



Mile High United Way

SNAPSHOT MARCH 2021



MILE HIGH UNITED WAY UNITED FOR FAMILIES

Never has the need for high quality early childcare and education been more critical—and never has the work of United for Families been more impactful than during this year for the pandemic. Because of you, Mile High United Way has been there for families and children when we were needed the most.

[United for Families](#) focuses on creating and sustaining high quality early childhood care and education opportunities in neighborhoods that have been traditionally under-resourced and under-supported.

Because of you, beginning in the Globeville and Elyria Swansea, SE Thornton, Aurora, and Longmont areas, we are:

- Increasing access to high-quality, affordable early childhood education by delivering programs that fill the void
- Removing barriers to accessing critical services for young children and their families
- Investing in training programs for parents and caregivers to support children's school readiness
- Scaling and strengthening needed innovative programming
- Impacting systemic change through policy and research

LAUNCHING THE FIRST MOBILE PRESCHOOL



Working with Right On Mobile Education (ROME) we brought the first-ever mobile preschool to the City and County of Denver. This fully-renovated airport shuttle turned classroom-on-wheels is providing access to early childhood education for families in Globeville and Elyria-Swansea.

Mile High United Way and ROME worked collaboratively with neighborhood parents to bring this initiative to life, so that children in these communities can access quality early learning opportunities and enter kindergarten ready to thrive. During each two and half hour session, the children practice drawing and identifying letters, shapes, and numbers as well as engage in arts and crafts (sensory activities) and circle time for reading. [Learn more.](#)



MILE HIGH UNITED WAY ADVANCES GROUNDBREAKING EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION POLICIES

We were proud to support **Proposition EE** educating the public about the need for funding for universal pre-K in Colorado. This measure was up for vote in the 2020 fall election and we played an active role in communicating with donors, stakeholders, and educating the public about the opportunity it presents for universal pre-K in Colorado.

BECAUSE OF YOU

New early education solutions are being established, filling important voids and moving the needle on school readiness for young children.

140

Licensed preschool spots, increased from 96 in 2019

149

Families now have access to programming that supports both children and parents

218%

Increase in higher-quality caregiving options from trained providers from 2019

\$97,300

Assistance for rent, food, and other basic needs provided to over 100 families as part of an on-going strategy

CHANGING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION LANDSCAPE WITH EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING

After a rigorous statewide selection process, Mile High United Way was chosen to launch the tenth Home Instructions for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) site in the state of Colorado. HIPPY is an internationally-recognized program that supports parents and their young children to ensure they have the tools to enter kindergarten ready to learn and thrive.

This evidence-based program delivers proven early learning curriculum through 30 weekly home visits to 30 families with children ages two to five. These one-on-one interactions between a trained home visitor and family have 40 years of rigorous research that demonstrate the program's effectiveness, especially those families in under-resourced communities. The sessions are currently being held virtually in neighborhoods in Aurora where 87% of children are on free and reduced lunch and, on average, only 13.6% of elementary school children are reading at grade level according to 2019 Colorado Measures of Academic Success.



"When I started I thought I can do the same thing for other moms and empower them and tell them, yes you can do it, you can go back to school and you can do whatever you want. Now I feel I have the ability to pass that confidence to others."

CATALINA GONSALES, MILE HIGH UNITED WAY COMMUNITY ADVOCATE SUPERVISOR AND HIPPY COORDINATOR

STABILIZING THE CHILDCARE SECTOR DURING THE PANDEMIC



Like so many small businesses, childcare centers face enormous challenges to stay afloat during the COVID-19 pandemic. Without emergency financial support, 60% of childcare providers said they would have gone out of business. To meet this critical need, and to ensure the survival of our childcare

providers, a public-private partnership effort called **Keep the Lights On** was established to provide:

- 1) Health and safety supplies
- 2) Direct financial investment in licensed family childcare homes, centers, and school-age programs statewide.

Together, with your support and the support of our partners, we provided **\$230,000 in much needed supplies to 1,200 childcare providers across Colorado in June 2020.**

This included:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • 10,800 gallons of disinfectant soap | • 240,000 pairs of gloves |
| • 2,400 gallons of bleach | • 33,000 masks/facial coverings |
| • 57,600 rolls of toilet paper | • 36,000 rolls of paper towels |

In addition, a total of **\$1.5 million in grants was awarded to family childcare homes and childcare centers across our state to cover COVID-related costs to help providers remain open.**

PROVIDING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AT CRITICAL TIMES



Because of you, we were able to provide families with at-home learning kits that allowed children to immerse themselves in the joy of learning when engaging in early childhood education was made difficult for many families by the pandemic. By distributing over 3,000 at-home learning kits, you helped families build important school readiness skills at home to help give children a strong start. The kits included age-appropriate books, games, arts and crafts, and supplies like diapers and essentials to support a healthy bedtime routine. We also partnered with the Denver Public Library to deliver **1,500 early learning books to families**, in order to build important school readiness skills at home.

Additionally, through our Community Advocates, we provided \$97,300 in direct client assistance via individualized, wraparound support to families, ensuring basic needs were met so they had one less worry weighing on their shoulders during the pandemic.

INVESTING IN INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

Because of you, we invested in and strengthened innovative childcare programs, including La Piñata del Aprendizaje. La Piñata del Aprendizaje is a two-generation, “play and learn” program that provides parents and caregivers with the tools they need to support their child’s development and school readiness. In this past year, 20 parents and 25 children have been served through this program, which consists of 35 weekly, two-hour sessions that create an enriching and stimulating environment for children.

By supporting local community programs, like La Piñata del Aprendizaje, we are helping to fill a critical gap in neighborhoods where there are currently no licensed infant or toddler childcare slots available.

“Above all, one of the ways we feel [Mile High United Way] makes this relationship is the empathy for the community...They really see the needs of the neighborhood, in this community, which many times doesn’t reach the ears of others.”

*GUADALUPE, CO-FOUNDER,
LA PIÑATA DEL APRENDIZAJE*



THANK YOU for your investment in Mile High United Way and in our United for Families program. You truly are changing lives and ensuring that more children in our community are having quality early learning experiences, so they can enter school ready to thrive.

Learn more and continue your investment at unitedwaydenver.org.