UNITED WAY OF METRO CHICAGO
NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK INITIATIVE

BRIGHTON PARK NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

BPNN
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OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Brighton Park is a neighborhood located approximately seven miles from the Loop on Chicago's Southwest Side. In 2010, Brighton Park was identified as a high-need community, but there were no social service intermediaries and funding was lacking. However, the Brighton Park Neighborhood Council (BPNC) was an active organization focused on community schools and after-school programs. BPNC was drawn to the idea of working with other community organizations to offer broader support to families and residents. As a result, the Brighton Park Neighborhood Network was established in 2012. The coalition now has over 80 partners that include schools, hospitals, social service providers, city departments, elected officials, and small businesses.

The construction of the Michigan & Illinois Canal, which functioned as Chicago's sanitary and shipping channel, drew many early settlers to the area in 1851. The neighborhood attracted industry, manufacturing, and a large Eastern European population. Over the past 20 years, the Polish, Irish, Lithuanian, and German residents who once defined the neighborhood left the area, and a Latiné population, many of whom are recent immigrants, moved in. Some factories have remained, while others have been replaced with new housing and strip malls. The neighborhood faces challenges like high unemployment, insufficient investment in neighborhood schools, and barriers to accessing mental health services.

LEAD AGENCY

Brighton Park Neighborhood Council

COMMUNITY VISION

Seeks to build the capacity of our community to dramatically improve outcomes for every resident by providing comprehensive support in violence prevention, education, health, and employment

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES: A DUAL APPROACH IN BRIGHTON PARK



- Food
- Housing Assistance
- Individual Health and Wellness

RESPONDING TO IMMEDIATE BASIC NEEDS OF Brighton Park Residents

BUILDING NEIGHBORHOOD SYSTEMS STRONGER IN Brighton Park



- Family Wraparound Supports
- Community Schools

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK IN ACTION

After adopting a charter and creating an infrastructure to support the work of the coalition, the Brighton Park Network has seen parents and residents taking an active role in their neighborhood by convening large groups of people to address neighborhood issues. The Network is focused on making their community safe for all residents by providing comprehensive wrap-around social services and community-led initiatives. By leveraging the strengths, resources, and expertise of coalition members, the Network aims to promote the holistic well-being of Brighton Park residents and dismantle structural disparities within the community.

- **Parent Mentor program** was established, and Chicago Public Schools' standardized testing shows that classrooms with a parent mentor demonstrate a +3 point differential in test results and improved academic achievements.



COALITIONHIGHLIGHTS

- **Brighton Park Neighborhood Council Service Center Ribbon Cutting (April 2026)**. Through a collaborative partnership between BPNC and its BPNN partner organizations, the BPNC Service Center provides the community with access to comprehensive, wraparound services that address a wide range of needs.
- Provided **food assistance to over 1,000 families** through our food distribution events, helping address food insecurity and improve access to nutritious food in our community.
- Provided **comprehensive case management to 1,274 families** through the **Success and Stability Program** and the **Illinois Welcoming Center Program**
- To help expand community access to and awareness of existing workforce training programs, the BPNN Financial Stability Committee hosts its **Annual Workforce Development & Resource Fair.** The event welcomes over 200 community members who have the opportunity to engage with and learn about available wfd resources.
- Ladder Up provided **free tax preparation services** to low-income households in Brighton Park, generating **$1.4 million in refunds** returned directly to the community.
- Provided **employment opportunities to 149 youth and young adults** between the ages of 16-24
- **New Life Centers** provides mentoring to opportunity youth through therapy, sports, and resource assistance to prevent gang involvement

> *"United Way is instrumental in the work that we do. Without United Way, we wouldn't have the Neighborhood Network coalition that allows us to have collaborative partnerships to address the community's needs. We're very excited to continue strengthening the partnership with United Way through the expansion of services, community engagement, and the impact that the BPNC Service Center will have for the community.*



MARIBEL MARTINEZ
Director of Community Partnerships,
Brighton Park Neighborhood Council

JOIN US! Together, we can build neighborhoods like Brighton Park stronger. Direct your United Way gift to **"Neighborhood Networks"** to be a part of this critical strategy. Learn more at **LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/neighborhood-networks**

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