



The Net Benefit

Partner Launch Toolkit
June 2018



**Missouri Foundation
for Health**

a catalyst for change

On behalf of Missouri Foundation for Health, I want to thank you for being a part of *The Net Benefit* campaign from the beginning. **We're excited to work with you to educate Missourians about how taking care of our residents who need help most leads to stronger communities and a stronger state.**

We created *The Net Benefit*, a nonpartisan education campaign, because we've found that when Missourians' basic needs are not met, their health is negatively impacted. Through the campaign, we will reinforce how important it is for our families, friends, and neighbors to have access to food, shelter, health care, and economic support – no matter who they are or where they live.

This toolkit is the first set of materials designed to help you bring *The Net Benefit* message to the communities you serve and reinforce that we all benefit when we come together to help people who are in need. **Please only begin using these materials once Missouri Foundation for Health launches the campaign—on Tuesday, June 26, 2018.**

In the following pages, you'll find:

- **A core message guide** that provides the building blocks to incorporate campaign messages into your communications, including local media efforts.
- **A social media tip sheet** to help you announce your participation in the campaign and share key messages through your social media channels.
- **Template materials**, including a newsletter/website paragraph, blog post, and church bulletin.
- **Other outreach activities** to inspire you to spread *The Net Benefit* message.
- **Fact sheets** to use as a resource. These include:
 - [Perceptions of the Health and Social Safety Net Across Missouri](#), which summarizes findings from public opinion research Missouri Foundation for Health commissioned to gain insight into Missouri voters' knowledge of and experiences with the safety net.
 - [Safety Net Programs in Missouri](#), which provides an overview of the network of supports that help Missourians in need.

We look forward to providing more materials to you in the coming months so you can continue sharing *The Net Benefit* message. Please keep an eye out for mffh.org/TheNetBenefit and contact Courtney Stewart (CStewart@mffh.org), Vice President of Strategic Communications, with any questions along the way.

Again, I am thrilled to be working with you toward the betterment of all Missourians.

Sincerely,

Bob Hughes
President and CEO
Missouri Foundation for Health

The Net Benefit Core Messages

Missouri Foundation for Health developed the following message guide to help you communicate how taking care of the Missourians who need help most leads to stronger communities and a stronger state.

We hope these messages are a useful tool in your existing communications. Whether that's through presentations to your networks, interviews with local media, or materials you are producing, this language can be woven throughout to further amplify *The Net Benefit* message throughout the duration of the campaign.

In this toolkit you will also find additional guidance for using this language in your outreach to reporters, through op-eds or letters to the editor, on social media, in church bulletins and more.

We encourage you to incorporate local data and stories to make this information even more relevant to your audiences.

Message Framework

Our communities are only as strong as our people. And our people—our families, friends, and neighbors—are strong when they have access to the food, shelter, health care, and economic support they need to lead healthy lives. This is true no matter who you are or where you live.

When Missourians have access to care and resources that help them meet their needs, they have the opportunity to live up to their potential and pursue their dreams, bringing limitless value to their communities and to our state.

When our kids are healthier, they're better prepared to learn and grow.

When older adults have access to food and economic supports, they can live with dignity as they age.

When our neighbors have a safe place to call home, they have the stability and protection to focus on their well-being.

When we look out for one another, we all see *The Net Benefit*.

We are all in this together. Working toward the betterment of people makes us stronger as communities, and as a state.

About the Campaign

- We are working to amplify Missouri Foundation for Health's efforts to educate Missourians about what we all need to lead healthy lives. We see *The Net Benefit* of our families, friends, and neighbors having access to food, shelter, health care, and economic support – no matter who they are or where they live.
- We all benefit when we come together to help people who are in need. It helps our children be healthier and better prepared to learn; our adults experience better health and economic self-sufficiency; and our communities thrive.
- Everyone should have the same opportunity to live up to their potential and pursue their dreams, because where we start off in life should not determine where we end up. When we leave our neighbors behind, it has a ripple effect on our communities.
- Taking care of our residents who need help most—particularly children, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities—leads to stronger communities and a stronger state.
- Now more than ever, we must look out for our neighbors and strive to understand what it takes for each of us to lead a healthy life. And we must recognize the important work of dedicated professionals, local institutions, and volunteers who work tirelessly to support those in need.
- *The Net Benefit* is a nonpartisan education campaign.

