

KEY FACTS - COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

For Benton and Franklin Counties

WHERE/WHY: Two key events took place that brought about the need for Community Solutions:

1. 2004 – Community Needs Assessment conducted by WSU Tri-Cities
2. 2006 – In-depth one-on-one interviews with community leaders in parallel with a Community Leaders Summit

From those events, two key findings were identified that issued a call to leadership:

- We need better linkages among local not-for-profits
- Our coordination efforts need to improve so we are able to meet as many service needs as possible, and become more efficient and effective in providing services to people in our community.

WHAT: A comprehensive region-wide health and human services planning and implementation process that will provide for:

- ✓ More strategic use of resources
- ✓ Emphasis on prevention and root causes of problems
- ✓ More effective and efficient service delivery
- ✓ Greater coordination and collaboration
- ✓ Education about community needs

WHO: Over 200 community leaders are participating on Community Solutions Teams and as Blue Ribbon Advisors. They represent all sectors of the community.

United Way was asked to be the facilitator of this process.

HOW/WHEN: The first cut of a first of its kind Community Solutions Plan was completed in December 2007, outlining the community's vision and priorities to bring about improvement in community conditions and people's lives. Education, health, safety and self-sufficiency have been identified as key focus areas for Benton and Franklin Counties. In 2008, the group is moving forward and working with the community to implement the Plan and create a system that can better meet the needs of our residents.

A "Babies Can't Wait" initiative has been launched to kick-off the implementation of Community Solutions. The vision of "Babies Can't Wait" is that by the time today's newborns are 20 years old, they will be successful in school and in life. This success will come as a direct result of a foundation built that will enable them to maximize their physical, social-emotional and cognitive skills.

Be a part of the solution...