Funding Dates:
March 2020 - December 2020

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic shutdown, United Way of Greater Knoxville launched the Knox County COVID-19 Response Fund as an answer to our community's emergent social service needs. United Way of Greater Knoxville gathered donations from companies and individuals across our community and dispersed $1.1 million through mini-grants to local nonprofits serving our neighbors impacted by the crisis.

50 nonprofits received funding to provide essential services for our community, including meal distribution, housing assistance, healthcare access, employment resources, hygiene product and personal protective equipment (PPE) disbursement, technology access, mental health counseling, and more.

The outcomes and services made possible by the mini-grants are reported below.
FOOD SECURITY

28,305
meals were distributed to families, children, and individuals

Thanks to local food supply efforts, food insecurity in Tennessee rose by only 25%, compared to 97% across the country.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

1,245
families received assistance to help them to stay in their homes

HEALTHCARE ACCESS

42,485
individuals received the healthcare they needed
EMployment Resources

11,319 individuals received help finding or maintaining employment

Hygiene Product & PPE Distribution

3,699 items were distributed to neighbors in need

Emerging Needs

35,705 individuals received assistance with emerging needs, including mental health counseling, technology access, and more
Helping Mamas

Helping Mamas distributed 13,152 diapers and 1,428 packs of wipes to 500 Knox County families, as well as car seats and other baby necessities.

A staff member from Helping Mamas said, “Just this week we had a sweet mom reach out to ask if we had a car seat - she was getting ready to be induced and knew that she would not be able to leave the hospital without it. We were able to not only give her a car seat but loads of baby goodies as well. She literally stopped by our office on the way to the hospital to pick up the car seat, and she was so appreciative. Thank you for your partnership!”

CAC Mobile Meals

The risks of the COVID-19 health crisis have significantly affected the senior population served by the CAC Mobile Meals program, and requests for meal support continue to grow into 2021. With assistance from their mini-grant, the CAC Mobile Meals program has added 150 new clients, serving an average of 1,100 individuals per day.

Metro Drug Coalition

With mini-grant funding, Metro Drug Coalition was able to pay for 19 individuals’ deposits to reside in sober living facilities.

One of these individuals was Jimmy, who moved into Integrity House, a transitional recovery residence. He was leaving treatment and had nowhere to go and no financial support from family. With help from this supportive environment, Jimmy started his own painting business, completed the terms of his probation, re-established a relationship with his daughter, and is now a house manager in the same sober living home that gave so much to him when he needed it most. With support from organizations like Metro Drug Coalition and Integrity House, recovery is possible!
**InterFaith Health Clinic**

With mini-grant funding, InterFaith Health Clinic provided 174 counseling sessions to low-income, uninsured individuals.

Lynn first came to InterFaith because she knew she needed counseling services. She says, “I was suffering from depression because I’d been sick for so long and I couldn’t afford to go to the doctor.”

In addition to depression, Lynn had several physical problems. Her diabetes and blood pressure were uncontrolled, so much so that the InterFaith physician who treated her was shocked that she hadn’t suffered a heart attack or stroke. The physician was able to help her get her diabetes and blood pressure under control, allowing Lynn to focus on positive changes in other areas of her life. Lynn began seeing a mental health therapist to get healthy mentally and emotionally, and she credits InterFaith with turning her life around. “They make me feel great about myself,” says Lynn. “They’re a thorough clinic and they follow through when others don’t. InterFaith saved my life.”

**Girl Talk, Inc.**

Girl Talk, Inc. used their mini-grant funding to cover costs for individual mental health services for their participants - girls who have barriers to accessing these resources. Funds were also used to provide group mentoring activities and supplies that facilitated safe spaces for girls through fun, educational, and engaging curriculum. Brittany, a high school junior, is one of the many girls who has been positively impacted by Girl Talk, Inc.

Brittany joined Girl Talk’s program in the fall of 2020. Brittany is in foster care and had gotten mixed up with the wrong crowd. She made poor choices and used drugs as an outlet to escape her problems. Now that Brittany is enrolled in Girl Talk’s programming, she receives mental health support, attends group activities, and even has a mentor. Through Girl Talk support groups and sleepovers, she has been able to make healthier relationships with new friends who have a positive impact on her life. Brittany is starting to thrive mentally and emotionally, making better choices and focusing on her future - she even wants to attend college! Girl Talk is so proud of Brittany!
YMCA of East Tennessee

The YMCA of East Tennessee used their mini-grant funding to quickly pivot their mission to provide essential childcare for emergency personnel. The funds helped cover a variety of costs associated with this immediate change to their programs and policies, including staffing, supplies, and more. As staff-to-child ratios changed, the need for more staff was evident as well as additional sanitizing and cleaning products to ensure a safer environment. The afterschool childcare staff and programming increased from a three-hour per day program to full-day essential care for 12 hours per day, made possible with the support of the United Way.

FOCUS Ministries

The mini-grant funding FOCUS Ministries received was used to support women in their day-to-day needs during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, including rent assistance, food and basic hygiene necessities, transportation costs, and medical prescription costs.

YWCA Knoxville and the Tennessee Valley

The YWCA of Knoxville and the Tennessee Valley used their mini-grant funding to provide 30 families at the Phyllis Wheatley Center with $100 gift cards to assist with food, household supplies, and cleaning products during the pandemic. Many of their clients struggled with job loss and/or the unavailability of jobs and these funds were crucial in meeting emerging needs and keeping food on the table.