

A DAY OF CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

With an army of volunteers, United Way of Lincoln County turned its focus on four schools across the county: Norris Childers Elementary School, Catawba Springs Elementary School, North Brook Elementary School, and West Lincoln High School. While the day started off rainy, it ended with sunshine and smiles because of the work the volunteers put in! Due to T-Mobile's Volun-T Program, Huber Technology, Pepsi, and Lowe's Home Improvement, supplies and materials helped get Day of Caring 2025 started. Throughout the day, United Way volunteers completed four separate beautification projects, from spreading tons of mulch to building butterfly gardens and so much more. Several businesses joined groups of volunteers, including The Timken Company, Atrium Health, Pepsi, Aptar, T-Mobile, Huber, United Bank, Lincoln Cultural Center, and many more. Their employees made a direct impact in the work completed. Lincoln County Schools do so much for the community, so paying that back by completing these projects was both gratifying and productive! This day is one of UWLC's favorite days of the year, and everyone connected to it is so glad to be able to make a difference in the community and bring direct change to Lincoln County and its families and children!



SERVING UP SUPPORT FOR UWLC



This year, UWLC hosted its first annual Pickleball Tournament at Betty Ross Park! Despite the heat, it was an incredible day, full of amazing players who served up support for those in need! With a mixed doubles tournament, the picklers played their hardest, and the team Paddles Up, made up of David & Julie, took the gold! This event was just one example of the community coming together to help people in need face their greatest challenges. Atrium Health, this event's Signature Sponsor, as well as The Timken Company, the Impact Sponsor, allowed this event to take place, thus raising funds for emergency needs and sharing impact stories. Their support, as well as the pickleball courts donated by the City of Lincolnton, the drinks donated by Pepsi, and the breakfast donated by My Brothers Bagels, made UWLC's first pickleball tournament the success it was! Above all, it was the picklers who joined in our tournament and helped UWLC raise funds and awareness for what we do and how we impact our community!

STUFFING THE BUS FOR LINCOLN COUNTY

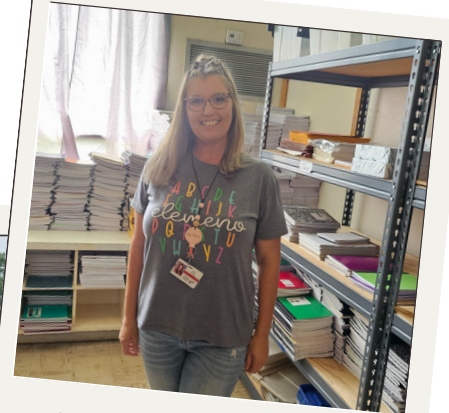
With help from nearly 30 businesses and organizations, United Way of Lincoln County was able to bring in more school supplies than ever before! From July 7 through August 8, UWLC and the Lincoln County community came together in a show of support for students and teachers in need. On Sort Day, dozens of volunteers came out to help organize and prepare the supplies. At the back-to-school events, the West ARC was able to help 135 children get school supplies and new-to-them clothes, and the Central ARC served nearly 300 children during its shopping days, too. At the Sunrise Community, over 100 children received school supplies. Additionally, some of the donated school supplies were given out at West Zone and Love Denver, serving over 1000 children total. Closing out the Stuff the Bus 2025 events were the Teacher Shop Days, and more than 75 teachers were able to get materials for their classrooms and help students who may not have the supplies that they need! Each of these events are incredibly important to getting students and teachers ready for the new school year, and UWLC appreciates each and every volunteer who came and helped their community!



Sort Day Volunteer!



Sort Day Volunteers!



Teacher Resource Day
#2!



Stuff the Bus Donation Site!

