WHY IT’S IMPORTANT

Your commitment to helping students be successful is an important one. Our community continues to struggle with the basics of helping all kids get the education they need and deserve. These are the primary indicators that drive United Way investments:

• **Low graduation rates.** While the data has been criticized for inaccuracies, Washington state ranks **44th in graduation rates**—just 79.4% of students are graduating on time. This rate is even lower for students of color. The impact on our community is long-term:
  • **Low earning potential.** People without a high school education have low earning potential. The median wage is roughly **$27K** per year—just over the federal poverty level for a family of four.
  • **Higher unemployment rate.** The unemployment rate for Americans with less than a high school diploma is **5.7%**, the highest of any of the educational categories.
  • **Unsustainable workforce.** When people aren’t graduating, Washington companies miss out on a hirable workforce. Businesses bear the cost of recruiting outside talent.

• **Preparation gap in kindergarten readiness.** The most recent data shows that just 56% of kids were ready for the classroom on the first day of kindergarten. Nearly 2 out of 3 low-income kids start kindergarten behind their more affluent peers, and there are larger, more inequitable preparation gaps between kids of color and their white peers. The early years of a child’s development are crucial, and early education sets kids up for long-term learning success.

• **High number of disconnected youth.** We have more than **14,000 young people** in King County who have not completed—and are not in—school and are not working. This high number represents lost potential for our community and long-term costs.

PROGRESS MADE THIS YEAR

More families served through ParentChild+

ParentChild+ (formerly Parent-Child Home Program) continues to be our primary strategy to close the preparation gap in kindergarten readiness—and impact graduation rates long-term. Completion rates for the two year program average 82% and 1,300 families are being served each year. Children who complete the program are more ready to learn on day one of preschool and kindergarten, and data shows us that these **positive results** are still with them into the third grade.

This year we expanded the program to serve kids who are not at home with a parent during the day, but instead in small, family child care programs. Family child care providers work long hours for little pay and often have limited access to quality training and professional development opportunities.

This new application of ParentChild+ (called the ParentChild+ Family Child Care model) is just coming out of the pilot phase and increases the knowledge and skills of family child care providers. Using the same strategies that are so successful in the home visiting model, early learning specialists work one-on-one with providers to support school readiness and family engagement for all the children in their care.
Significant system improvements in helping young people getting back on track:
With so many young people in our community not in school and with no viable job prospects, Reconnecting Youth is key to helping young people finish their education—and success rates continue to soar. We’re now serving youth at 15 sites around the county, and last year nearly 900 young people completed their high school credential. Because of donor investments, these are the types of wins we’re seeing:

- Scale. The program has grown in terms of the Open Doors dollars being drawn down ($7.8M in the region). Last year, more than 3,500 youth were served.
- Access. There are 29 partners serving young people across the county—and they’re using culturally relevant outreach methods.
- Increased Coordination. Providers are all tracking—and sharing—data to improve their results.

WHAT WE’VE LEARNED

Kindergarten readiness rates have plateaued. After a steady rise in kindergarten readiness rates, they have plateaued a bit this year at 56%. While rates for the general population have been improving, kids of color have been improving at slower rates—and that is where donor investments have been focused. The team saw a particular need for families from Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo and West African countries and, as a result, has added these ParentChild+ providers: Iraqi Community Center of WA, Horn of Africa Services, the West African Community Council and Congolese Integration Network. We continue to focus donor investments in South King County and South Seattle where many young families continue to struggle when their children start school.

Organizations haven’t been equipped to serve children who are homeless. Last year’s Point-in-Time Count showed that an estimated 763 families with children were homeless. It has become clear that the two types of service providers—homelessness and early childhood organizations—aren’t always talking to each other. Your investment allowed for a first-ever summit last winter. Sessions focused on helping homelessness and early education providers learn and share best practices about generational trauma faced by urban Native communities, and to identify culturally relevant programming and practices at the intersection of family homelessness and early learning. The result has been better understanding of how culture fits into early education and more continuity in service to children of color experiencing the trauma of homelessness.

Case management isn’t being fully funded. In 2017, the Washington state legislature moved to strengthen state funding for basic education: $7,486 per student for the 2018/19 school year. This increase in funding (14% over the prior year) goes directly to school districts. What we’ve learned through the expansion of the program is that when support services like case management are offered through community based nonprofits, the results are much better. Our continued direct funding to these nonprofits is critical to support youth with services like case management that help them complete their education.

ParentChild+ Service Providers

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<tr>
<th>Atlantic Street Center</th>
<th>Encompass</th>
<th>Southeast Youth and Family Services</th>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Home Society of Washington</td>
<td>Horn of Africa Services</td>
<td>Southwest Youth and Family Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese Information and Service Center</td>
<td>InterCultural Children and Families Services</td>
<td>Voices of Tomorrow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congolese Integration Network</td>
<td>Iraqi Community Center of WA</td>
<td>West African Community Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denise Louie Education Center</td>
<td>Kindering</td>
<td>YWCA</td>
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<td>El Centro de la Raza</td>
<td>Neighborhood House</td>
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This sort of focus allows your dollars to reach even more vulnerable children and have an impact on a greater number of families.
WE APPRECIATE YOUR CONFIDENCE IN UNITED WAY

United Way has a leadership role in the community in both early learning and disconnected youth.

**Scale.** We have a proven track record of taking programs to scale. We pilot them—find out what’s working, what’s not—and take the most promising work (like ParentChild+ and Reconnecting Youth) to scale.

Our partner selection uses a racial equity lens. We work closely with the communities that we serve—we know, for example, that organizations run by people of color are more effective serving people of color. We vet potential grantees, invest in high-performing programs, hold agencies accountable for results, evaluate progress and scale investments to maximize results where there is proven impact.

**Effective.** In early learning, we’re trusted partners with both the City of Seattle and King County. We lead a group of funders in making joint funding decisions, which streamlines the application process for agencies, saving them time and effort.

**Leverage.** We’re actively educating and advocating for young people. We’re currently educating decision-makers involved in distribution of funds from the City of Seattle’s Sweetened Beverage Tax.

WE COULD NOT DO IT WITHOUT YOU

It is no stretch to say that without your support, our community would not be as strong:

**Graduation rates would continue to be low.** With your help, we’re positioned to reduce this number dramatically.

**Racial disparities would be deeper.** Your United Way investment is targeted toward offsetting these imbalances. Every investment we make is with a racial equity lens. Our program team applies the vigor necessary—asking the question “will these dollars offset the inequities in our community?”

**More low-income kids would start school behind their peers.** Your donation has made it possible to bring this program to scale. While there are wait lists in some neighborhoods, we’re serving the most isolated families and working to grow the program even further.

**Thank you for your commitment to this important work!**