



HELPING CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL

Education is one of the building blocks for a good life. A high school graduate earns upwards of \$260,000 more in a lifetime than a non-graduate. Likewise, a well-educated workforce attracts world-class jobs, fueling the local economy. But in our community, the high school graduation rate hovers around 65%. United Way wants to change that, so we invest over \$5 million each year in local youth programs that are giving kids a real chance at success.

We start with early childhood education for preschoolers and kindergarteners, continue with tutoring and mentoring for grade-schoolers, and follow through with after-school programming, school-to-work and scholarship opportunities for high school students.

UNITED WAY EDUCATION OBJECTIVES:

Increase the Number of Children Who:	What United Way is Doing	Why
Enter school ready to succeed	Investing in early childhood education.	<p>Research shows that as much as half of school failure is due to gaps in school readiness before a child transitions to kindergarten. Today, more than one-third of kindergarteners do not have the basic skills they need to succeed in school.</p> <p>United Way result: 66% of children in United Way early childhood programs show improvement in literacy skills.</p>
Read proficiently by 4th grade	Mentoring and tutoring programs.	<p>Until 3rd grade, children are learning to read. After 4th grade, they're reading to learn. By 4th grade, a child's grades and absenteeism can predict with 90% accuracy whether he or she will graduate from high school on time.</p> <p>United Way result: 91% of children in United Way youth programs say they try harder to do their best in school.</p>
Graduate from high school on time.	Quality after-school programs.	<p>Today's young Americans are less likely to earn diplomas than their parents, a distinction not shared by any other industrialized country. Researchers cite engaging in risky behaviors as a primary warning sign for dropping out, equally important as academic performance and attendance.</p> <p>United Way result: 88% of teens in United Way youth programs are able to say "no" to friends if asked to use alcohol and/or other drugs.</p>
Are prepared for success in college, work and life.	Scholarship opportunities, leadership development and career exploration to help our young people build a lifetime of success – and break the cycle of poverty.	<p>Kids who learn more, earn more. Nearly half of individuals living in poverty are without a high school diploma. A student with an Associates degree will earn \$400,000 more and an individual with a bachelor's degree will earn nearly three times more.</p> <p>United Way result: 87% of kids in youth development programs have goals and plans for the future.</p>

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