

# STRONG & SECURE FAMILIES



United Way of Elgin

**Strong families are the cornerstone of a vibrant community. When families are safe, secure, and self-sufficient, they are able to be active and engaged members of the community.** The reality is, as many as one-third of working Americans do not earn enough money to meet their basic needs. Wages have not kept pace with the rising cost of housing, health care, childcare, and education. Many families are walking a financial tightrope, living paycheck-to-paycheck and unable to save for college, a home, or retirement. Just one unanticipated expense – a car breakdown, an uninsured illness, a cutback in work hours – can lead to a crisis.

## OUR STRONG & SECURE FAMILIES GOAL IS:

- To empower families to achieve their full potential

United Way of Elgin is working with its partner agencies and through its initiatives to address the immediate needs of individuals and families and connect them to resources and educational tools that promote long-term stability.

**COMMUNITY INVESTMENT: \$245,000**

## OUR PARTNERS AND INITIATIVES:

- Association for Individual Development
- \*Center for Economic Progress
- Community Crisis Center
- Ecker Center for Mental Health
- Family Service Association of Greater Elgin
- \*FamilyWize
- Food for Greater Elgin
- Greater Elgin Family Care Center
- \*Kane County Guide to Community Services
- \*Making Kane County Fit for Kids
- Northern Illinois Food Bank
- PADS of Elgin
- Senior Services Associates
- The Literacy Connection
- Well Child Center

*\*Denotes United Way Initiative. Visit our website, [www.uwelgin.org/ourwork](http://www.uwelgin.org/ourwork) for more information about our partners.*

# RESULTS: THIS IS WHAT GIFTS ACHIEVED LAST YEAR

**2,999,332 MEALS** were provided through area food pantries and shelters

**124 VICTIMS** of domestic violence or abuse and their children received safe shelter and counseling

**516 INDIVIDUALS** received 16,161 nights of shelter; 70% were able to secure stable housing

**5,930 DENTAL VISITS** were provided to children and adults for preventative and restorative care

**\$2.34 MILLION** in tax refunds were received by Elgin families and individuals

**312 INDIVIDUALS** developed the skills needed for employment; 62% maintained employment throughout the year

**1,168 INDIVIDUALS** received mental health therapy services; 85% showed sustained improvements for one year

**6,195 BACKPACKS** filled with nutritious food were distributed weekly to hungry children during both the school year and summer months

# UNITED WE FIGHT,

# UNITED WE WIN



**UNITED WAY OF ELGIN** envisions a community where we work together so that all individuals and families achieve a better quality of life through education, financial stability and good health. This vision for the Elgin, South Elgin, Hampshire, Burlington and Pingree Grove communities imagines a world that fosters hope and opportunity for everyone:

- Where all children receive a **quality education** that offers a pathway to **improved education** and **career opportunities**
- Where the cycle of poverty and financial dependence ends, and **productive livelihoods begin** for even the most disadvantaged
- Where everyone accesses effective health care that **improves their quality of life**

## TO DO THIS WE WILL:

- Galvanize and **connect all sectors of the community** to create long-term social change that produces healthy, well-educated, and financially stable individuals and families.
- Unite our community to **address challenging issues** and bring about long-term positive impact.
- **Raise and invest community funds** to create and support innovative programs and approaches to generate sustained impact in education, financial stability and health.



United Way of Elgin

## THE BEST RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT

When you choose United Way as your partner in giving, you choose the best way to achieve results and make a difference right here in our area. Your gift does more than just help people who are in urgent need right now – you also support meaningful, lasting change that affects the entire community.

## YOUR INVESTMENT DELIVERS:



**Accountability.** The investment of your hard-earned dollars is overseen by a volunteer board that ensures the strictest accountability, fiscal responsibility, and careful use of your donation.



**Connection.** Through United Way, your investment connects businesses, volunteers, community leaders, and non-profit organizations, multiplying impact. Together, we can accomplish more than any one person, group or organization.



**Expertise.** Our volunteers are issue-experts who identify the most pressing needs and most effective solutions for making our community a brighter place. We also draw on the knowledge and resources of United Way Worldwide, the largest private non-profit in the world.



**Efficiency.** United Way effectively leverages private donations in order to finance innovative programs and initiatives that profoundly affect communities. Your investment supports dozens of programs that must show measurable outcomes to receive funding.



**Results.** Your gift makes a long-term impact on our community. United Way goes beyond quick fixes to create measurable change that lasts.

# EDUCATION

Learning begins at birth, but many parents do not realize their critical role as their children's first teacher. Early learning can take many forms, from parental interaction to childcare programs to formal preschool education. These early learning experiences are important, as they can shape a child's entire academic future. When children start kindergarten ready to learn and equipped with the necessary language and literacy skills they are more likely to be reading at grade level in third grade and more likely to graduate high school on time with a plan for college or career training.

