



We Go Together For Kids
Connecting our Community - Strengthening our Families

Annual Report 2019-20



A Letter from the Steering Committee

The 2019-20 year has been a year of significant transition and growth. With the retirement of the founding Director, Marjory Lewe-Brady, WeGo Together for Kids started the year in a pivotal moment. The Steering Committee welcomed a new Coordinator to facilitate the efforts of WeGo Together for Kids. Furthermore, the partnership/collaboration collectively identified new ways to support the West Chicago community in the midst of a global pandemic. Through the steadfast commitment and dedication by the 40+ partners of WeGo Together for Kids, the mantra of Together is Better came to life in support of the West Chicago community.

Everything WeGo Together for Kids does is made possible by the generous donations of our funding partners and the many other resources community partners dedicate to the West Chicago community.

Thank you for your commitment to supporting and enhancing the health, safety and well being of children and families in West Chicago. Together, we are better.

With gratitude,

2019-20 WeGo Together for Kids Steering Committee

Mission

To support and enhance the health, safety, and well-being of children and families through a collaborative, coordinated, and comprehensive approach for West Chicago schools and community.

Vision

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

Collective Impact Statement

In 2019-2020, WeGo Together for Kids developed a collective measurement system to capture and communicate the collective work of partners across West Chicago. The collaborative will build on this system to be able to increasingly show the impact of this work in the community.

Collective Impact Model

WeGo Together framework for bringing partners together to achieve social change

Relationship Development

Partners and the community must have trusting and equitable relationships to create long lasting impacts.

Shared Data and Decision Making

Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable. Achieved through Results Based Accountability.

Common Agenda/Goals

Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action. Achieved through Results Based Accountability.

Communication

Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation.

Funding Stewardship

Meaningful funding allocation and sustainability are included in every step of the process. Bring partners together to determine what resources to chase and who makes sense to lead the effort.



Result Areas

Coordinated strategies for a common agenda to achieve collective results

Youth & Family Health

WeGo Together for Kids and partners support West Chicago families to pursue and continue to improve their physical health and emotional well-being. This incorporates a diverse set of activities that address health and resiliency, including:

- Mental health services and awareness raising
- School and community based lifestyle opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity
- Mentorship for middle school students
- Afterschool programming providing relevant activities

- Parenting support and education including for new and expecting parents
- Doula services
- Child development
- Nutrition education and support

Many of WeGo Together for Kids partners provide these services directly and others refer families to other organizations to supplement their own support to families. Healthy West Chicago, a collaboration focusing on healthy living among all community members, is a key contributor to this area, both as a member of WeGo Together for Kids and as a convener of community organizations around health and nutrition.

A key example of collaboration this year has been an intentional engagement of public, nonprofit and faith-based organizations to bring expanded mental health services to the community in partnership with District 33's community schools efforts. This year, the mental health clinician team was fully staffed, and there has been an increase in those served and strengthened collaboration among the partners involved. Mental health clinicians provide counseling to students and families in District 33, meeting families in the school, in the community or in client homes.

"I just ended services. She was very grateful at the end of our last Individual Education Program meeting. She said 'I must thank every single person on this call because you were all very helpful to my family and child.' Now she is a better parent. I could not do it without all my team members helping this child be successful."

*- WeGo Together for Kids
Community Mental Health Clinician*

Academic Achievement

Work in this result area focuses on providing afterschool and enrichment opportunities for students in preschool through the twelfth grade, in addition to adult education activities such as language classes. This supports students and families, holistically contributing to students' academic achievement and ensuring parents are set up to support their own and their children's success. This year,

activities included after school programming for children and youth, storytime, support to parents for preschool enrollment and kindergarten readiness, English and Spanish language classes for parents and community members, and musical education.

This spring, many organizations continued their support to students and families in this result area throughout the pandemic,

shifting gears to connect virtually over diverse platforms and by phone. This provided students with stability as they were able to continue to connect with programs and supportive adults. In some cases, activities became less focused on the enrichment activity, providing a formal or informal check-in for students and their families and providing families with information and resources to better use technology needed for virtual learning.

