

# IN HOUSTON, WE BELIEVE **IN A LIFETIME OF INDEPENDENCE**

**Do  
something  
about it.**



UNITED WAY OF GREATER HOUSTON  
**HELPS SENIORS SUSTAIN THEIR INDEPENDENCE**

The good news: today's seniors are living longer than ever before. The bad news: for many, a longer lifespan results in financial uncertainties and worries about health care, mobility and the ability to remain in one's home. Thanks to United Way of Greater Houston, seniors in our community have access to support with daily living and household chores, home visits and medical care, transportation, companionship and nutritious meals. United Way is there to see that seniors can lead a lifetime of independence.

## THE FIGURES

**44**  
percent

In Harris county,  
44% of seniors have  
a disability

**1**  
in 5

1 in 5 seniors in  
Greater Houston  
have difficulty paying  
for prescriptions

**1**  
in 3

More than 1 in 3  
seniors in Harris  
County have an  
income below  
\$25,000

**1**  
in 4

A quarter of families  
find themselves  
caring for an aging  
relative

**25**  
percent

25% of seniors in  
Harris county live  
alone

## THE REALITY

**As our population ages, many seniors in our community are living longer lives. Sadly, they often lack immediate family or a strong support network nearby.**

Under those conditions, it is easy to become isolated, depressed and unable to handle the normal day-to-day activities.

Last year, United Way assisted more than 71,000 seniors in our area with meals, transportation, help with daily life and companionship.

### Understanding the need

In 2008, our 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE answered more than 575,000 calls for help, which included:

- 4,485 calls for transportation to medical appointments
- 5,976 calls for medical/prescription assistance
- 2,508 calls for home rehabilitation and repair
- 3,336 calls for prescription drug assistance

**DID YOU KNOW?** Studies show that seniors have a better quality of life if they stay in their own homes. It also happens to be more cost efficient.

## A STORY



*"I have seen nursing homes and that is one place I never want to be."*

**Texas women are known to be colorful, hospitable and, most of all, independent. Spend five minutes with Elaine and all three of those traits immediately become apparent.**

A youthful senior now in her late eighties, Elaine spent the majority of her life either handling the business affairs of the Medical Center executives who employed her or lovingly taking care of her mother.

But 10 years ago, all that began to change. "Mother passed away and a couple of years later, I began to lose my eyesight," Elaine recalls.

Diagnosed with macular degeneration, and faced with the prospect of a life confined to a nursing home, Elaine was desperate for a way to stay in her own home. "I've seen nursing homes and that is one place I never want to be," says Elaine.

Elaine found the help she needed when she reached out and called the 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE.

With the help of United Way, Elaine was assigned a home health care worker who checks on her a few times a week. This caring individual drives Elaine to appointments, helps her with the mail and makes sure her medication is properly sorted. The health care worker is more than just an assistant. "She acts as my eyes," says Elaine.

The support United Way provides enables Elaine to meet the challenges of daily life, stay independent and remain in her own home.

## OUR COMMITMENT

*United Way is a founding partner of the Care for Elders initiative – a collaborative effort formed to improve the quality of life for seniors in the Houston area.*

## WHAT YOUR DOLLARS CAN DO

### **\$3 A DAY**

(\$1,095 GIFT)  
CAN PROVIDE:

219 meals delivered to a homebound, low-income senior

### **\$200 a month**

(\$1,560 GIFT)  
CAN PROVIDE:

31 trips to medical appointments for seniors

### **\$500 A YEAR**

CAN PROVIDE:

7 seniors with intensive case management and referral services

## WE GIVE **EVERY GENERATION A CHANCE TO THRIVE**

**Nutritious meals • Social interaction •  
Help with daily living • Support network •  
Home visits and care**



## THE CHANGE

**83**  
percent

83% of seniors in United Way programs were able to remain independent in their own homes

**71**  
thousand

71,000 area seniors stayed independent with meals, transportation, help with daily life and more

**2**  
thousand

2,100 seniors accessed transportation for medical care

**8**  
thousand

8,800 seniors received help handling their daily routines

**4**  
thousand

4,500 home visits supported senior independence

## THE FUTURE

### In Houston, we stand up for seniors.

Studies show that seniors live longer and more fulfilling lives when they remain independent and in their own homes. Thanks to United Way, seniors in our community have access to help with daily living and household chores, home visits and medical care, transportation to doctors, companionship and activities, assistance with home repairs, nutritious meals and a robust support network. We make it possible for seniors to live alone without being alone.

**Please stand up for our community and join others who share your can-do spirit by giving generously. Together, we *do something about it* ... the United Way.**

