

STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY



Kahlia, who's been going to tutoring since first grade, says she looks forward to each session.

EDUCATION: Removing Barriers To Learning

Kahlia struggled in school from an early age. By first grade, the Franklin student was behind in reading, writing and math. That was when Kahlia's mom reached out to one of United Way's education partners (Gentry's Educational Foundation). Through this after-school tutoring program, elementary students spend an hour to an hour-and-a-half working on homework or reviewing lessons with tutor-teachers. The little girl who struggled with reading and math is now "advanced" in both reading **and** math, according to recent standardized test scores, and her grades have skyrocketed. Most importantly, though, Kahlia says she's learned to believe in herself, thanks to her tutor-teacher. "If someone says, 'Oh, this is so hard; I can't do this or I can't do that,' she says, 'Yes, you can. You have to believe in yourself. I believe in you,'" says Kahlia. By instilling the skills needed to succeed in school **plus** self-confidence from an early age, the foundation is set for achieving success in school, work and life.

HEALTH: Supporting The Most Vulnerable

Payton was born weighing only 3 lbs. and spent several weeks in the NICU. When she came home, a United Way health partner (Nurses for Newborns) provided a visiting nurse to serve Payton and give support to her parents as they anxiously waited for her to gain weight and achieve important developmental milestones. Brooke, Payton's mom, says "I was a fear-filled mother and our nurse became a trusted friend, a voice of reason, and a support system. The first eight months of Payton's life would have been more difficult without this help." Today, Payton is a healthy 4-year-old who loves princesses and truly believes her Daddy is Prince Charming!



Adults achieved their goal of a high school equivalency and skills training to improve their employment and self-sufficiency.

INCOME: Reducing Burdens Of Financial Need

Adults without a high school diploma often have difficulty finding the kind of employment needed to maintain their self-sufficiency. Through one of United Way's financial stability partners (Begin Anew), adults can attain a high school equivalency degree and gain additional job skills that can create new employment opportunities and increase job security. One such client—a single mom—held a steady job for several years, but her advancement options were limited without a high school diploma. After she earned her high school equivalency degree, though, she was able to begin training as a healthcare technician through her employer. This new position represents a significant pay increase and the fulfillment of a longtime dream for her. When you create opportunities for workers to advance their careers, you create opportunities for families to thrive financially.