UNITED WAY OF METRO CHICAGO
NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK INITIATIVE



WEST CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

The West Chicago Neighborhood Network was launched in 2014, in partnership with lead agency partner **WeGo Together for Kids.** West Chicago is a suburban community located 35 miles west of the city of Chicago. Nestled between numerous wealthy communities, including Wheaton and Naperville, the suburban setting creates a variety of barriers, such as limited access to public transportation and limited reliability and access to affordable housing and healthy food.

Founded in 1849, West Chicago was the first Illinois community built for travelers and rail workers. West Chicago has a long-standing history of immigrants settling in the community and has seen consistent growth since its founding. In the early 1900s, Latiné families began settling in West Chicago. In recent years the community has become home to resettled refugees from around the world. To this day, West Chicago remains an industrial hub with many jobs in the manufacturing sector; however, more than one-third of the population remains low income.

LEAD AGENCY

WeGo Together for Kids

COMMUNITY VISION

A vibrant and engaged community where children and families reach their full potential

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES: A DUAL APPROACH IN WEST CHICAGO

- Food
- Essential Household Items
- Utility Assistance
- Individual Health and Wellness



RESPONDING TO IMMEDIATE BASIC NEEDS OF West Chicago Heights Residents

BUILDING NEIGHBORHOOD SYSTEMS STRONGER IN West Chicago



- Quality Education
- Physical and Mental Health
- Community Engagement
- Economic Stability
- Emergency Preparedness

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK IN ACTION

With a coalition of 68 Network partners, family liaisons, community mental health clinicians, and working groups, the West Chicago Neighborhood Network's goal is to support and enhance the health, safety, and well-being of children and families through a collaborative, coordinated, and comprehensive approach from West Chicago schools and community. **The Neighborhood Network's working groups have created a Common Agenda that includes:**

- Children and families have **access to and the opportunity for continual learning.** (Academic Achievement)
- Community partnerships help families and children, 0-8 years old, **build strong relationships through access to play and learning opportunities.** (Early Childhood)
- Families will pursue and continue to **improve their physical health and emotional well-being** (Youth and Family Health); have a sense of belonging and are informed and **invested in building their community** (Community Engagement); and are **economically stable** (Stable Families).
- Schools and community are **aware of and prepared for emergencies.** (Emergency Preparedness)



"Many kids and families in West Chicago struggle with mental health, finding and keeping affordable housing, literacy, access to health resources and much more. Because of the generosity of United Way of Metro Chicago's Neighborhood Network grant, WeGo Together for Kids is able to provide resources, programs and services to buoy our community.



MOLLY BECK DEAN
Executive Director,
WeGo Together for Kids

JOIN US! Together, we can build neighborhoods like West Chicago 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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