



UNITED WAY OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY AND MERRIMACK VALLEY INSPIRE 4 LIFE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

Overview

inspire 4 life is a large-scale public engagement campaign aimed at mobilizing the community around a simple call to action: *be there for youth and inspire them for a life of success.*

Research overwhelmingly confirms that positive youth-adult relationships help keep kids safe and engaged in school, with options for a successful future. Unfortunately, too many youth do not have this kind of necessary support. inspire 4 life helps adults understand the importance of having consistent relationships with youth and provides them with the means to get further involved.

Goals

The inspire 4 life campaign aims to create impact in the community that goes *beyond* the youth served by United Way programs. We believe that *everyone* has the power to inspire a young person for a lifetime of success. That's why we've organized this large-scale, multi-component campaign that rallies the support of the entire community—including individuals, community and faith organizations, schools, businesses, government, and the media—so that they see themselves as part of the solution to helping young people succeed.

Our goals:

1. **LISTEN:** Increase public awareness about issues facing youth in our community
2. **LEARN:** Educate the public about what the latest research and best practices say are the best ways to engage with youth
3. **LEAD:** Create opportunities for stakeholders to get engaged with the campaign by volunteering, promoting the campaign to others in the community and making a contribution to the campaign

Strategies

inspire 4 life uses three key strategies to help us achieve our goals: **Listen, Learn, and Lead**. By providing opportunities to *listen* to youth's thoughts, read their stories and learn about what they say is important to them, adults can feel empowered to understand and relate to youth. Through education on latest research, the community will *learn* what works for youth and what significant policy issues impact their future. Lastly, stakeholders will take the *lead* by pledging to become part of the solution through engaging with various audiences and through giving.

Campaign Activities

As a public engagement campaign, United Way will work collaboratively with community partners and champions to plan and execute activities related to the inspire 4 life campaign.

Examples include:

- **Engagement Opportunities**— annual inspire 4 life: Summit on Youth; education/awareness forums; staff professional development trainings;

engagement opportunities such as mentoring, apprenticeships, tutoring, coaching etc. and links to volunteer resources.

- **Marketing and Public Relations Efforts**—interactive campaign website (www.inspire4life.org); regular e-communications with inspire 4 life members and individuals who have joined the campaign; direct mail; events; media outreach.
- **Resource Development Efforts**—outreach and recruitment for awareness and education events, donation opportunities, and major gifts solicitation.
- **Community Convening and Action Planning** - bringing together community stakeholders to organize and coordinate efforts to change the odds for youth.

Sign-on & Champions

The inspire 4 life campaign calls upon community members to sign on to a credo to “join the movement” in support of youth. Members’ level of involvement can range—from an individual volunteering as a mentor or making a financial contribution to a community organization, submitting research/best practices in the field, to a business donating in-kind resources. The campaign offers a menu of opportunities that will allow people to get engaged in ways that meet their preferences.

We will also target and recruit key champions that will agree to market the campaign, participate in online discussions, provide information to post on the web, and become a champion of the cause. These champions will receive visibility on the inspire 4 life website, www.inspire4life.org, special invitations to and recognition at inspire 4 life events, potential citation as a best-practice in UW materials and in advertisements, and the excitement of being part of a larger movement to change community behavior and to help youth succeed in school and life.

Measurement

Success will be measured in a variety of ways:

- We will conduct public opinion polls at the start of the campaign, and at the 3- and 5- year marks. These will assess levels of perception around youth issues, awareness of the campaign, change in knowledge, behavior, and skills, and change in giving.
- We will host awareness and education-focused events that will increase in attendance.
- We will determine level of engagement through the number of sign-on and engagement stakeholders, and through surveys/phone interviews as well as track the number of media organizations interested in supporting this cause.
- We will track indicators of youth’s school success, such as number of youth repeating a grade, attendance, 3rd grade reading scores, etc.

The inspire 4 life campaign will also have specific 5 year sign-on goals for each targeted audience and will support the identified goals and measure set forth by United Way’s Increasing Youth Opportunities team.