2022 COMMUNITY INSIGHTS REPORT SUMMARY

United Way
of Greater Cincinnati

Our transformation to an organization implementing true change in our community began by asking the community to drive our work and investments – to tell us what challenges to address and what solutions work for them. We leaned into the expertise of approximately 400 community members, business leaders and 200 partners and analyzed extensive community data. **The following is a summary of this work and how the community guides our funding efforts.**

Sincerely,

Moira Weir
President/CEO

OVERVIEW

United Way of Greater Cincinnati worked with research partners to gather community perspective through a combination of quantitative survey and qualitative interview learnings. Research methods included community surveys, public data gathering, one-on-one conversations, small focus groups and community partner feedback.

THE RESEARCH HAD THREE OBJECTIVES:

- Understand root causes of economic mobility and well-being, including ideas and opportunities.

- Identify community assets that are creating or could help implement solutions, or that might be missing or under-resourced.

- Explore what success over two years might look like, including how United Way of Greater Cincinnati could best utilize findings to demonstrate how insights guide funding and provide transparency in accountability.

TOTAL ENGAGEMENT + GEOGRAPHICAL SAMPLING:

405
Total people engaged

190
Total partners

SURVEY FINDINGS

TOP CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED THROUGH SURVEY

78%
Economic & Financial Well-Being

60%
Employment

58%
Health & Wellness

MOST CRITICAL CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS

71%
Community And Social Connectedness

80%-91%
Education

52%
Social & Emotional Milestones for Youth

TOP APPROACHES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY TO INFORM SOLUTIONS

59%
Involving community in design

59%
Building stronger connection between stakeholders

53%
Provide more resources or address the flow of resources

43%
Create new or different policies in government or local institutions

41%
Address differences in deeply held beliefs or viewpoints

37%
Improve or change the practices of local organizations

UNIVERSAL THEMES – CHALLENGES ➡ OPPORTUNITIES

REACTIVE ➡ PREVENTION FOCUSED

- Economic challenges are central to many barriers families face, particularly when focusing on efforts to help children and youth thrive. We need to focus on preventative solutions to change this.

> " Institutionalized racism has helped keep people in subjugation… But you don't undo hundreds of years of legislation and indoctrinated privilege in just 30 years; it doesn't go away with one new law. Education on both sides can help change it. You have to change people's thought process - little by little. "
>
> – Robert Harper, Pastor and Community Leader

UNWELCOMING ➡ CENTER COMMUNITY

- Racial discrimination and lack of cultural sensitivity present significant barriers for families and communities. Communities are rarely directly engaged to inform, guide or participate in the creation of solutions meant to support them. There's a need to embrace a shared motto: "nothing for us, without us."

INTERCONNECTED ➡ STRENGTHEN COORDINATION

- Issues are interconnected. While there's a need to prioritize, we can't view issues in silos. The issues of health care, child care, housing, education and mental health were more likely to be referenced together.

POWERLESS ➡ ENABLE EMPOWERMENT

- Challenges are so individualized they create tensions at the "individual" level. The traditional concepts of power and recognition feel aspirational or even unattainable, as many are challenged with meeting their most basic human needs. There is a sense of "hopelessness" that leads to "helplessness."

INSECURITY ➡ STIMULATE SECURITY AND TRUST

- Many are overwhelmed when trying to navigate a complicated system of solutions and don't feel they have control over the situation. There's a need to recognize and overcome the distrust (and competition) within the system to build stronger collaboration, accountability and sustainable solutions.

> " I don't know what to do or where to turn. It's numbing. The feeling of being all alone and in survival mode. Lack of support. "
>
> – Melanie Marshall, Nonprofit partner

ISOLATION ➡ DRIVE CONNECTION

- Their challenges create a disconnect to the community where they need the support. Informal networks currently provide the greatest support to families yet are rarely part of solutions. People crave deeper connection with communities and see a need for dialogue across communities.

INSIGHTS INFORMED FUNDING DECISIONS

1. Listened to community and partners and themed insights about community challenges, root causes and ideas for solutions.

2. Prioritized partners based on their alignment to priority areas and sorted them against the identified themes.

3. Refined the themes to identify the systems-change opportunities most prime for action based on the unique assets, expertise, and strengths of partners and the collective ability to shift root causes.

2022 OPPORTUNITY AREAS

NextGen Success
Financial empowerment for young people through coordinated educational and workforce pathways

Equitable Economic Mobility
Breaking down barriers to employment & equitable asset building

Housing First
Building strong financial foundations through stable housing

Ready Kids, Resilient Families
Transforming the early education system of care to support the resiliency of kids and their families

Improved Prevention, Stronger Communities
Scaling trauma-informed approaches to strengthen community well-being

Responding to Community Need
Improving the effectiveness of the nonprofit system of care to respond to community needs

NEXT STEPS

- **MAY 2022:** Opportunity briefs released
- **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2022:** Planning period for systems-change portfolios
- **OCTOBER 2022:** Action plans established
- **OCTOBER 2022 -JUNE 2023:** First year of portfolio implementation

LIVE UNITED®

United Way

United Way of Greater Cincinnati