Stable Families

The aim for this result area is that West Chicago families are economically stable. For WeGo Together for Kids, this means that households spend less than 30% of their income on monthly housing costs. Organizations focus on providing direct assistance and resources, as well as referring families to community resources, information and services. The ultimate goal is family stability and empowerment of families to take ownership and be able

to navigate resources and processes in the long-term. This in turn contributes to children's success both inside and outside the classroom. This year partner activities included case management, referrals to food pantries, financial literacy, legal assistance, donated school supplies and books, information for enrollment in public assistance programs, home repair, affordable and healthy food education, and holiday food baskets.

Community Engagement

WeGo Together for Kids partner work in this area focuses on West Chicago families having a sense of belonging within the community, being informed, invested and building their community. There are a broad range of activities that contribute to community engagement, including partner participation in community festivals and events, organizational events that celebrate participant milestones within programs

or their own lives, back-to-school events, parent workshops, holiday programming, partner trainings, and a parent leadership group.

Work in this area also includes civic engagement and activism. WeGo Together for Kids and partners have voiced a commitment to equity during the pandemic and during the protests around systemic racism and injustice. Work throughout



the year included engaging community members in critical conversations and supporting community mobilizations calling for adequate safety measures for essential workers during the pandemic.

Early Childhood

Partnerships in this result area help families and children, 0-8 years old, build strong relationships through access to play and learning opportunities. It includes formal and informal learning and development opportunities for young children, therapeutic play, family play groups and parent support groups, home visiting, parent-child workshops, and early childhood music programming.

Over the last year, partners within this result area have come together to solidify a vision and strategies to realize that vision. They have worked to ensure alignment of efforts at both the community and county levels. Partners have planned and developed a community survey to gather input from parents on strengths and needs within the community as related to young children and their development.

COVID-19 Response

West Chicago was one of the hardest hit communities in DuPage County during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Partners mobilized to address increased need while shifting gears to work remotely when possible and ensure the safety of program participants, clients, staff and volunteers when in-person programming was needed. The network worked together to provide a wide array of support and services to meet emergency needs and other challenges

families faced in this new reality. Activities include case management, mental health support, financial assistance, food drives, delivery of essential supplies, as well as testing and contact tracing. For students and families social emotional support was provided, as well as help navigating virtual learning platforms, information sharing, and formal and informal check-ins with families.



* <https://westchicago.org/west-chicago-covid-19-communications-center/>

Emergency Preparedness

Over the last year, partners have trained community members in mass casualty, first-aid, and using and maintaining fire extinguishers. They have also successfully run school safety and fire evacuation drills at all schools within the community and worked with schools to ensure school safety plans are updated.

A Year At a Glance



Back to School Event

In August 2019, we hosted our fourth annual Back to School event. This year we grew the event to include District 33 schools and partners to share information with families about starting off the school year. More than double the amount from last year, 640 individuals attended and 448 District 33 students received new school supplies!

Humanitarian Service Project

In December 2019, 238 District 33 students received a bag full of wrapped presents from the Humanitarian Service Project. St. Andrew Lutheran Church graciously hosted the successful event.



United for the Holidays

Sponsored by the United Way of Metro Chicago, 100 families were invited to Zone 250 at the West Chicago Park district for a holiday celebration. Attendees received cold weather gear, new toys, photos with Santa, and a dinner with friends and family.

Hablemos/Let's Talk

In January 2020, Hablemos/Let's Talk! kicked off by bringing together native Spanish speakers and native English speakers to practice and learn from one another. Hablemos builds language skills and bridges the community so people don't just live next to each other, but can live with each other! Developed by District 33 parents in partnership with Literacy DuPage and People Made Visible.



COVID-19 Impacts Us All

In May and June 2020, when COVID-19 began to disrupt West Chicago, WeGo Together quickly pivoted efforts to respond directly to families being impacted. Financial assistance for household bills and a home delivery system of care packages became the newest initiatives.