REACHING OUT TO COMMUNITY

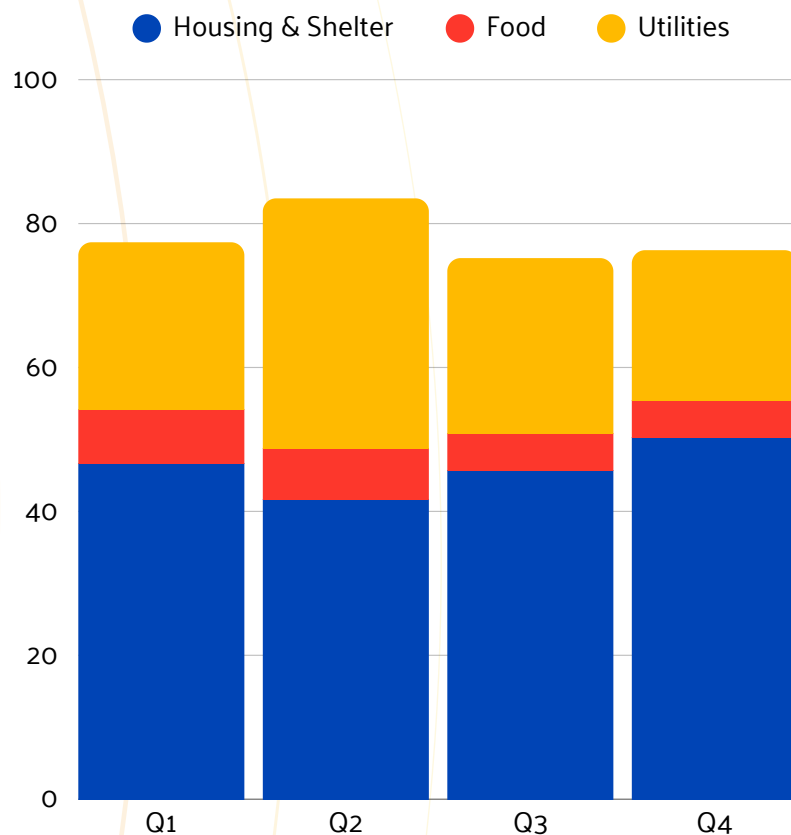
From the Sunrise Community to the Oaklawn neighborhood and more, United Way of Lincoln County makes it a priority to connect with places and people in need. Throughout the last year, UWLC has helped support these communities by supplying 15 afterschool tutors, providing at least 80 holiday meals to families in need, furnishing many children and families with Christmas gifts, and more! This past summer, United Way helped support several summer arts programs in the Sunrise Community through a Lincoln County Cultural Center and NC Arts Council grant. This grant allowed for art courses, dance classes, rap lessons, and more throughout the summer months, before ending in an amazing recital that showcased all the children learned. UWLC also helped with over 65 emergency assistance situations. In many of these cases, the family was hit by an unexpected medical crisis that put them behind on their bills. They often had jobs or were typically on top of their situations, but when faced with this kind of emergency, they needed a helping hand to remain financially stable. Additionally, UWLC held and participated in several resource and health fairs across the county. During these events, UWLC was able to share important resources, like 211 and other ways to get assistance when in need. Each of these examples are just a hint at all the ways United Way of Lincoln County is involved in helping Lincoln County overcome its obstacles and be everything it can be.



NEEDS ACROSS LINCOLN COUNTY

Over the past 12 months, there have been over 1,187 calls into 211 for support services. By analyzing this data, Housing & Shelter remained the highest need, taking up 45.9% of the calls. Utilities, which includes water, electric, and gas, was the second highest need for Lincoln County residents, coming in at 26%. From there, Food, Healthcare & COVID-19, and Employment & Income were the next highest categories, making up 6.2%, 3.5%, and 3.3% respectively.

Looking at each of the quarters, representing by Q1-4, there is some fluctuation. Q1 represents October 2024–December 2024, Q2 represents January 2025–March 2025, Q3 represents April 2025–June 2025, and Q4 represents July 2025–September 2025. In terms of variances, there was an increased need during Q2, specifically for utility assistance. Food and housing stay fairly similar, averaging 6.25% and 46.2% respectively throughout the 12 months. Consistently, housing and utilities are the highest need.



INVESTMENTS IN LINCOLN COUNTY

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY

2,129 lives impacted through affordable, enriching childcare supports across our community

1,500 lives impacted by behavioral intervention programming & mentoring for at-risk youth

5,495 lives impacted through awareness, prevention, intervention, and education services focused on addressing and preventing child abuse in our community.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

143 lives empowered through job and life skills support to reach economic stability

2,295 basic needs met through the West & Asbury resource centers

540 vulnerable neighbors were provided shelter and wrap-around resources for financial security

