



***A Message from:  
United Way of McLean County's President & CEO:  
David Taylor***

Recent headlines are littered with tragic events, and many of them hit close to home. Whether you have friends or loved ones in Florida, Texas, or Puerto Rico, or find yourself considering the time you stayed at the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas, these events remind us of how interconnected and interdependent our lives are with each other.

They say in life, it's not what happens to you, it's how you react. Based on some reactions in the national spotlight, I'm troubled by the dissension and politicizing of tragedy these days. This happens whether you're white or black, Democrat or Republican, conservative or liberal. Too frequently, we want to jump to a label like this because it's a simpler way to categorize our outrage or simplify our pain and confusion at these complex issues and the various reactions to them.

Recent hurricanes may or may not be the result of climate change. Violent shootings, like the one in Las Vegas, may or may not be curbed by more strict gun control measures. NFL player protests may or may not be disrespectful, freedom of speech, a thoughtful protest, a slap in the face, etc.

I don't profess to know the answers to these questions, and as the father of a young daughter, I struggle with how to respond when she asks inevitable questions. What I do know is the level of "certainty" and "expertise" conveyed by a variety of people through various media outlets on a host of these issues seems to be more related to ego, "likes", viewers, and sensationalism than it is about accuracy and dialogue.

To find answers to some of these questions, I have to look no further than McLean County. I think of Lyn Hruska, of our local American Red Cross being deployed to help in our hurricane ravaged areas. I think of the semis full of food that our own Midwest Food Bank ships constantly to these areas. And, I think of how my church recently took up an offering that was promptly donated to District 87 and Unit 5 to buy hot lunches for students in need.

I'm proud of how these individuals and organizations have reacted to local and national circumstances and events, taking care of others and taking care of our own. That's a trait we seem to see more of here in our local community than in other areas of the country. Instead of looking to point the finger as to why something happened or point out who is at fault, we simply roll up our sleeves and recognize that our help is needed.

At the end of the day, we recognize how we're all connected. Human services describes well what we do. We help people, and no matter their beliefs, skin color, or political affiliation, when tragedy or need strikes, we step in to donate money, give blood, lend a hand.

Part of the reason I serve in this role with United Way is because of my desire to contribute to the greater good in our community in whatever way I can to influence and change it in a positive way. I may not have the answers for Addison when she asks the tough questions, but I'm confident that through my work, I can be a role model for her on how to react in life and how to be a part of the solution.



## Mid Central Community Action - A Place to Turn for Victims of Domestic Violence

Mid Central Community Action's (MCCA) "Countering Domestic Violence" program in Bloomington served 691 adults and 50 children in just 2017. Local MCCA statistics indicate 3,595 calls were received through their local Hotline representing an 8.5% increase from 2016. 61 adults and 38 children stayed at their Neville House, with Orders of Protection granted to 226 a 4% increase from 2016, and 408 individual counseling sessions were provided.

About 1 out of every 3 women and 1 in 7 males in America will be physically assaulted or raped by an intimate partner at some point in their lives and 10% of all

violent crime reported is committed by an intimate partner with 1 in 7 being males. It's estimated that a domestic violence act occurs every 15 seconds somewhere in the United States. That figure translates to over 2.5 million victims per year.

MCCA's Neville House program, which operates in McLean County only, is designed to create safe, nurturing families free from violence and control through free and confidential services. The Countering Domestic Violence (CDV) assists and empowers families in crisis situations with individual and group counseling for adults and children and serves as a community resource by providing awareness, advocacy, and education on the issue of domestic violence. As the only emergency shelter in the area, they can empower residents as they strive to accomplish their goals through assistance in areas such as domestic violence education, life skills training, transportation, medical assistance and parenting support.

CDV Confidential Services include a 24 hour Hotline - 309-827-7070 , emergency shelter, court advocacy, counseling services, adult/youth supported education, community awareness and professional trainings.

MCCA believes a community well-informed about domestic violence, will lead to community members that are involved in finding solutions. Partnerships with other community organizations, businesses, agencies, churches and educational institutions are fundamental in our work. CDV staff are available for in-services, staff training, school dating violence prevention programs, and community presentations.

If you are a victim of domestic abuse, computer use can be monitored and it is impossible to completely clear information viewed on the internet from your computer.

### **Internet and Computer Safety**

There are hundreds of ways that computers record everything you do on the computer and on the Internet. If you are in danger, please try to use a safer computer that someone abusive does not have direct access, or even remote (hacking) access to.

- **Use a safer computer.** It might be safer to use a computer in a public library, at a community technology center, at a trusted friend's house, or at an Internet Cafe.
- **If you think your activities are being monitored,** they probably, are. Abusive people are often controlling and want to know your every move. You don't need to be a computer programmer or have special skills to monitor someone's computer activities - anyone can do it and there are many ways to

monitor.

- **Computers can provide a lot of information** about what you look at on the Internet, the e-mails you send, and other activities.
- **It is not possible to delete** or clear all computer "footprints".
- **If you think you may be monitored** on your home computer, you might consider no home Internet use or "safer" Internet surfing. Example: If you are planning to flee to California, don't look at classified ads for jobs and apartments, bus tickets, etc. for California on a home computer or any computer an abuser has physical or remote access to. Use a safer computer to research an escape plan.
- **E-mail is not a safe or confidential way** to talk to someone about the danger or abuse in your life, please call your local domestic violence program hotline instead.
- **Traditional "corded" phones are more private** than cellular phones or cordless phones.

The challenges facing victims of domestic violence are complex and go beyond being in immediate physical danger. Chronic health conditions, underemployment, limited affordable housing and childcare are just some of the obstacles many victims must overcome.

If you or someone you love is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1, The National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or [MCCA's local Hotline at 309-827-7070](tel:309-827-7070).

Mid Central Community Action is one of 28 partner agencies of United Way of McLean County.



## **Volunteers Needed for Annual United Way of McLean County and Local McDonald Restaurant Change Drive**

United Way of McLean County will be partnering with the local McDonald Restaurants for their Annual Change Drive to be held on Thursday, October 19.

The 5 locations scheduled to participate are:

- 1 McDonalds, 1610 East Empire Street, Bloomington (across from Eastland Mall)
  - 2 McDonalds, 1535 East College Avenue, Bloomington (near Shoppes at College Hills)
  - 3 McDonalds, 2507 East Oakland Avenue, Bloomington
  - 4 McDonalds, 804 South Main Street, Normal (near ISU)
  - 5 McDonalds, 3102 East Empire Street, Bloomington (across from the airport).
- We're looking for two volunteers to cover a 2-hour shift at each location with shifts beginning at 7:00 a.m. and ending at 3:00 p.m. One volunteer will be located 'inside' the lobby area and the other at the end of the drive-up after the

customer has paid for their order.

If you can share some of your time to help with this event, please go to the SignUpGenius link below and make your shift(s) selection.

[Click Here to Volunteer](#)

Questions about volunteering, contact Pat Grosso, Director of Resource Development, United Way of McLean County, 309-828-7383, [pgrosso@uwaymc.org](mailto:pgrosso@uwaymc.org) .

United Way of McLean County Workplace Campaigns have already started and October will be one of our busiest months for fundraising events. Here's just a few of the people in our community having a great time raising funds. Your annual payroll deductions and donations are so important to over 36,000 residents who benefit from the 28 partner agencies and their 64 programs funded by the United Way of McLean County thanks to your annual support.

**Give Local - Stay UNITED!**



US Bank Employees Help Celebrate their support for UWMC



UWMC leadership participate in Growmark's Employee Partner Agency Informational Fair



Ameren employee's kick-off their annual UWMC campaign this month