

## The Game of *Real Life* – Condensed (10 minutes)

**Purpose of Presentation:** An Activity to present United Way of Muscatine’s investments in education.

### Training Objective:

- Participants will have a better understanding of United Way of Muscatine’s investment in educate to prepare students to graduate

**Materials Needed:** Each time you play you will need at least one copy of the script and a set of game cards for each player. You will need to create the game board. Make the board large enough to accommodate your human game pieces!

- **For play outdoors,** use side walk chalk to outline the game board (see below for details).
- **For play indoors,** use colorful tape (duct or masking) to outline the game board (you will need at least 50 feet of tape) OR use colorful poster board or flip chart paper to lay out your board (see below for details).

### Facilitator Preparation and Tips:

- **For play outdoors:** find a space of at least 30X30 to draw your game board. Always get approval to use side walk chalk in the space. And, be sure to have an indoor back up just in case the weather doesn’t cooperate.
- **For play indoors:** have a space that is clear of all obstacles and is big enough for the game board (10’x20’) and for spectators (participants of the presentation) to stand around and observe.
- **THE GAME BOARD:** There are TEN total spaces including START and FINISH.
- **Be Creative:** Make the spaces big enough for three adults to stand in at-one-time. Try laying out the spaces in a curving path from the start of the journey to the end with high school graduation.
- **START AND FINISH BLOCKS:** be sure to plan ahead and create your START and FINISH prior to laying out the game board. These pieces you can reuse.
  - “START Your Journey to High School Graduation”
  - “FINISH: GRADUATION on-time, prepared for college, work, and life.”
- **The Playing Cards:** There is a set of cards for each player. Players will move forwards and backwards – one of your three players will not graduate.

### The Game of *Real Life*! (SCRIPT)

- Welcome & Introduction
- United Way focuses on EDUCATION, FINANCIAL STABILITY & HEALTH. The building blocks of the quality life.
- One of our aspirations for this community is that all youth are graduation high school on time, prepared for college, work, and life. The Game of Real Life will illustrate the significance of parent involvement, quality programs, and opportunities for all students.
- I need THREE volunteers. Volunteers, you will be young people in school and you will be sharing with us your journey to graduation. You each have four cards numbered in order. As we go along, I will prompt you to read your card – loudly so we can all hear!
- Finally (if situation permits) – Everyone let’s get out of our seats and gather around our “youth” as they go on their journey to High School Graduation.

### Let’s Play – The Game of REAL Life! (Highlighted areas are for the facilitator to read/present)

Each player will start in a different place based on their card. Throughout the game I will provide comments that connect the dots between the experience of our “youth” and the work of united Way of Muscatine.

### SERIES ONE

The first card you have will identify your Elementary School. Failure to read at benchmark by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade greatly increases your chances of dropping out of high school. The better the school, the teachers, the programs, the more of a head start you have. Talk about FRL reading level chart. **PLAYER ONE**, tell us about your School...

**PLAYER 1:** My School is considered lower tier in student achievement. 88% of the students at my school are on free and reduced lunch and 50% scored at benchmark end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in reading. I will start the game at the **STARTING BLOCK**.

**PLAYER 2:** My School is considered middle tier in student achievement. 50% of the students at my school are on free and reduced lunch and 65% scored at benchmark end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in reading. I will start the game at **SECOND BLOCK**.

**PLAYER 3:** My School is considered higher tier in student achievement. 27% of the students at my school are on free and reduced lunch and 83% scored at benchmark end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in reading. I will start the game at **THE FOURTH BLOCK**.

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**SERIES TWO.** Ok, **PLAYER 1**, let's see what's next for you...

**PLAYER 1:** My mom got a text from our teacher about back to school supplies I can get from United Way's Pack the Bus supply drive. **MOVE FORWARD TWO SPACES**.

**Color Commentary:** Parents who are connected to schools and actively involved in their child's education greatly increase the child's chance for success. Alright **PLAYER 2**, what's new for you...

**PLAYER 2:** There is no afterschool program in my neighborhood, so I invited my friends over to my house to play video games after school. **MOVE BACK ONE SPACE**.