How These Needs Are Being Met

- Missourians are connected to the food, shelter, health care, and economic support they need to lead healthy lives through a combination of state and federal programs, dedicated professionals, volunteers, and community organizations.
- Missourians' access to care is made possible with the help of a network of programs—including the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and disability, and housing assistance.
- People should be able to tap into resources that help to enrich their lives, whether for the short term or long term. These programs provide a universal set of services, and our children benefit because their well-being is dependent on the well-being of their parents and caregivers. When their caregivers have access to care, the whole family benefits.
- Our communities have strong support systems that are often the first place Missourians turn when they are in need. These supports are only made possible because of the network of professionals and volunteers who work tirelessly to make sure our family, friends, and neighbors have food, shelter, health care, and other economic supports when they need it most.
- We all know someone who has benefited from the local assistance of food pantries, churches, job training programs, community organizations, or health clinics and is better for it. It just goes to show that when we look out for one another, we all see *The Net Benefit*.
- The leaders from these community organizations will tell you themselves—they aren't equipped to provide all the support necessary to help Missourians in need. That's where federal and state support programs come in.

Food

- Having access to enough nutritious food is critical to ensure Missourians have the fuel they need to attend school prepared to learn, go to their jobs ready to be productive, and maintain their health as they age. But when our family, friends, and neighbors can't afford to put enough food on the table, they suffer from hunger and lack of good nutrition.
- Many Missourians don't know when or where they will get their next meal. But with nutrition assistance programs such as Food Stamps, known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) serving as the first line of defense against hunger, our neighbors can feed their families.
- Reducing the amount of food going into low-income households has the potential to increase the rate of child abuse and neglect in Missouri. Children are completely dependent on their adult caregivers for food. When families have less food, the first to go hungry are often the youngest and most vulnerable.
- Our littlest Missourians' health in their early years is essential to their development as they grow. Nutritional support from WIC helps give our children a strong start in life. Children who are healthy have a greater chance of growing up to be thriving adults who contribute to and build our economy.
- Missouri families rely on the help provided by charitable programs, such as food banks, but such assistance can only go so far without federal help. For example, for every meal that Feeding America (with six locations in Missouri) provides through their network of food banks, SNAP provides 12 meals.

Shelter

- Housing plays a critical role in our physical, mental, and emotional health. We know that when people have a safe, affordable place to call home, they are less likely to have unmet health needs.
- Individuals and families can create stability, find new opportunities, and improve their lives when they have the protection that a home provides.
- We've seen the difference a safe, affordable home can make in the lives of Missourians. For example, organizations have found that when homeless veterans have a roof over their heads, their health improves and they require fewer social services.¹

¹ <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/show-me-healthy-housing-0>

Health Care

- Medicaid provides vital coverage for children—including those with special needs—who otherwise wouldn't be able to get the care they need to grow and thrive. Medicaid also helps seniors stay in their homes and covers people with disabilities so they can afford their care.
- We know how important it is for our kids to be covered. When they are healthier, they are better prepared to learn. And ultimately, they are more likely to become productive, healthy, independent adults. In Missouri, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides health insurance to children from families who are working hard to get by.
- Local hospitals, community health centers, and medical providers are supported by state and federal programs. This support is critical for health care systems across our state and to increase access to care for all residents.
- When Missourians don't have access to health care, their costs for medical care are passed on to everyone else. It could be in the form of higher insurance premiums or having to cover care that goes unpaid. In the long run, everyone pays the price.

Economic Support

- For Missourians most in need, economic supports that help cover the basics are in fact a lifeline.
- For older adults and people with disabilities, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) helps cover basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing.
- When Missouri families fall on tough times, support programs must be there to help. They offer temporary help for Missourians to get back on their feet. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) helps low-income families pay for basic needs, like utilities, clothing, child care, education and job training, and transportation.

The Net Benefit

- When Missourians have access to the care they need, they have the opportunity to live up to their potential and pursue their dreams—bringing limitless value to their communities and to our state.
- When our kids are healthier, they're better prepared to learn. And ultimately, they're more likely to become productive, healthy, independent adults.
- When older adults in Missouri have access to food and economic supports, they can live with dignity as they age.
- When people with disabilities receive aid, they are more likely to live independently and outside of costly institutional care.
- When our neighbors have a safe place to call home, they have the stability and protection to focus on their well-being.
- When Missourians have the resources and support they need to lead healthy lives, no matter who they are or where they live, they can thrive.
- When we look out for one another, we all see *The Net Benefit*.

