90% of a child’s brain development occurs before age 5

Kate noticed her son Teddy wasn’t speaking like he should be around his second birthday. With support from her pediatrician she called Developmental Services Center, a United Way partner, and Teddy was enrolled in speech services. His mom saw a big improvement in his skills.

After his third birthday, Teddy was able to enroll in his school district’s Special Education Program.

“I just felt a flood of relief and hope that he would be in a program that gave him the boost that he needed to have a good education,” she said.

A United Way study found 33% of local kindergarteners weren’t prepared for the first day of school.

The early years are critical - kids who are prepared for kindergarten are more likely to graduate from high school.

Cate Stallmeyer-Gerard, local educator, sees the importance of early intervention and school readiness programs every day. “The potential impact for the United Way Kindergarten Readiness initiative is that all kindergarteners enter on a level playing field. They have all had experiences talking, reading and playing and engaging in social activities that are going to set them up to be successful”.

United Way fights for all kids to have an equitable start in school through our various Kindergarten Readiness initiatives:

- 7,000 Getting Ready for Kindergarten calendars provided free to local families
- CU Cradle 2 Career Anchor entity
- 1,100 Getting Ready for Kindergarten Kits distributed to local families
- $455,104 granted to 10 local programs working to improve education

By supporting United Way, you are helping local children like Teddy prepare for school and life.

This is your IMPACT.