

## Embargoed Press Release

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### NEW ALICE® EXPERIENCE EXPLORES THE TOUGH CHOICES BEHIND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

**Making Tough Choices in Indiana™ invites participants to experience the everyday tradeoffs ALICE® households face and consider how communities can expand opportunity and choice.**

**INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (September 7, 2026)** – People often see the outcomes of financial hardship, but not the limited choices that shape them. A new interactive experience from Indiana United Ways gives Hoosiers a chance to see those choices from a different perspective.

Making Tough Choices in Indiana: An Interactive ALICE® Experience launches today at [indianatoughchoices.org](http://indianatoughchoices.org). The free online experience invites participants to step into the world of an ALICE household and try to make a paycheck last through the first two weeks of the month.

ALICE® stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed and represents households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level but less than the cost of essentials in their local community.

Participants choose a household and job, pay regular monthly expenses, and make everyday spending decisions. Along the way, they face a variety of situations.

“ALICE research has helped us understand the scale of financial hardship in Indiana. Making Tough Choices in Indiana™ helps us better understand the choices behind those numbers,” said Michael Budd, President and CEO of Indiana United Ways. “Financial security is about more than having enough money. It’s about having the freedom to make choices that move your life forward. When we better understand what shapes those choices, we can have productive conversations about how communities can expand opportunity.”

The experience draws on ALICE® research from United For ALICE and reflects common expenses, wages, household needs, and financial pressures faced by households across Indiana. It is not designed to teach participants how to budget or judge the decisions they make. Instead, it uses experiential learning to build understanding and encourage reflection and discussion.

Most financial setbacks do not begin with one big mistake. They begin with one difficult moment. What happens next often depends on the choices available in that moment.

Making Tough Choices in Indiana™ explores how income, community resources, work, health, child care, transportation, food, housing, and other factors can affect those choices. Participants also learn how local United Ways and their partners work across sectors to remove barriers, connect resources, and expand opportunities in their communities.

The experience is designed for individuals as well as employers, nonprofits, schools, government leaders, community groups, volunteers, donors, and others interested in better understanding financial hardship. It can be completed individually or used to support facilitated conversations about ALICE®, financial security, and local opportunities for action.

“United Way has always been about what is possible when people work together,” said Budd. “Our goal is to help community members and leaders have a shared understanding of the challenges people face, so we can work together to expand people’s opportunities and choices for getting through today and building for their future.”

At the end of the experience, participants can connect with their local United Way to learn more about ALICE® in their community and find ways to get help, get involved, or give back.

Making Tough Choices in Indiana: An Interactive ALICE® Experience will be available on or around September 7 at [indianatoughchoices.org](http://indianatoughchoices.org).

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### **About Indiana United Ways**

Indiana United Ways is the state membership association for local United Ways serving communities across Indiana. It provides a wide range of advocacy, training, technical assistance, networking, and grants to ensure that local United Ways can meet their community’s most pressing needs. Along with its members and partners, Indiana United Ways works to strengthen communities and expand opportunities so more Hoosiers can build financial security and pursue the future they envision for themselves.

### **About United For ALICE®**

United For ALICE is a U.S. research organization driving innovation, research and action to improve life across the country for ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and for all. Through the development of the ALICE measurements, a comprehensive, unbiased picture of financial hardship has emerged. Harnessing this data and research on the mismatch between low-paying jobs and the cost of survival, ALICE partners convene, advocate and collaborate on solutions that promote financial stability at local, state and national levels. This grassroots ALICE movement, led by United Way of Northern New Jersey, has spread to 40 states and the District of Columbia. It includes United Ways, corporations, nonprofits and foundations. For more information, visit: [UnitedForALICE.org](http://UnitedForALICE.org).