By the Numbers

Please refer to the [Safety Net Programs in Missouri](#) fact sheet for additional information.

- Safety net programs ensure an estimated 1.1 million Missourians have access to care, including 250,000 children.
- In 2016, more than 965,000 Missourians were enrolled in MO HealthNet, the state's Medicaid program, and able to receive affordable health care. Medicaid enrollees include working families, older adults, and people with disabilities.
- The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) covers about 80,000 low-income Missouri children under 19 years of age whose families earn too much to qualify for Medicaid services, but are not able to afford costly private insurance.
- More than 140,000 Missourians received SSI benefits in 2015. Over 94 percent of beneficiaries in SSI have a disability.
- Throughout fiscal year 2015, approximately 844,597 Missourians received SNAP benefits each month, giving them access to nutritious food.
- More than 118,000 Missourians participate in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) as of March 2017, which provides affordable, nutritious food for pregnant women and mothers with children age 5 and under. Forty-nine percent are children, 25 percent are infants, and 26 percent are women (2014). Of the Missouri women participating in WIC, 41 percent are pregnant, 37.3 percent are postpartum, and 21.7 percent are breastfeeding.
- In 2015, 31,053 Missouri families received TANF benefits to help cover the cost of basic needs. Historically, nearly half of Missourians who receive TANF benefits are under 10 years old, and almost 80 percent are under 25 years old.
- In 2016, over 500,000 Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) claims were submitted, and each recipient received an average of \$2,459. Forty thousand EITC recipients are veterans and 155,000 are rural families.

Missouri Foundation for Health Research

In the fall of 2017, Missouri Foundation for Health conducted a research project to connect with Missouri voters and better understand the role of the safety net in their lives and in their communities.

- Missourians see many families in need around them and many are struggling themselves. Missouri Foundation for Health conducted a research project and learned that half of Missouri voters have personal experience with safety net programs. They may currently be receiving help, have in the past, or have a family member receiving help.

According to a Missouri Foundation for Health survey:

- Most Missourians—two-thirds—know someone who is currently receiving help through the safety net.
- More than nine in 10 Missourians believe the safety net is important. Most Missouri voters do not want to see funding cuts for safety net programs. These sentiments remain consistent across demographics and political party lines.
- Missourians believe local, state, and federal government all have a role to play in helping families in need.

Risks

- Cuts to programs like SNAP, Medicaid, and WIC will significantly impact tens of thousands of Missouri children. Children will lose access to a nutritious meal or ability to see a doctor, and therefore won't have the supports they need grow, learn, and thrive. With fewer resources, families will have to make hard choices between eating a nutritious meal or being able to afford medication.
- Research shows that imposing work requirements on safety net programs doesn't cut poverty.² Putting barriers between Missourians and their access to health care, food, housing assistance, and other supports makes it harder for families to get by when they are already struggling.
- According to St. Louis University's Center for Health Law Studies, work requirements add more bureaucracy that can result in lost coverage for people who do work.³ Sometimes people are paid in cash for their work or have employers who do not offer help in documenting their work. Or, there is a risk of paperwork being filed in the wrong place. In the end, it's Missourians who lose when their access to care is cut off.
- The proposed federal budget threatens the availability of programs like SNAP and Medicaid for Missourians most in need—our children, seniors, and people with disabilities. This funding is a necessary safeguard when local assistance from places like food pantries, churches, and community organizations do not have the resources to help. There is only so much help local organizations can provide.
- Proposed block grants would cut funding for programs and give less money to Missouri to administer them. To compensate, our state would need to cut people—such as children, seniors, and people with disabilities—from important programs or reduce funding for other needed services.

² Hahn, et al. "Work Requirements in Social Safety Net Programs." Urban Institute, Dec. 2017.

www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/95566/work-requirements-in-social-safety-net-programs.pdf.

³ Watson, et al. "Medicaid and Work Requirements - FAQs." St. Louis University School of Law - Center for Health Law Studies, 2018.

Social Media Tip Sheet

We hope you'll join us in launching *The Net Benefit* on Tuesday, June 26, and continue spreading the word in the weeks and months that follow. We know that social media is an important tool in reaching your networks. We have prepared sample social media posts that you can use as is, or edit as you see fit. We encourage you to personalize the content so that it fits your voice. We have also provided graphics to accompany these posts.

