

walking a mile in the shoes

Food insecurity, housing instability, homelessness, lack of reliable and affordable transportation, domestic violence, inability to afford basic necessities, unemployment and underemployment is a reality for many of our neighbors right here in our community.

Across our service area of Goodhue, Wabasha & Pierce Counties, 1 in 10 people live in poverty. These challenges are a daily struggle for many.

Striving to ensure the basic needs of all in our community are met is one of United Way's bold goals.

BUT HOW DO YOU FIGHT POVERTY, AN ISSUE THAT IS SO COMPLEX?

At United Way we believe that it begins with an increased understanding of poverty and empathy for our neighbors who are living it.

To this end, we began facilitating poverty simulations.



Think you know what poverty feels like?



Experience our Poverty Simulation



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What is it?

The Poverty Simulation is an impactful and interactive experience in which participants begin to understand what it might be like to live in a typical low-income family trying to survive from month to month.

IT IS A SIMULATION, NOT A GAME.

The Poverty Simulation brings an awareness of the realities our neighbors in poverty face everyday and ideally serves as a catalyst for ongoing dialogue and ultimately real local social change.

Each participant takes on the role of a person living in poverty. Roles are based off of real family scenarios. The goal is to make ends meet, feed your family, and maintain housing for one month.

COULD YOU SURVIVE?

Logistics

Allow 2.5-3 hours for the event which includes the introduction, briefing, simulation exercise, and the debriefing period.

Time to promote the event and generate a confirmed participant list is at least 45 days. United Way will also utilize this time to hold an orientation for volunteers who help facilitate the simulation and to prepare for your simulation.

The event can be held in any very large wide open room with roughly 3500 square feet.

14 tables, 185 chairs, a microphone and podium are needed. A map with specific room arrangement will be available.

Between 30 and 80 participants can attend & assume the roles of up to 26 different families facing poverty.

The participants may be groups from one organization or it can be a group of mixed individuals.

United Way relies upon the help of 20 volunteers to facilitate the event by playing the roles of the service providers.

United Way will work with you to customize your debriefing period to ensure the simulation experience is most valuable and applicable to your group.



Benefits

Participants begin to understand life living with a low-income.

The simulation experience increases empathy, awareness, and sensitivity for individuals and families living in poverty.

It can serve as a training for employees who work directly with people in poverty or who develop programs and policies that affect people in poverty.

It serves as a catalyst for local impact.

Past Participant Comments

“People in poverty have an extremely hard life to live and need the support of their community to improve their situations.”

“Eye-opening experience! Gave each one of us the ‘opportunity’ to live in poverty for a period of time...but we were able to go home at the end of the night and escape what others can't.”

“Worthwhile event”

“Unexpected revelations”

“Realistic”

“Powerful”

Our Partners

United Way is able to facilitate poverty simulations because of the time, commitment, passion, and skills of our incredibly generous partners who volunteer their time!

THANK YOU

Hope Coalition

Live Healthy Red Wing

Faith in Action

Three Rivers Community Action, Inc.

CARE Clinic

League of Women Voters Red Wing

ProAct

Hispanic Outreach Program of Goodhue County

Workforce Development, Inc.

Goodhue County

Red Wing Youth Outreach, Inc.

Colvill Family Center

Mayo Clinic Health System

Every Hand Joined

Incredible Individual Community Volunteers

United Way Board of Directors

Rotary

Red Wing Shoe Company

Interested?!

Contact Laura Sand Prink at the United Way at 651-388-6309 or laura.prink@uw-gwp.org

Thank you for your interest in the United Way Poverty Simulation!