\$45,769 provided for emergency assistance and financial literacy programs

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

3,297 individuals received affordable medication and health service assistance

90 lives impacted through aging adult caregiving services

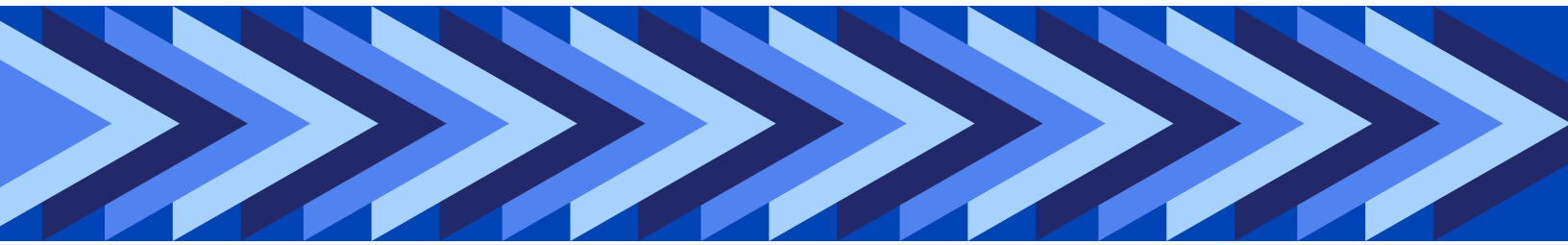
1,095 individuals with disabilities and special needs benefited from programs providing job readiness, independent living skills, and inclusive sports and summer camp opportunities

IMPACT STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Jaylin is a single mother, and her life was already busy to the max. This wasn't improved by having her daughter prematurely, which put her out of work and caring for a high-risk baby. Thankfully, her daughter's health improved, and Jaylin found a new job and secured childcare. However, while she was healing from childbirth and taking care of her newborn, her bills didn't stop. Her power was set to be cut off, which isn't an option with little ones in the house. Jaylin reached out to United Way and explained her situation and her plan for the next month. With her new income, she would be able to afford her bills, but that income wasn't available yet. United Way was able to step in and keep her power and water on, setting her on the course for financial stability and safety.



Shaun and his girlfriend had busy lives. With three children in the house, along with a sick parent, they have many responsibilities that they need to manage. Unfortunately, Shaun lost his job of over a year due to the company downsizing. Still, Shaun was doing everything that he could. He reached out to DSS for help finding work and scheduled as many interviews as he could. However, that didn't stop his bills from being due. When he reached out to United Way, he shared his story and his plan for addressing his family's situation, but for that plan to succeed, he couldn't let his power and water be shut off. United Way of Lincoln County was able to step in and provide the support he and his family needed.



Lisa and her husband just welcomed a new baby to their family. Typically, she is a stay-at-home mom, watching their three small children, while her husband works. His income covers their bills, and her work supports their needs. Sadly, she developed complications from the birth, such as post-eclampsia, that hospitalized her. Because she wasn't at home to watch their children, her husband had to stay home and miss work. Her symptoms were severe and landed her in the hospital several times, and his limited paychecks

made them fall behind on their bills. Once that started, it became a spiral, going from bad to worse. Even though her health stabilized, they were facing a new hurdle: eviction. With the help of a few other organizations, United Way was able to help pay their due rent and get the family on a payment plan. This support allowed the family to remain housed and able to flourish.



Everything was going fine for Derrick and his five-person family—until he was injured at work. His injury was bad enough that he had to stay home for more than 5 weeks, and despite normally being able to afford their lives, they suddenly found themselves struggling to even buy food. Thankfully, he knew to call United Way. Not only were we able to direct him to the nearest food pantries, but we were also able to get his family food for the week. This support and the shared resources kept his family going until he made it back to work.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

United Way of Lincoln County partnered with the Lincoln County Health Department and Atrium to conduct a community health assessment (CHA). The CHA is incredibly important in identifying and addressing the major issues of our community.

To begin, a survey was shared with Lincoln County residents, and there was a 75% increase in participation as compared to the last CHA in 2022. All those who answered are Lincoln County residents, ensuring that the information is localized and specific to our community's needs.

Utilizing Atlas and Metopio, we were able to identify the greatest needs in Lincoln County. Atlas makes data user-friendly as an interactive tool, while Metopio is a shared data analytics tool that transforms complex data into clear, actionable insights.

Once the data was collected, UWLC, LC Health Department, and Atrium hosted a community forum, attended by close to 50 community leaders, including healthcare, government, and nonprofit leaders. We shared the collected information and explored the data. Each of the groups talked amongst themselves, identifying priorities and sharing stories of individuals and families they have interacted with. This kicked off many important conversations and ideas for how to impact change and help those in need.



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The top priorities for this community are transportation, behavioral health, and access to affordable childcare. Each of these mark the largest areas of struggle and difficulty in Lincoln County citizens' lives. Transportation can impact access to healthcare, employment, education, and support services, while behavioral health includes mental health issues and substance abuse. The final top priority, access to affordable childcare, impacts not only the child, but the caregivers. For a secondary priority, the group chose to focus on addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood.

ACCESS TO MENTAL & HEALTH CARE

What specific needs or areas of focus has your group identified under this priority?

Anxiety

Basic needs, food, shelter, income, etc.

Mental health services

Food and shelter, basic needs, etc.

Mental health services

Mental health services

Mental health services

What's getting in the way of meeting those needs? are there any gaps in resources or support?

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