



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties Offers Attendance Matters® Toolkit to Support Student Success

Tri-Cities, Wash. — September 16, 2026 — United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties is helping local families and schools address one of the most important factors in student success: getting to school every day.

Through our Attendance Matters® program, United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties offers an Attendance Matters® Toolkit designed to provide parents, caregivers, school staff and community partners with practical resources to encourage regular school attendance and help students overcome barriers that can keep them out of the classroom.

Regular attendance is an important part of a child's educational journey. When students miss school frequently, they can miss valuable instruction, classroom experiences and opportunities to build relationships with teachers and peers. The Attendance Matters® Toolkit gives adults the information and tools they need to have positive, supportive conversations about attendance and help students develop habits that support their success.

The toolkit is designed for use by both parents and school staff, making it a resource that can help create a shared approach to improving attendance. For parents and caregivers, the toolkit provides resources and strategies to help identify challenges affecting a child's attendance, establish positive routines and encourage students to make attending school a priority. For educators and school staff, the toolkit offers resources to support conversations with families, strengthen attendance-focused communication and help identify ways to connect students and families with additional support when barriers arise.

"Attendance is about more than simply being in a classroom," said Asta Bonheyo, Community Impact Director at United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties. "When students are present, they have more opportunities to learn, connect and participate. The Attendance Matters® Toolkit gives parents and school staff practical tools to work together and help students build a strong foundation for their future."

United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties believes that improving attendance is a community effort. Schools, families, nonprofit organizations, businesses and community members all have a role to play in creating an environment where students feel supported and encouraged to attend school regularly.

"We're not just counting absences; we're working to understand why students aren't in school and how we, as a community, can help," said Bonheyo. "Whether it's transportation, health issues, or family challenges, we're here to connect families to resources and schools to solutions."

The Attendance Matters® Toolkit is part of United Way's broader commitment to supporting children, families and schools throughout Benton and Franklin Counties.

Parents, caregivers and school staff interested in learning more about the Attendance Matters® program can contact United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties, to access the Toolkit visit <https://www.uwbfc.org/AMtoolkit>, or follow the organization on social media for additional resources and information.

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