, violent crime, child abuse and neglect and food access.
- *Born Healthy.* The path to prosperity begins at birth. Children must be born into safe homes with families that are socially, emotionally and financially prepared to care for them. Data tracked: Birth weight, prenatal care, birth mothers with less than 12th grade information and teen pregnancy
- *Prepared for Kindergarten.* In order to be kindergarten-ready, young children need quality early education, strong relationships with families, a safe and secure home environment and regular health and developmental screenings and support. Data tracked: PALS-K benchmarks, health insurance coverage, early childhood education and early intervention programs.

- *Grade-Level Reading by 3rd Grade.* Kids who are reading proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to graduate high school on time. Data tracked: Third grade reading SOL scores and chronic absenteeism.
- *Middle School Engagement.* Attendance and success in middle school are critical in keeping students on track for on-time graduation and preparing them to continue their education after high school or secure a self-sustaining job. Data tracked: Eighth grade reading SOL scores, chronic absenteeism, suspensions and expulsions, and relationships with caring adults.
- *High School Graduation.* A high school diploma is a critical milestone on the path to a post-secondary degree and/or a self-sustaining career. Data tracked: On-time high school graduation, high school dropout rate, chronic absenteeism and juvenile crime.
- *College- or Career-ready.* As they continue their education or enter the workforce, young people need access to skills and training that enable them to secure and maintain gainful employment with a living wage. Data tracked: Labor market participation in adults ages 25-64, educational attainment, FAFSA completion, higher education enrollment and industry recognized credentials.
- *Financial Well-being.* Covering basic needs is not enough. Families and individuals need sufficient income to avoid debt, build savings and prepare for unanticipated expenses. Data tracked: Asset poverty, unbanked or underbanked households, unemployment rate, population and children living below 200% of poverty thresholds and households spending 30 percent of income on housing.
- *Connected & Healthy Older Adults.* Older adults and persons with disabilities must be emotionally and physically healthy, financially secure and socially connected. Data tracked: Older adults (65+) living below poverty thresholds, premature age-adjusted mortality rate, adults in poor or fair health, health insurance coverage and social isolation.

The data provided on the website comes from a variety of highly credible sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau, Homeward, the Virginia Department of State Police, the Virginia Department of Social Services, the Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Employment Commission and the Virginia Department of Education. Data will be updated as it is available. A one- to two-year lag time in data currency is typical for data from public sources.

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About United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg

United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg empowers individuals and addresses systemic problems to provide everyone with a clear path to success. We do this by conducting research, funding programs and organizations, driving systems-level change and engaging with individuals in 11 localities across the region. Learn more at YourUnitedWay.org.