

UNITED WAY'S EDUCATION STRATEGY: CHILDHOOD SUCCESS



The goals of United Way's Childhood Success strategy are to ensure that:

- All families are strong , stable, and supported from the start
- Children enter school ready to succeed
- Students are successful in elementary school, are prepared for middle school, and graduate high school

Research shows that children who enter school ready to learn are more likely to achieve early reading proficiency by third grade, and graduate high school on time.

*Students who graduate high school are more likely to find a job that pays a livable wage, live healthier lives, stay out of the **criminal** justice system and have children who also graduate high school on time.*

Our strategy for Childhood Success includes:

- **Family Engagement:** Equipping families with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to support child development and school success (e.g., Free Kindergarten Readiness Calendars, training on how to turn everyday moments into learning opportunities, parenting classes, informed playtime).
- **Effective Care and Education:** Improving access to learning environments to engage and support children and students (e.g., early learning programs, before and after school programs, support for families with special needs).
- **Community Supports:** Providing support for at-risk children and their families (e.g., outlets for parenting or pregnant youth, support for troubled or homeless teens, healing for families experiencing trauma)

We tailor solutions to address the particular needs and aspirations of Whatcom County families.

Bellingham Childcare and Learning Center (BCLC)

Affordable Childcare: Provides affordable, high quality childcare for families who are in transition or working toward economic self-sufficiency. Children are provided with healthy meals and early learning opportunities.

Bellingham Public Schools Foundation

GRADS: Instruction and support for pregnant & parenting teens, and certified childcare for their infants and toddlers. The program is designed to help pregnant teens/young parents stay in high school & work toward graduation. Services help students to work toward a healthy pregnancy, learn & apply positive parenting skills, explore career & work options, set goals toward balancing work & family, and avoid repeat pregnancies

Boys & Girls Clubs of Whatcom County

Academic Success: Extends learning beyond the school day with a variety of small group, one-to-one, and independent enrichment opportunities. The program (composed of iStride Academy, Power Hour, Summer Brain Gain, and STEM) aligns with K-12 common core standards, helps students learn effective study skills, time management and organization habits, and reinforces skills learned in school.

Home Port Learning Center

Home Port Learning Program: Alternative school for at risk youth. Develops an education for each student following initial academic skill level assessment. Students have the opportunity to learn vocational woodworking skills while completing hands-on service projects including work on a 26' longboat built by the students that also serves as a floating classroom.

Lydia Place

Parent Support Program: Focuses on strengthening the parent-child relationship, providing parent coaching and hands-on tools, providing developmental screenings, and tailoring resources such as referring families to a licensed child therapist for assessment/intervention when needed. The objective is to increase positive childhood outcomes & ultimately a reduction in the cycle of poverty.

Northwest Youth Services

Positive Adolescent Development (PAD): Provides safe temporary housing for runaway, homeless, or at-risk youth age 13-17. 24-hour support service is provided. Youth work with Case Managers to create a Master Service Plan for goal setting and to plan for obtaining stable housing.

Rebound of Whatcom County

Roots Program: Support for preschool through middle school children who have experienced trauma and are dealing with behavioral/emotional issues. Children learn positive coping skills, anger management, self-awareness techniques, and communication skills. The Parenting Enrichment curriculum helps parents/caregivers develop family building skills.

Whatcom Center for Early Learning

Birth to Three Program: *Addresses the needs of children assessed with at least a 25% delay in at least one area of development, and their families, utilizing Primary Coaching Method. Specialists work in the child's home or community setting with caregivers present, attending to individual needs of the child & specific goals the family has set for their child. Family Resources Coordinators guide families through eligibility, develop a service plan, set goals, connect families with community services and help support transition to services.*

Whatcom Early Learning Alliance (WELA)

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn: *A group class model for kindergarten readiness where parents and caregivers learn alongside children. The intention is to offer children a high-quality early learning experience, similar to preschool, while caregivers get to learn and practice parenting skills. Classes are free to participants and offered on a drop-in basis.*

Whatcom Family YMCA

Early Learning: *Operates two state-licensed early learning centers for 200 children age 1 month to 5 years old, offering progressive support development on a cognitive, social, and emotional level throughout the first 5 years of life. Kindergarten readiness is achieved through hands on learning, peer interaction, literacy readiness activities, with healthy snacks & meals.*

WWU Foundation/Woodring College/Bellingham Public Schools

Closing the Opportunity Gap through Free Extended Day Programming: *Provides free, high-quality afterschool enrichment activities three afternoons a week at two BPS Title I elementary schools: Alderwood and Cordata. The goal is to create opportunities for children & families in our community who have the most limited access to enrichment programs, giving them the chance to expand their learning, become more connected to school, and to explore their interests, skills, and talents.*