



Education

1. Education is the cornerstone of individual and community success. Without quality early learning opportunities, many children will lack basic skills and will enter kindergarten unprepared for school challenges. During their school years, children need to build on their early foundation. This foundation is critical in order to graduate from high school and go on to achieve financial stability as adults. Children in our community are still dealing with setbacks they encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic. From early learning all the way through high school graduation, things look different, but United Way funded partners are working diligently to give kids the tools and hope they need to be successful. By donating to the United Way Impact Fund, you are helping support numerous early learning centers, after-school programs and community learning centers that help provide kids with an additional educational experience to help build a foundation that will better their lives.

2. The first three years of a child's life, when the human brain develops more rapidly than any other subsequent period, is a time of enormous social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. In fact, research indicates that nearly 90 percent of brain growth occurs during these early years. The pace of this growth depends on whether the child's eagerness to learn is stimulated by his or her environment. Workforce issues continue to impact early learning centers for these young learners. These funded programs focus their efforts on early education and preparing children to enter school ready to learn:

- CEDARS Youth Services – Early Childhood Development Center
- Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties – Early Headstart and Headstart
- Lincoln Literacy – Family Literacy Activities for Immigrants and Refugees
- Malone Community Center – Early Education Program
- Northeast Family Center – Parents as Partners
- Willard Community Center – Preschool Program

By donating to the United Way Impact Fund, you help support these programs so they can continue to better the education of children throughout our community.

3. Student academic motivation and engagement tends to decline during middle school years as students begin developing socially, and start to value independence and question authority. This can potentially expose them to negative social influences. At the same time, parent engagement with schools also tends to decline. Maintaining regular attendance is a critical factor related to academic success and graduation. Regular attendance at school is perhaps the strongest indicator of academic performance. United Way funded partners continue to focus on building social, emotional and academic skills as well as providing supportive environments to ensure perseverance and continued success into the high school years:

- The Arc of Lincoln – Youth Programming
- Big Brothers Big Sisters Lincoln – Mentoring Program CEDARS Youth Services – Community Learning Centers

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Lincoln/Lancaster County – After-School Program
- City Impact – Impact Reading Center
- Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska – Outreach Program
- Lighthouse – After-School Mentoring and Education Program
- Lincoln Literacy – Family Literacy Activities for Immigrants and Refugees
- LUX Center for the Arts – After-School Enrichment
- Malone Community Center – Out of School Program
- The Salvation Army – Lincoln – After-School/Fine Arts Academy Program
- TeamMates Mentoring Program of Lincoln

By donating to the United Way Impact Fund, you are helping support these agencies so that they can continue to provide a place for kids to stay engaged and continue building their educational skills outside of regular school hours.