Missouri Foundation for Health will share social media tip sheets throughout the year for you to continue sharing The Net Benefit message. These will be based around themes (e.g., Back to School in August, Mental Illness Awareness Month in October, and Veterans Day in November) that likely align with your existing communications.

Get Started

- **Follow Missouri Foundation for Health (@MoFoundHealth) on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) to get the latest information about the campaign.** We will also share campaign announcement messages, photos, and data points that you can retweet and share with your networks.
- **Use the #TheNetBenefit hashtag in your posts.** That way you can be part of the conversation with partners across the state.

Sample Social Media Posts and Graphics

We're excited to see @MoFoundHealth has launched #TheNetBenefit. Because we know when Missourians have the opportunity to live up to their potential and pursue their dreams, they bring limitless value to their communities and our state. Learn more:

www.mffh.org/TheNetBenefit



[Download this image ^](#)

We have joined the @MoFoundHealth #TheNetBenefit campaign to talk about what Missourians need to lead healthy lives. Learn more: www.mffh.org/TheNetBenefit



[Download this image ^](#)

When Missourians have access to enough nutritious food, they have the fuel they need to go to their jobs ready to be productive.
#TheNetBenefit



[Download this image ^](#)

When our neighbors in Missouri have a safe place to call home, they have the stability and protection to focus on their well-being.
#TheNetBenefit



[Download this image ^](#)

When Missouri kids are healthier, they're better prepared to learn and grow.
#TheNetBenefit



[Download this image ^](#)

When older adults have access to economic supports, they can live with dignity as they age.
#TheNetBenefit



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Template Materials

We have provided the following template materials to help you announce *The Net Benefit* through your existing channels. Feel free to use as is or personalize this sample language to best meet your organization's needs.

Announce *The Net Benefit* Through Your E-Newsletters

Share the campaign through your organization's e-newsletters. Alternatively, if you subscribe to relevant newsletters and e-newsletters, get in touch with the editor by sending a note introducing yourself and offering to contribute.

Template E-Newsletter

Our communities are only as strong as our people. And our families, friends, and neighbors are strong when they have access to the food, shelter, health care, and economic support they need to lead healthy lives. This is true no matter who you are or where you live. But when Missourians' basic needs are not being met, their health is negatively impacted. And when our neighbors are left behind, it has a ripple effect on our entire community.

That's why [Organization] has joined Missouri Foundation for Health in launching *The Net Benefit*, a nonpartisan education campaign to share how taking care of our residents who need help most—particularly children, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities—leads to stronger communities and a stronger state.

[Use language below that best aligns with your work and/or replace with local data/stories.]

Where we start off in life should not determine where we end up. When Missourians have access to the care they need, they have the opportunity to live up to their potential and pursue their dreams—bringing limitless value to their communities and to our state. When our kids are healthier, they're better prepared to learn. And ultimately, they're more likely to become productive, healthy, independent adults. When older adults in Missouri have access to food and economic supports, they can live with dignity as they age. When our neighbors have a safe place to call home, they have the stability and protection to focus on their well-being. When we look out for one another, we all see *The Net Benefit*.

Learn more about *The Net Benefit* and how you can get involved at www.mffh.org/TheNetBenefit.

Develop and Distribute a Blog Post

Your organization’s blog can be a great way to announce *The Net Benefit*. Check out this sample post for inspiration and adapt it based on your organization’s expertise and the audiences you reach. The more you can localize the blog post, the more it will resonate with readers.

Template Blog Post

Our communities are only as strong as our people. And our people—our families, friends, and neighbors—are strong when they have access to the food, shelter, health care, and economic support they need to lead healthy lives. This is true no matter who you are or where you live. But when Missourians’ basic needs are not being met, their health is negatively impacted. And when our neighbors are left behind, it has a ripple effect on our entire community.

[Insert an example—such as a story or local data point—of how you know this to be the case.]

That’s why [Organization] has joined Missouri Foundation for Health in launching *The Net Benefit*, a nonpartisan education campaign to share how taking care of our residents who need help most—particularly children, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities—leads to stronger communities and a stronger state.

Where we start off in life should not determine where we end up. We all know someone who has benefited from the local assistance of food pantries, churches, job training programs, or health clinics and is better for it. It just goes to show that when we look out for one another, we all see *The Net Benefit*.

