



# Connecting Kids Program Rules and Guidelines

## Important Information for You to Know:

- Connecting Kids currently relies on a referral-based system. Certificates will be given to the following entities: social service agencies in our community, UW partner agencies, Sioux Falls and the surrounding area school principals/counselors and Connecting Kids organizations.
- Sioux Empire United Way's service area includes the following counties: Lincoln, Minnehaha, McCook, and Turner.
- Currently, the program serves children in **grades K-8**.
- For Kindergarteners: The child must have begun their Kindergarten year at the time of the activity. If the registration is due before this, that is fine.
- Each child is permitted to use only **one** certificate per **calendar** year.
- This application **must be** completed every other year.

## Agency/Organization Tasks and Expectations:

- Please ask the families if their child has already used a Connecting Kids certificate during the current calendar year. We track the usage after the certificates are submitted, so we understand this is essentially an "honor system". If there are any questions, you are also welcome to contact United Way to verify there was no prior certificate usage during the calendar year.

- Each agency must have financial qualification guidelines in place for a child to qualify for a Connecting Kids certificate. If you would like examples of qualification guidelines, please let us know. We also expect that you have a system in place to allow for exceptions to these guidelines for those families who are going through a difficult time but may not be able to “prove” their need within your typical guidelines.
- We hope Connecting Kids Partners will please communicate expectations and qualification guidelines to each of your staff so they can fully understand and explain the Connecting Kids certificates to the families.
- Sioux Empire United Way suggests that each agency has internal scholarships funds available within your operating budget if possible. Recognizing that Connecting Kids is limited to a certain age group and can only be used once per calendar year, we ask that you evaluate the scholarship needs of the children throughout the year and please utilize your internal scholarships whenever (OR to the full extent) possible.
- Please contact United Way when your agency needs more certificates.
- You are welcome to publish information about Sioux Empire United Way’s Connecting Kids program within your agency’s written communication to families in our community! Please contact United Way for assistance. (Example: Add logo or Connecting Kids information to the website or brochures.)
- Every year, we like the agencies and the parents/guardians assisted by Connecting Kids to take a survey. The survey generally is a couple of questions and is sent out at the end of a survey year. We ask each agency to pass the survey along to the parents/guardians assisted by Connecting Kids, for them to complete the survey.
- The application **must be** completed every other year.