



United Way
of Western Connecticut

Guidelines for Submitting Impactful Success Stories

With each grant report, grant recipients are required to submit **at least one** written success story about your program participants. These stories help us communicate the effectiveness of United Way funded partner programs to improve the lives of hard-working, struggling households in the communities we serve.

We ask that you use the following best practices:

1. Stories may be from individuals who have benefitted from the program and/or from agency staff who have observed their clients' experience. Client names and any other identifying information will not be shared publicly.
2. **Parts of a success story:**
 - a. **A brief description of the people and circumstances** – for example, if it's about a child, describe boy/girl, age or grade, and what barriers they faced.
 - b. **How the program may have made a difference** – this could be as basic as how the program helped the client to take part in an activity or workshop (the cost was X, but the client could only afford Y, or to accomplish a goal, etc.)
 - c. **How the individual is better off** – the end result for the client, i.e., an enrichment activity brought out a child's creativity, or they became part of a team for the first time, or a family was able to save up enough money to pay off a creditor, or rent an apartment, etc.
 - d. **Include a direct quote from the program participant or the participants parent when at all possible.** Quotes should be authentic but will be anonymous.

The most effective stories are those that allow the reader to envision the people helped and/or sense the emotional relief. Here's a good, brief example we were sent recently:

"I am a high school senior and the Weekend Food program is honestly a big help to me and my family. A lot of the canned food that the weekly packets have can build up over time, allowing us to sometimes take a week off of restocking our food supply. The program has honestly helped us out financially and I am extremely grateful for that."

Please note: We cannot use thank you notes unless they describe the circumstances (situation, age, individual or family scenario, etc) and how they feel the service received has helped them.

Unique success stories are due with the interim and final grant reports.

If you have any questions about these guidelines or your United Way of Western Connecticut grant, please contact Casey Levene, Vice President, Community Impact, at 203-297-6246 or casey.levene@uwwesternct.org.

Thank you!