Because when Missourians have access to the care they need, they have the opportunity to live up to their potential and pursue their dreams—bringing limitless value to their communities and to our state. When our kids are healthier, they’re better prepared to learn. And ultimately, they’re more likely to become productive, healthy, independent adults. When older adults in Missouri have access to food and economic supports, they can live with dignity as they age. When our neighbors have a safe place to call home, they have the stability and protection to focus on their well-being. When we look out for one another, we all see *The Net Benefit*.

[Insert a brief story to explain how one of these supports has helped a family you know.]

We are all in this together. Working toward the betterment of people makes us stronger as communities, and as a state. Learn more about *The Net Benefit* at www.mffh.org/TheNetBenefit.

Distribute Information through Your Faith Community's Bulletin

Another way to share information about *The Net Benefit* is through your congregation/faith community. That's because Missourians are often connected to the food, shelter, health care, and economic support they need to lead healthy lives through the caring support of our faith communities. Adapt and use this language to introduce the campaign to your congregations.

Template Bulletin

Working Together to Improve the Lives of Our Family, Friends, and Neighbors

Our physical and mental health is just as important as our spiritual health. And for our friends, family and neighbors to lead a healthy life, they must have access to food, shelter, health care and economic supports.

In our own community, we are committed to [insert examples of services provided by your church, why they are so important, and the difference you've seen these services make in the lives of your neighbors].

It just goes to show that when we look out for one another, we all see *The Net Benefit*.

Other Outreach Activities

In addition to the templates above, we encourage you to conduct other outreach activities to support *The Net Benefit* campaign. Here are a few ideas. We encourage you to be creative!

Conduct Local Media Outreach About *The Net Benefit*

Whether you are in touch with local media (newspapers, blogs, radio stations, TV, etc.) on a regular basis, or are looking to find new ways to talk about the issues you care about, you can use the core messages in this toolkit to *The Net Benefit* of helping Missourians lead healthy lives. By weaving in this messaging, you can help ensure a steady drumbeat of information about the campaign and reinforce the important work you are doing.

Here are a few suggestions:

- **Place opinion pieces and letters to the editor in newspapers.** This provides an opportunity for you to share your perspectives about the supports Missourians need to lead healthy lives and convey important facts and commentary that can successfully educate your audiences about the topic. The best time to do this is when a related story has run in the newspaper and you can “respond” to it.
- **Leverage your existing relationships with influential reporters**—including beat reporters and op-ed writers—and position yourself as a resource for unbiased information on this topic. Continually share information—including the fact sheets at the beginning of this toolkit, personal stories, and local data—to maintain these relationships. Offer to speak on background, or to connect the reporter with experts in the field whom they can quote in their stories.
- **Request a meeting with the editorial board** to share your perspective and explain why the board should care about Missourians having access to care and resources and the opportunity to lead healthy lives. Incorporate campaign messages from the core message guide into your prepared remarks. Bring copies of the fact sheets at the beginning of this toolkit with you. Tie your meeting request to a recent development in the news whenever possible.

Collect Stories to Highlight What Missourians Need to Lead Healthy Lives

Missouri Foundation for Health is collecting stories from across the state to convey what it really means to help Missourians in need. We want to amplify the voices of Missourians who have been supported by or interacted with this network of services. Doing so allows us to lift up the voices of people who are working to live up to their potential, bringing limitless value to their communities and to our state. We appreciate your help collecting stories that tell the story of *The Net Benefit*.

What We Want to Showcase

- How Missourians have found support in times of need, past or present.
- How communities are lifted when the individuals that make it up are lifted up.
- The role of community leaders (such as food pantry directors, faith leaders, volunteers, etc.) who are helping their neighbors access food, shelter, health care, and economic supports and can speak to the importance of these supports in building strong communities.

Two Ways to Collect Stories

1. Hold conversations yourself and share with us what you have learned. Additional details are below.
2. Refer people to www.mffh.org/TheNetBenefit, which includes a form to “share your story.”

Questions to Ask

- What is your biggest concern to your health and/or well-being?
- Is there anything getting in the way of leading a healthy life? How can you eliminate these obstacles?
- How have you been supported by local, state, and/or federal support systems at any time in your life?
- What is the important role that these support systems play in your family? With friends? Community?
- Tell me about someone, or an organization, that has made a difference in your life and your health.

Additional Information That Is Important to Collect

- Full name
- Hometown
- Contact information (phone and/or email)
- If possible, photo(s) of individual

Please share your stories with Daniel Waxler, Missouri Foundation for Health Communications Officer, by email: DWaxler@mffh.org.