



UNITED FOR FAMILIES IMPACT REPORT FY20-21

[Mile High United Way's United for Families](#) focuses on high-need areas and resources to ensure all children in our community have access to high-quality early childhood care and education. **THANK YOU for your generous investment in the Mile High United Way United for Families initiative.** Because of you, we were able to serve families across the metro area through our programs and initiatives. Through this impact report, we hope you see the lives changed and the tangible impact you have made on our community this year.

Our Community Challenge

- 90% of brain development happens in the first few years of life, laying the foundation for future learning and success.¹
- Half of Coloradans live in a childcare desert where there are more than three children for each available slot, and children of color are less likely to be enrolled in preschool than their white peers.²

Your Impact at a Glance

498 CHILDREN, parents, and caregivers served across four target neighborhoods

2,774 CHILDREN impacted by COVID relief funding received by 233 childcare providers

900 HIPPY home visits conducted for 68 parents

OVER 3,000 books distributed to partners and families

¹ <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/brain-architecture/>

² Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, pooled 2007–2009 to 2016–2018 one-year American Community Survey

Mile High United Way Launches Program to Promote School Readiness at Home



This past year, we proudly launched the tenth Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program in the state of Colorado. HIPPY empowers parents to support their child's early education. Since its inception, it has doubled in size, allowing us to remove families from our waitlist.

The heart of our HIPPY program comes from our trained and trusted HIPPY home visitors. Our home visitors meet with families weekly to deliver an evidence-based school readiness curriculum that ensures our youngest learners can enter kindergarten ready to thrive.

We piloted the program with 30 families in Aurora, targeting the neighborhood surrounding Lansing Elementary School. In June 2021, we were thrilled to celebrate [our first-ever graduation ceremony](#) for HIPPY students and their parents.

“This is our inaugural year of HIPPY. We launched this program during the pandemic, and I could not be prouder of this United for Families team who did the impossible. [Mile High United Way’s home visitors] launched this program, got all the families set up with their laptops, and made sure that we were actually assessing how children were progressing on their own school readiness.”

– Molly Yost, Senior Director, United for Families, Mile High United Way

Stabilizing the Childcare Sector During the Pandemic

COVID-19 shined a spotlight on the fragility of the early care and education sector. Prior to the pandemic, childcare providers – the vast majority being women and people of color – operated on razor-thin margins to meet fixed costs like paying staff, rent, mortgage, and utilities. Those challenges intensified. 73% of programs indicated that they have or will engage in layoffs and other cost-saving measures, or worse, permanently close their doors. Mile High United Way established Keep the Lights On – a public-private partnership to help ensure the survival of this critical sector. With our partners, you helped us support 125 licensed childcare providers and 108 Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers statewide, bringing Mile High United Way’s childcare relief effort total to **over \$1 million in financial assistance and PPE distribution.**



Thank you to our partners: The Women’s Foundation of Colorado, Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance, Healthy Child Care Colorado, Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC), Rose Community Foundation, Denver Office of Children’s Affairs, Colorado Department of Human Services, Daniels Fund, Gary Community Investments, Buell Foundation, Gates Family Foundation, Caring for Colorado Foundation, Colorado Health Foundation, and Wend Collective.



“The Mile High United Way team brought this collaborative effort to life through fundraising efforts, infrastructure support, data and evaluation analysis, coordination, and facilitation. We are honored to be a member of this collaborative effort and are grateful that you stepped up in such a big way to support the early care and education sector.”
– The Healthy Child Care Colorado team

Applying Our Data and Research to Improve Colorado’s Childcare System



Though often overlooked, a vast network of family members, friends, and neighbors devote their time and passion to providing childcare for millions of families. This form of care – commonly referred to as Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregiving – is one on which more than half of the young children in Colorado depend.

This year, Mile High United Way [conducted a research study](#), in partnership with the University of Denver’s Butler Institute for Families at the Graduate School of Social Work and Early Milestones Colorado, to better understand the impacts of the pandemic on FFN caregiving and how we can better support providers and families in our community.

Our findings highlight the impact the pandemic had on Family, Friend, and Neighbor care providers and caregiving:

58% OF PROVIDERS surveyed indicated their household income has decreased since the pandemic began. We found this decrease to be more drastic for Hispanic or Latina providers.

40% DECREASE in the overall number of children cared for in an average day.

36% OF PROVIDERS surveyed reported an increase in caregiving expenses.