

What would you do if you knew there was a proven solution that lifts millions of children and working families out of poverty each year... a tool that, at the same time, also improves child health and academic achievement, enables financial stability for hard-working families, and pumps billions of dollars back into local communities around the country?

You'd probably want to talk about it. You'd probably want as many of your friends, family and community to know about this amazing resource.

That's exactly why United Way, our community partners, and thousands of volunteers each year take action to connect millions of people to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). In fact, just last tax season, Oshkosh Area United Way, through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, helped connect local people to \$289,623 in tax refunds – money coming right back into our community.

Simply put, the Earned Income Tax Credit helps lower-wage working families keep more of what they earn. Research finds that the EITC encourages work, reduces poverty and leads to long-term gains in child health and academic success. Together with the Child Tax Credit (CTC), another essential credit that helps offset the cost of raising children, the credits lifted more than 9 million people – 5 million of them children -- out of poverty in 2013. (the most recent year for which data are available) The credits also help 22 million lower-income Americans have further financial stability.

There are three important ways you can take action this EITC Awareness Day – January 29, 2013 or any day!

- 1) Spread the word: Tell your friends and family about the success of the EITC & Child Tax Credit. Tweet it, post it, put a sign in your yard, a sticker on your car, or a tattoo on your arm. Why not be creative? The tax credits could mean hundreds or thousands of dollars in the pockets of people you care about. Use #EITC, #EITCDay, and #LIVEUNITED.

- 3) Connect people to the credits through free online tax preparation at MyFreeTaxes.com. Share the link and individuals or families earning \$62,000 or less in 2015 can file their state and local taxes for free online. Those who earn \$54,000 or less and want free in-person assistance can call the United Way Tax Assistance Line at 920-651-3060 to schedule an appointment at the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance site.

Thanks for taking action – because change doesn't happen without you.