

CULTIVATING COLLECTIVE WELL-BEING THROUGH COMMUNITY

When people feel connected, supported, and included, entire communities thrive. Yet for some Story County residents—especially older adults—opportunities to stay active and socially engaged can be limited. Isolation can impact mental, emotional, and even physical health, making it harder to maintain a sense of purpose and belonging.

United Way of Story County is committed to building a community where everyone can feel they truly belong. That's why we help fund programs like the Adult Day Center at the Sixty Forward Center, which offers seniors and retirees a welcoming space to gather, stay active, and engage with others. From shared meals to group activities, the Center fosters friendships, combats loneliness, and inspires participants to lead vibrant, connected lives.

IMPACT



81% of individuals surveyed reported they had improved access to social/emotional support



94% of individuals surveyed reported improved quality of life

WHY IT MATTERS



14% of Story County adults report two or more weeks of poor mental health per month



33% of Story County adults live alone

A Gathering Place for All

When she moved to Story County to be closer to her daughter, one Sixty Forward volunteer wasn't sure how she'd fit in. After losing her spouse, she was searching for connection and purpose.

She began as an atrium ambassador, greeting everyone who walked through the doors and making the Center feel warm and welcoming. Over time, she saw an opportunity to help others facing similar loss. She started a support group for people who have lost a partner—now nearly fifteen members strong.

The group shares meals, attends activities, and supports each other through life's ups and downs. For her, leading this group has been just as meaningful as participating. What began as a way to connect has grown into a space where others can heal, build friendships, and experience the power of collective well-being.

Learn more about how we are fostering a sense of belonging in Story County at uwstory.org/collective-wellbeing

