

## Local Needs – Charlevoix & Emmet Counties 2012-13

### How is the local education system?

By most measures, it's very good to great. But funding and achievement varies greatly by school district. Over **20%** of 3rd graders score below Proficient in reading – far too many.

Char-Em United Way's "Literacy Corps" is recruiting **150 volunteers** to read to, mentor and tutor local kids over the next three years. We've also started **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**. We're targeting early grade literacy to give kids the best start possible toward a successful life.

### Isn't unemployment going down?

**Unemployment rates in Emmet (14.7%) and Charlevoix (13.2%)** continue to be higher than Michigan's average of 9.4% for the first quarter of this year. Moreover, even in the best of times, many 'up north' jobs don't provide a living wage or benefits.

United Way's Funded Partners provide a range of 'safety net' services, as well as longer-term solutions to help our neighbors build their skills to get and keep jobs to support their families. We're taking the lead on **innovative ways to reduce poverty**.

### There is great health care up here, right?

Yes there is, but it isn't accessible to everyone. **16.6%** of adults 18 – 64 years of age are uninsured, and many more are underinsured. **14% of local residents** report they've delayed or not received needed care due to the cost.

We support a range of programs to address needs for health services. We distribute the **FamilyWize** prescription discount card which has saved local residents over \$100,000 on their prescriptions.

### I don't see anyone sleeping on the streets. Is there isn't a homeless problem?

In the last 10 months, **407 people were recorded as officially homeless** in our two counties. This includes 117 children in families.

United Way support helps keep families in their homes. We coordinate Project Connect which brings over 700 homeless or near-homeless people together with the agencies that can help them.

### Is hunger an issue?

About **70% of kids** in local schools qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch (and breakfast). Kids can't learn if they are hungry. **Over 14%** of the local residents receive state food assistance, not counting those using local pantries. Most of these neighbors are working people.

United Way is working with Manna Food Project to help local pantries improve the resources they provide to local residents and measure the impact of their efforts.