



## Frankie's Story



**Frankie is a survivor.** She grew up in an abusive household and left home at the age of 17 to begin a new life. She moved to Chicago where she found employment and was able to work through the many mental health issues that stemmed from her abuse. Then, Frankie was hospitalized to undergo a hysterectomy. During the procedure, she received multiple blood transfusions and found out later that her transfusions were tainted with HIV and Hepatitis B.

Struggling to understand her diagnosis, Frankie wasn't sure where to turn. That's when she heard about Chicago House and Social Service Agency, a United Way partner agency providing supportive programs to those affected by HIV and AIDS.

The staff at Chicago House helped Frankie to understand what living with HIV meant and how she could manage her illness. They provided counseling and comprehensive mental health support. Frankie found a strong network of supporters at Chicago House, and soon came to terms with her diagnosis and began to focus on how to continue living her life. "It was another family. They helped me work through so many things," said Frankie. Eventually, Frankie's health began to decline and she was unable to get around without the use of a wheelchair. Unable to live alone, Chicago House offered Frankie a safe place to live through their supportive housing program and helped her adapt to life in a wheelchair.

Frankie recently moved into a nursing home facility where she can receive more comprehensive medical care, but she still volunteers at Chicago House and shares her story with others who are HIV positive. She credits Chicago House and United Way with helping her persevere and live a quality life despite her illnesses.

Frankie's story—and thousands more like it—changed because of people like you.

Through proven strategies and quality programs, United Way measurably improves lives for individuals, families and entire neighborhoods across the region. Join us and change the story for those in need in greater Chicago.

Go to [LIVEUNITEDchicago.org](http://LIVEUNITEDchicago.org) to give and learn more.



Frankie's story changed because of people like you. Help us continue to *change* the story.