**Color Commentary:** The hours after school between 3pm and 6pm are a time of high risk for young people. They are more likely during this time to drink, have sex, try drugs, or engage in other risky activities. OST programs provide safe environments where young people can socialize, get help with homework, and even have a warm meal. **PLAYER 3**, Let's see what's next for you...

**PLAYER 3:** I got visit the Muscatine Municipal Airport with my volunteer “Big Brother”. **MOVE FORWARD THREE SPACES**.

**Color Commentary:** A STEM activities make learning fun by focusing on cool things kids are interested in.

**PLAYER 1**, what's up in your world?

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### SERIES THREE

**PLAYER 1:** My parents attended an open house at Sunset Park Afterschool Program. They signed me up! Yay! **MOVE FORWARD THREE SPACES**

**Color Commentary:** Sunset park participants are reading on or above benchmark by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

**PLAYER 2:** A teacher at my school noticed that I have been stealing food from the break room to bring home on Fridays. She got me signed up for the Bag of Blessings Program and now I have food at home to eat on the weekends. MOVE FORWARD FOUR SPACES.

**Color Commentary:** Children who are hungry have a hard time concentrating at school.

**PLAYER 3:** My parents both work full time but only make minimum wage. They can't afford athletic fees for me to participate in soccer. MOVE BACK TWO SPACES.

**Color Commentary:** Providing students with extracurricular activities keeps them engaged in school and increases their self-confidence.

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## SERIES FOUR

**PLAYER 1:** Because of a field trip I took during the Sunset Park summer program, I learned about all the great activities the library has for all students, even teens. MOVE FORWARD FOUR SPACES –CONGRATULATIONS! You have graduated High School on time and prepared for college work and life!!!

**Color Commentary:** Community involvement can lead to young people making connections and having opportunities that otherwise they would never have access to. **PLAYER 2, is on-time graduation in your future too?**

**PLAYER 2:** At a meeting with my teacher, my parents learned that the United Way Kids First Fund can help pay for AP testing fees. My parents are encouraging me to register for AP classes now. MOVE FORWARD FOUR MORE SPACES...CONGRATULATIONS...you have just graduated high school on time, prepared for college work and life!!

**Ok, I'm feeling good about this, PLAYER 3, what's in store for you?**

**PLAYER 3:** I skipped a lot of my classes this year. MOVE BACK TO START...you will not be graduation high school this year.

**In real life one out of every 5 students in Muscatine doesn't graduate on time.**

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### Summary Remarks:

But it's a long and winding road, because in **The Game of Real Life**, while luck and hard work might propel young people forward towards graduation, many more negative forces can converge to push them backwards towards dropping out.

You just witnessed some of them:

- Attending under-performing schools
- Living in poverty
- Parents who lack time and/or ability to encourage them
- Too much unstructured, unsupervised time
- Making bad decisions

But, regardless of a kid's situation and the impact of those negative forces, a kid's own resiliency and interventions by the community can sometimes make a difference. Schools, friendships, mentors, churches, engaging activities – all of these can help influence whether a young person graduates from high school.

When kids have access to really good afterschool activities conducted by trained professionals, and when they are surrounded by a network of caring, interested adults, their chances of graduating from high school on time, ready for college, work, and life increase exponentially AND they will be ready to win The Game of *Real* Life!

## PLAYER 1

### CARD 1

My School is considered lower tier in student achievement. 88% of the students at my school are on free and reduced lunch and 50% scored at benchmark end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in reading. I will start the game at the STARTING BLOCK.

## PLAYER 1

### CARD 4

Because of a field trip I took during the Sunset Park summer program, I learned about all the great activities the library has for all students, even teens. **MOVE FORWARD FOUR SPACES – CONGRATULATIONS! You have graduated High School on time and prepared for college work and life!!!**

## PLAYER 1

### CARD 2

My mom got a text from our teacher about back to school supplies I can get from United Way's Pack the Bus supply drive. **MOVE FORWARD TWO SPACES.**

## PLAYER 2

### CARD 1

My School is considered middle tier in student achievement. 50% of the students at my school are on free and reduced lunch and 65% scored at benchmark end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in reading. I will start the game at **SECOND BLOCK.**

