

Would You Rather Game

Engagement in a Box

Time Needed: 5-10 Minutes

Group size: Flexible—can be done on an individual basis or as a large group

Overview

The focus of this engagement is to give you an overview of United Way's work in the areas of Education, Safety and Health. After experiencing the stress of making a difficult decision, participants will gain an understanding of what United Way is doing to make difficult decisions easier for everyone in our community.

Items Needed for Engagement

- ✓ Would you Rather Question/Answer Sheets

How to Execute the Engagement

In this engagement individuals will be asked to take on the persona of someone who was helped by United Way services. They will be given a situation and then asked to make one of two decisions. Once the individual or group has made their decision, a facilitator will share with them what is going on in our community to address this issue. There are a variety of scenarios and topics from which to choose. Individuals can answer one question or try several.

You are a parent of a sixth grader, Samantha, who is complaining of a toothache. Your family has good health care coverage through your husband's work, but an extremely high deductible for dental coverage. You just spent several hundred dollars on school supplies for Samantha and your other two sons. **What do you do?**

Would you rather visit the ER and have your child's pain treated temporarily OR schedule a visit with a dentist and get preventative care but have expensive dental bills?

Did you know?

According to a report released by Public Health for Madison and Dane County, dental pain led to more than **11,000 visits** to a primary care doctor, urgent care, or emergency room in 2010—resulting in **\$1.6 million dollars** in charges. This report also revealed that nearly **3,300 middle and high school students** said they missed school in the past year because of tooth or gum pain.

Here's what United Way is doing:

United Way of Dane County is committed to ensuring that all people's health issues are identified and treated early. HealthConnect—a health insurance premium assistance program was created in 2013. HealthConnect is not health insurance, but rather provides financial assistance for an individual's out of pocket cost of the insurance premium for Silver Level health plans purchased through the Health Insurance Marketplace. So far in 2015 we are paying premiums for over 1000 individuals in Dane County. In addition, we created access to comprehensive dental care for over **150 uninsured children** by over **90 volunteer dentists**.

You are a busy single parent of 3 young kids—George, age 4, Sophie, age 7 and David age 12. Between running them to soccer practice, music lessons and daycare you sometimes don't have the time or money to make healthy sit-down meals.

What do you do?

Would you rather swing through the drive-through of a fast food restaurant and get them dinner quick or spend the time and money, out of your already packed schedule to, make healthy sit-down meals?

Did you know?

Even in resource rich Dane County, families struggle to provide a balanced diet to their children on a regular basis. Research from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reveals that low income families spend **\$7 of \$10** in their family budgets on basic needs. Close to a fifth of that budget is spent on food for the family. For a family of four living at the Federal Poverty Level, that allows **\$82** per week or about **\$20 per person**. **50%** of restaurants in Dane County are considered to be fast food restaurants.

Here's what United Way is doing:

United Way's Healthy Food for All Children Delegation announced the creation of an innovative 10-year plan which aims to get fruits and vegetables into the hands and diets of children in our community. This plan unites key research-backed strategies with the ultimate goal of reducing the number of hungry children in Dane County in half by 2023.

You are the parent of a 6th grader, Vicki. You've noticed ever since your mother passed away that Vicki has seemed distant. She was extremely close with her grandmother. She's having a hard time getting up for school and has little to no interest in eating—she just pushes her dinner around the plate. You've also gotten several emails from her teacher about homework she hasn't turned in. You've talked to her about the death and she insists she's ok—when you press the subject further you always end up in a fight with her.

What do you do?

Do you leave her alone and let her work through it by herself or do you continue to force her to talk about?

Did you know?

National research shows us that **1 in 4** youth will experience a traumatic event by their **16th** birthday. Some example of what trauma could be for a youth could include the death of a loved one or pet, a family member getting critically ill or even witnessing abuse firsthand. If youth who are experiencing the effects of trauma aren't treated by the time they get to 9th grade, there is a much smaller chance that they can be successfully helped. They are more likely to drop out of school, get in trouble with the law, drink alcohol, abuse drugs and become pregnant.

Here's what United Way is doing:

The Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools program or CBITS provides screening, early intervention and treatment for 6th graders who are experiencing anger, anxiety and depression. In CBITS groups they learn skills that help them work through the trauma and manage its effects on their lives. This allows them to move on with their lives and focus on the goal of graduation. In 2013, CBITS screened **2,500** sixth graders for anger, anxiety and depression. **82** of these students received treatment for childhood trauma while **195** others received help for other mental/behavioral health concerns through other programs.

You and your spouse have a two-year old named Aaron. He is a giggly, alert and engaged baby. At your doctor visits your pediatrician has been discussing with you the importance of early education and enrolling him in a daycare where Aaron can interact with other children. Both you and your spouse work long hours. Your mother takes care of Aaron while you and your spouse are at work. Your mother loves Aaron and enjoys being a part of Aaron's life. If you were to put him in daycare instead of having your mother take care of him, your entire salary would go to pay for daycare. You need this money to pay basic bills such as utilities and buy groceries. **What do you do?**

Do you place Aaron in a daycare which provides the social and emotional curriculum your pediatrician has suggested but takes your entire salary or do you leave him in the loving care of your mother and use that money to pay bills?

Did you know?

In the US, the average cost of center-based daycare is **\$11,666** per year or **\$972** a month. This past year, only **42%** of children in the Madison schools scored “ready for kindergarten” on their kindergarten screener. In Dane County **30,995** children are under the age of 5; **15%** of these children live in poverty. By the time they start kindergarten, children living in poverty have heard **30 million fewer words** than children from literacy-rich homes of professionals. For example, children from literacy-poor homes arrive at school with vocabularies of **800 -1,000 words** vs. **6,000 – 10,000 words** for children from more literacy-affluent homes.

Here’s what United Way is doing:

United Way is committed to ensuring that children are cared for and have fun as they become prepared for school. In 2013, **2,500** parents, child care providers and children learned skills and experiential play opportunities through 15 United Way Play and Learn sites. In addition, **10,400** children in 2013 were screened through Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), a research-based tool used to identify children with potential developmental delays. One-third of children screened have at least one potential developmental delay. All were referred for early intervention avoiding more severe issues later.