A Shift to Virtual Meetings

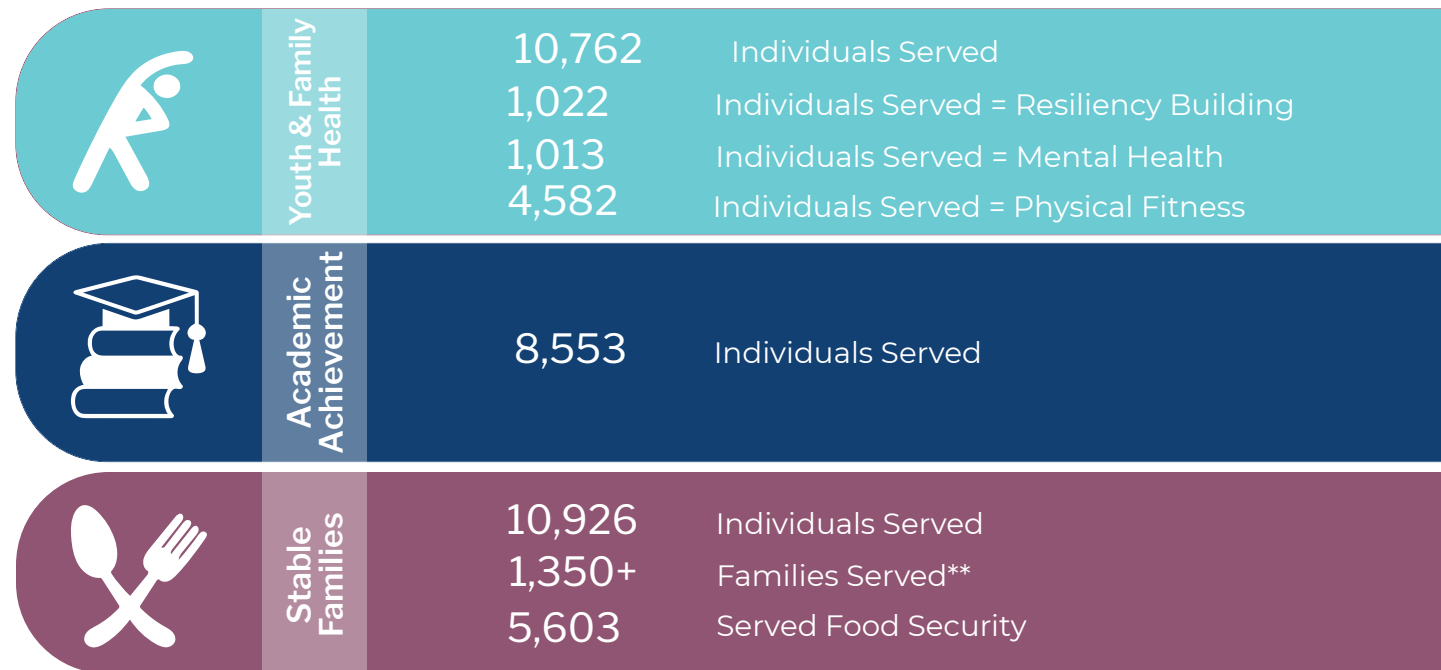
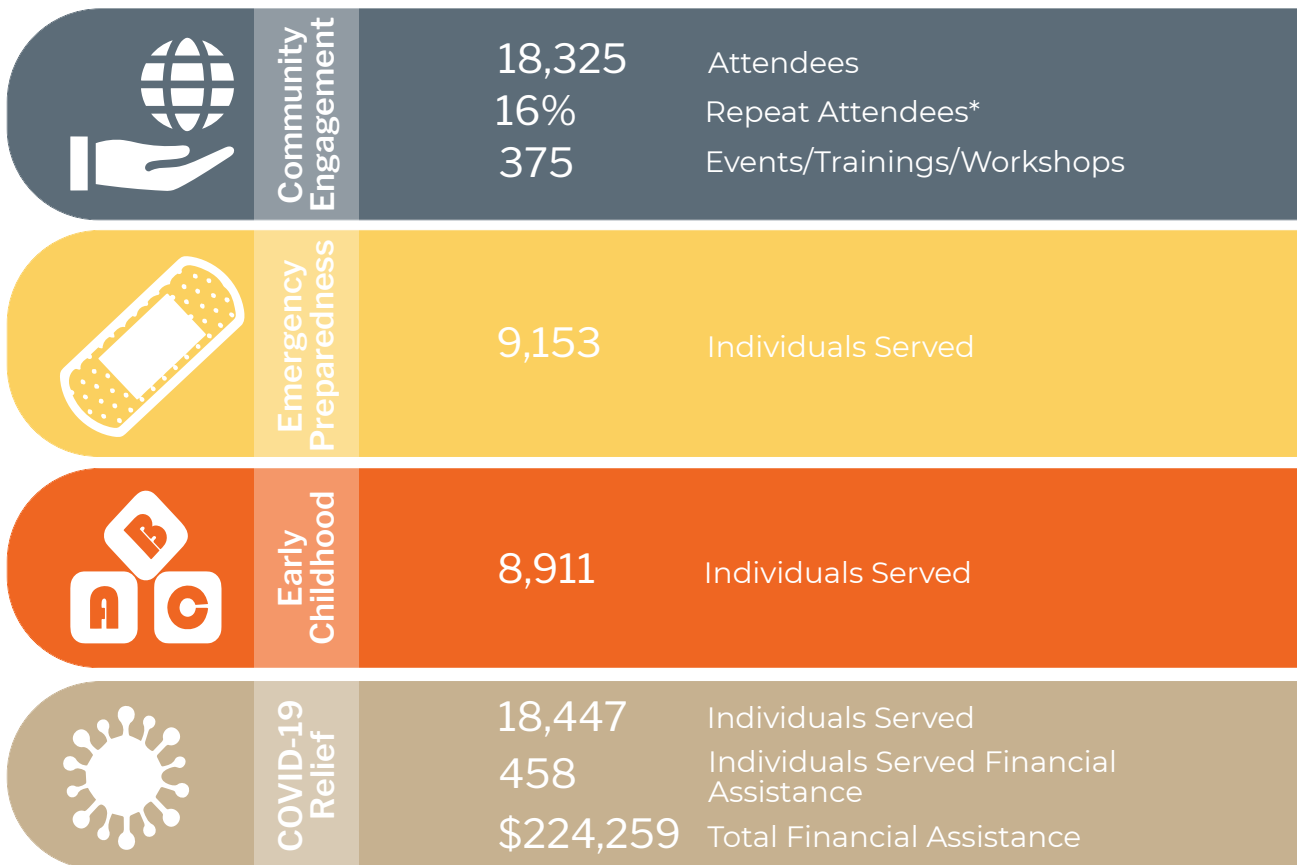
In response to COVID-19, WeGo Together began hosting its monthly partnership meetings virtually. We also began hosting our first ever virtual self-care meetings for partners and the community. Participants engaged in a variety of activities including desk yoga and guided meditations.