In Elgin, 69% of incoming non-English speaking kindergarteners and 50% of incoming English speaking kindergarteners arrive below the School District U-46 Literacy Benchmark. One third of these students cannot identify a single letter of the alphabet. Additionally, the school district only has capacity for about 28% of Elgin's preschool-aged children; the rest are left paying preschool tuition at other centers. With 74% of Elgin's preschoolers living in low-income households, those who cannot attend the district's programs are likely not attending any preschool program.

## OUR EDUCATION GOALS ARE:

- To provide children with the core skills to succeed in school and ensure a healthy start
- To build literacy skills to ensure all students are reading at grade level by the end of 3rd Grade
- To provide opportunities for college and career readiness to ensure a community of engaged and successful adults

United Way of Elgin is working with its partner agencies and through our initiatives to make sure children enter schools with the skills they need to succeed in school and in life.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT: **\$229,000**

## OUR PARTNERS AND INITIATIVES:

- \*Alignment Collaborative for Education
- Boys and Girls Club of Elgin
- \*Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Easter Seals DuPage & Fox Valley Region
- \*Elgin Partnership for Early Learning
- \*Getting Ready for Kindergarten Calendar
- Girls Scout of Northern Illinois
- One Hope United: Elgin Child & Family Resource Center
- \*Reading Buddies
- Youth Leadership Academy
- YWCA Elgin

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# RESULTS: THIS IS WHAT GIFTS ACHIEVED LAST YEAR

**13 READING BUDDIES** provided more than 200 volunteer hours reading to preschool children



**99% OF CHILDREN** who participated in a family literacy program with their parents achieved age-appropriate English language skills to prepare them for kindergarten

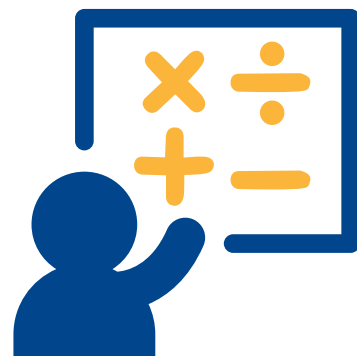


**11,000 FAMILIES** with preschoolers received Getting Ready for Kindergarten calendars

**3,747 CHILDREN** received a free book each month from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library for a total of 34,297 books

**66 THIRD-GRADE STUDENTS** received tutoring to help raise their reading and math scores. 83% increased their proficiency in reading in one school year. 97% increased their proficiency in math.

**352 YOUTH** participated in an after-school program that helped them maintain or improve their grades. 90% showed improved academic performance at school



**531 CHILDREN** received quality childcare, preschool and early intervention services; 96% reached age-appropriate developmental milestones



# INITIATIVES



**THE ELGIN PARTNERSHIP FOR EARLY LEARNING (EPEL)** formed as a community collaborative to ensure the healthy growth and optimal development of young children.

Research shows that children who have access to high-quality experiences ( home, child care, preschools, home visiting, library, museums, community events, etc.) from birth to five enter school socially, emotionally, and academically prepared to succeed in kindergarten and in life.

As a collaborative effort, EPEL connects partners and families to community resources to increase access to high quality early learning experiences and promotes positive child/adult interactions. Through these efforts, EPEL aims to increase the number of children ready for learning in kindergarten, leading to a new generation of socially competent and excited learners.

United Way of Elgin serves on the Executive Committee of Elgin Partnership for Early Learning.

For more information visit: <http://www.elginpartnership.org/>.

## THE ALIGNMENT COLLABORATIVE FOR EDUCATION

(ACE) is a framework for organizing and aligning community organizations and resources in support of public schools. With increased coordination, ACE changes how we work together and transforms the ways in which the community engages with the school districts.

### The key principles of the alignment model include:

- The work is organized around the priorities of School District U-46 and community partners are invited to participate in coordinated activities that support the school district's strategic plan.
- The work is generational. It requires a long-term commitment.
- The work is focused on students who need the most support in order to be successful.
- Coordination of the community and its resources is highly structured and accountable for results.

A Governing Board of Directors sets the agenda for ACE. They are the highest level of leadership for the collaboration. An Operating Board makes the day-to-day decisions and is action-oriented. Three A-Teams focused around Early Childhood Development, Trauma-Informed Care, and Educational Pathways do tactical planning and implementation. These teams drive the process, carrying out innovative solutions to the identified issues.

United Way of Elgin serves on the Governing Board of ACE.

For more information, and to learn how you can get involved with ACE, visit [www.align4edu.org](http://www.align4edu.org).

