



November 17, 2016

Dear Colleague,

When kids do well, the whole community does well.

As our community continues to be challenged, we have joined United Way as a partner to work differently, embarking on a journey to change the story and help children and families succeed from cradle to career through Bridgeport Prospers, collective impact work.

With your help, United Way of Coastal Fairfield County is changing the odds for children. While serving as the backbone organization for Bridgeport Prospers, they are bringing together members of the community, business leaders, parents, educators, local government and non profits to create real systematic change for our children.

As this work progresses, we are all too aware, that, right here in Bridgeport **62% of families** live at or below the poverty level. They struggle to afford housing, childcare, food, healthcare and transportation. Understanding this need, United Way continues to focus on providing children and families with stable home environments, support for basic needs, and opportunities that build a foundation for learning for young children.

Because of **YOUR** support -

- Over the last 10 years, family homelessness has been reduced by 65%.
- More than 1, 000 children received supplemental food for the weekend, as part of the The Kids' Backpack Program, which amounts to approximately 99,000 meals, helping kids come to school on Monday ready to learn!
- Through FamilyWize, a national prescription discount program, nearly \$2.6 million dollars have been saved in Coastal Fairfield County since 2009.
- Community members have access to Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA), providing free assistance with filing tax returns. Last year, this program helped families save nearly \$700,000 in tax preparation and filing costs, families received over \$6,000,000 in tax returns and over \$2,000,000 in Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC), which was money returned to the community to manage bills, and save for emergencies.
- Families can learn about quality childcare options by utilizing United Way's info line 2-1-1.
- Students are improving their reading skills and are receiving extra support from caring adults as part of the Foster Grandpals program in United Way's six Schools' of Hope, including Geraldine Johnson School and Curiale School in Bridgeport.

If you wish to make a change to your current donation, please contact Christine Walsh Mitchell (cmitchell@bridgeportedu.net), Payroll/Benefits Supervisor, by Monday, December 12, 2016. Otherwise, your current pledge will automatically renew for one year, beginning January 1, 2017. Not yet a donor? I encourage you to become one by contacting Christine Walsh Mitchell (cmitchell@bridgeportedu.net).

On behalf of the children, my sincere thanks,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Fran".

Frances Rabinowitz
Interim Superintendent of Schools