Pollapalooza

On May 30, State Representative Karina Villa along with many community partners hosted a 40,000 pound chicken giveaway for families near and far impacted by COVID-19.

Outcomes



* Percent of total attendees for organizations reporting repeat attendance

** # of families reported by 68% of participating organizations

Note: Some individuals may receive services from multiple organizations reporting, or may be counted multiple times within one organization - therefore note that numbers may be duplicated in some cases.

Success Story

Collaboration

Teen Parent Connection provides parenting support services for young parents in West Chicago and DuPage County. The agency's partnership with WeGo Together for Kids has been key in expanding available resources to those families. "We strategically place our parent support groups in communities where we can serve the most families, including West Chicago. Our partnership is important so that we know what other services are available in that area."

WeGo Together for Kids is a collaborative space that includes resource sharing, particularly at its monthly meetings where

partners can develop relationships. Teen Parent Connection has invited partner organizations to provide specialized presentations to their parenting groups.

"When I attend WeGo meetings, there's always something that I get out of it - new ideas that I can share with my team to think about in our programming."

- Jennifer Borgognoni, Director of Programs,
Teen Parent Connection



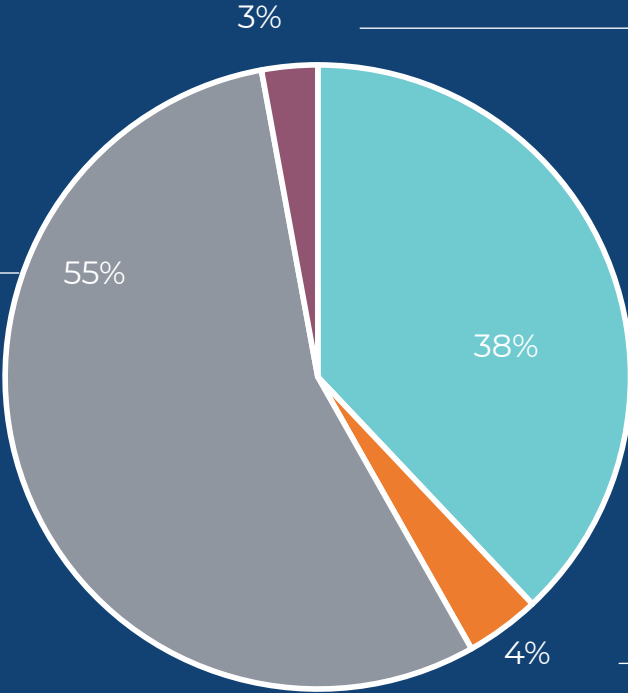
Annual Budget Breakdown

2019-20 By Funding Source

Full Service Community Schools via District 33

Total: \$1,039,733
Full Service Community Schools
21st Century Community Learning Centers

Total: \$391,152.33
District 33 Evidence-Based Funding



COVID-19 Response

Total: \$75,000
Chicago Community COVID-19 Relief Fund Round 1
Chicago Community COVID-19 Relief Fund Round 2

United Way Neighborhood Network

Total: \$1,000,000
CY20
FY19 Rollover

Siemer Institute

Total: \$100,000

Steering Committee

Ryan Kennedy, Chair – Department of Probation & Court Services

Benjamin Weseloh, Co-Chair, Financial Oversight Committee –

West Chicago Public Library District

Nicole Cameron, Financial Oversight Committee –

Metropolitan Family Services DuPage

Gary Major, West Chicago Park District

David Sabathne, Financial Oversight Committee –

Western DuPage Chamber of Commerce

Laura Beard, United Way of Metro Chicago

Becky Koltz, Community High School District 94

Kara Murphy, DuPage Health Coalition

Kristina Davis, West Chicago Elementary School District 33

Jen Tapia, West Chicago Elementary School District 33

Mila Tsagalis, DuPage County Health Department

Kyle Reschke, Wheaton Bible Church

Retired - *FaKelia Guyton, DuPage Early Childhood Collaboration*

Retired - *Tammy Pressley, Northwestern Medicine*

Retired – *Rita Brosnan-Lopez,*

Metropolitan Family Services DuPage

PARTNERS

Access DuPage

Benedictine University

●● Breaking Free, Inc.

Community High School District 94

● Community Outreach for Developing Artists (CODA)

DuPage Children's Museum

DuPage County Community Services

DuPage County Election Commission

●●●● DuPage County Health Department

DuPage County Probation & Court

DuPage County Sheriff's Office

●●●● DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform

●●● DuPage Habitat for Humanity

DuPage Health Coalition

●●●●● Educare of West DuPage

●● Evangelical Child and Family Agency

●●● Family Focus

Family Shelter Services

H.O.M.E. DuPage

●●●● Healthy West Chicago

Kid Care Medical

●● Literacy DuPage

●● Metropolitan Family Services DuPage

Mexican Cultural Center

●●● NAMI DuPage

Neighborhood Food Pantries

Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB)

Northwestern Medicine

●●● Outreach Community Ministries/Wheaton

Youth Outreach

●●● People Made Visible

●● People's Resource Center

●●● St. Andrew Church

●●●● Teen Parent Connection

●●●● U OF I Extension

United Way of Metropolitan Chicago

Wayne/Winfield Area Youth and Family

Services WAYS

●● WDSRA

West Chicago City Museum

●●●● West Chicago Elementary School District 33

●●● West Chicago Fire Protection District

●●●● West Chicago Park District

●●● West Chicago Police Department / City Hall

●●●● West Chicago Public Library

●● Western DuPage Chamber of Commerce

●●●● Wheaton Bible Church/Puente del Pueblo

World Relief

●●●● YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

Youth Guidance

Result Areas

Symbols indicate numbers reported on p13 of this report. Additional partners may have provided data for other reports or purposes.

● Youth and Family Health

● Academic Achievement

● Stable Families

● Community Engagement

● Emergency Preparedness

● Early Childhood

● COVID-19 Relief



We Go Together For Kids