## PLAYER 1

### CARD 3

My parents attended an open house at Sunset Park Afterschool Program. They signed me up! Yay! **MOVE FORWARD THREE SPACES**

## PLAYER 2

### CARD 2

There is no afterschool program in my neighborhood, so I invited my friends over to my house to play video games after school. **MOVE BACK ONE SPACE.**

## PLAYER 2

### CARD 3

A teacher at my school noticed that I have been stealing food from the break room to bring home on Fridays. She got me signed up for the Bag of Blessings Program and now I have food at home to eat on the weekends. **MOVE FORWARD FOUR SPACES.**

## PLAYER 3

### CARD 2

I got to visit the Muscatine Municipal Airport with my volunteer “Big Brother”. **MOVE FORWARD THREE SPACES.**

## PLAYER 2

### CARD 4

At a meeting with my teacher, my parents learned that the United Way Kids First Fund can help pay for AP testing fees. My parents are encouraging me to register for AP classes now. **MOVE FORWARD FOUR MORE SPACES... CONGRATULATIONS ...you have just graduated high school on time, prepared for college work and life!!**

## PLAYER 3

### CARD 3

My parents both work full time but only make minimum wage. They can't afford athletic fees for me to participate in soccer. **MOVE BACK TWO SPACES.**

## PLAYER 3

### CARD 1

PLAYER 3: My School is considered higher tier in student achievement. 27% of the students at my school are on free and reduced lunch and 83% scored at benchmark end of 3rd grade in reading. I will start the game at **THE FOURTH BLOCK.**

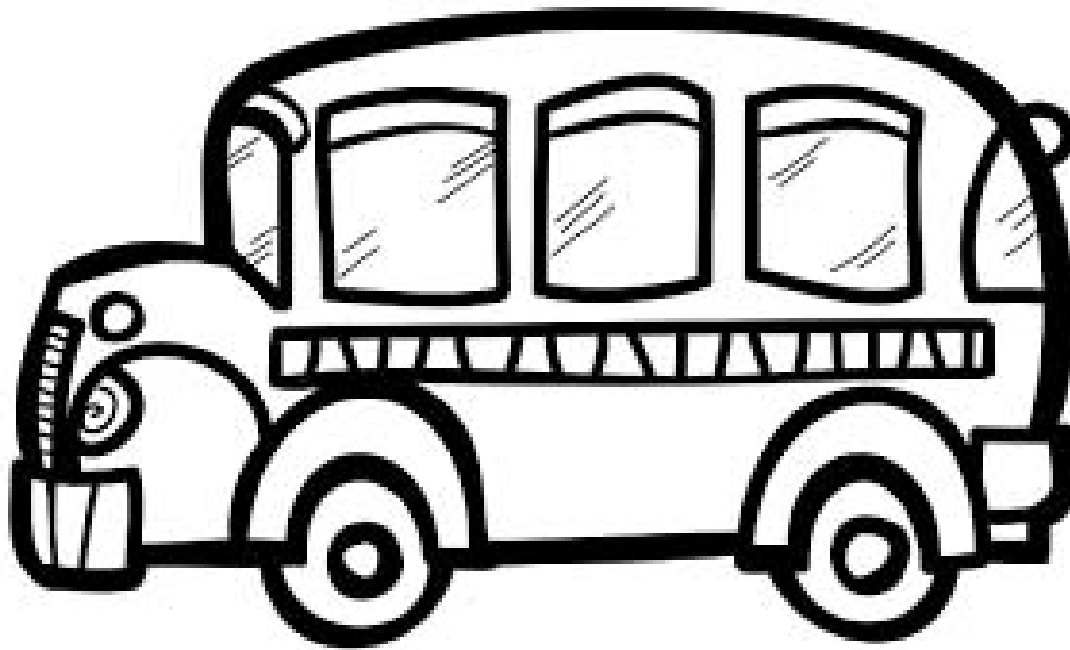
## PLAYER 3

### CARD 4

I skipped a lot of my classes this year. **MOVE BACK TO START...you will not be graduation high school this year.**



# START





**1**

2

3

44

5

6

7

8



# FINISH

