

UNITED WAY OF HERNANDO'S EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE SUCCESS STORY

FINDING SAFETY, STABILITY, AND A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Since June, United Way had been walking alongside a young mother navigating overwhelming financial stress, past trauma, and an unstable home environment. Despite her determination to provide for her two young daughters, the lack of safe and affordable housing left her feeling isolated and without reliable support.

With no other immediate options, she accepted help from a family member. Unfortunately, what began as a temporary solution quickly became another source of hardship. She experienced ongoing instability, emotional and physical abuse, and financial exploitation, leaving her



exhausted and discouraged. Feeling alone even while surrounded by others, she reached back out to United Way—seeking guidance, reassurance, and someone to stand in her corner.



Recognizing the depth of her need, United Way connected her with trusted community partners for mental health peer support and continued case management. Soon after, an opportunity emerged: a modest, welcoming home she could afford on her own. However, the required application fee, first and last month's rent, and security deposit placed the home just out of reach. The financial strain she had endured left her with no savings to move forward.

United Way stepped in to bridge the gap. Our team assisted with application fees, provided guidance on lease requirements, and covered the deposits and move-in costs—ensuring this hardworking mother could secure safe, stable housing for her family. More importantly, we remained invested in her long-term success.

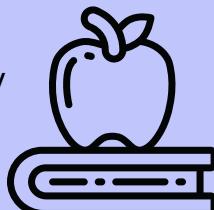
Just weeks before the holidays—and only two days before her youngest daughter's birthday—this family of three moved into their own safe space. Today, they are no longer living in survival mode, but in a home filled with stability, hope, and the promise of a brighter future.



UNITED WAY OF HERNANDO'S PARTNER AGENCY SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

EARLY LEARNING COALITION

J.S. was a stay-at-home mother for 20 years before deciding to re-enter the workforce. Working towards her CDA eased the challenges of obtaining a job and advancing her new career. She stated that she was "so grateful to the United Way of Hernando County and the Early Learning Coalition for giving me the opportunity to earn my CDA at no cost. This program has strengthened my skills, deepened my understanding of child development, and given me more confidence in the classroom and the workforce. It's been an incredible step forward in my growth as an early childhood professional."



MID FLORIDA HOMELESS COALITION



DIVERSION & WRAPAROUND HOMELESS SERVICES

A single mom of 3, "Joan", was in the middle of a custody battle and living paycheck to paycheck. Her job changed management companies, which in turn changed employees pay dates. This meant she had to wait an additional 2 weeks for her paycheck. She was able to pay her rent late, but incurred a late fee. With all of her other bills she was unable to pay the late fee. Mid Florida Homeless Coalition was able to step in with the help of funding from the United Way's Community Investment Grant and pay the late fee, so Joan could pay her normal monthly bills including her rent and utilities. This ensured Joan was no longer at immediate risk of homelessness and remained stable in her home.

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

During the Summer hiatus from school, PHP continues their mission to help reduce food insecurity amongst Hernando County children. This past summer PHP provided more than 200 bags of food every week to 5 summer camps hosted at various schools throughout the county. In addition to these bags, PHP also supports a program, called Impact, that serves at-risk youth. They provided these children with snacks and water throughout the summer. The participants of both of these programs constantly tell us how grateful they are for the assistance we provide and how excited the kids get when they are able to go home with bags of food.

WEEKEND BLESSINGS PROGRAM



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



As the price of groceries continues to rise, so does the number of clients visiting St. Vincent de Paul's Food Pantry. Despite this increase, they have managed to serve all who visit their pantry with groceries, fresh produce, and a warm welcome from volunteers who treat them like family. This quarter SVDP served 5,471 Hernando households (17,015 individuals) with 339,202 pounds of food.

FOOD PANTRY

