

GIVING OPPORTUNITY *How You Can Help*

READINGPALS

Opening children's minds to the wonders of reading, which fosters lifelong learning

Nearly one third of Florida's third graders attending public school cannot read at grade level. And, sadly, those children are four times more likely to drop out of high school.

Right here in Broward County many elementary school children struggle daily with reading. At home many children have parents who work, some multiple jobs, so there is very little time for reading. In addition, there might be language barriers, no access to books in the home and the parents might have their own reading challenges. In an effort to provide additional support to the schools, parents and children, United Way of Broward County implemented ReadingPals.

Why ReadingPals?

In an effort to ensure more children are reading at grade level by the end of 3rd grade, United Way of Broward County introduced an early literacy initiative called ReadingPals. Volunteer "reading pals" are screened, trained and deployed into the schools for one hour a week for 25 weeks to read to a child. In addition, each student receives 17 books to take home.

During each visit with a student, the ReadingPal volunteer practices oral reading, meaningful book content discussion, simple reading instruction and confidence-building motivation. To help support the volunteer and the student a guide is provided with each book. A parent guide is also sent to the parents in an effort to reinforce these new concepts in the home.

Currently, the ReadingPals program is in 21 schools and serves 330 students. Last year, volunteers donated more than 7,000 hours of instruction and children received 10,000 free books to take home.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I have a 1st grade 'reading pal' and each week I am amazed at her excitement and perseverance. Her reading and confidence have considerably improved since the beginning of the school year.

When I signed up to volunteer, I was determined, but not convinced I could make the time commitment. I quickly realized how grateful I was to have this meaningful experience each week.

The time I spend with her reminds me how special it is to help others – and how we both benefit from our time together. The ReadingPals program has helped me personally remember what is important in life."

– JENNIFER, "READING PAL"

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How We Are Changing Lives

The success of the ReadingPals program has been demonstrated in the significant gains the students obtained.

- Children with a "reading pal" increased their scores significantly in print knowledge, phonological awareness, math and oral language
- In a teacher survey, 100% believed ReadingPals had a direct correlation to the improvement of the students reading capacity
- In a sample of 127 children, reading proficiency was increased 160%. Median scores also increased eight levels

How You Can Help

United Way of Broward County's ReadingPals program is currently offered in only 21 schools. The need is great since the Broward County Schools system has 138 elementary schools in the district. More dollars are needed to expand the program throughout Broward County and to ensure every child has a chance.

You can help expand the ReadingPals program across Broward.

Your contribution will help United Way of Broward County reach its goal of ensuring every child is reading at grade level by the end of the school year.

- \$1,000 Provides materials and supplies for one volunteer
- \$750 Provides free books for an entire first grade class
- \$500 Sponsors two family literacy events
- \$365 Provides a year curriculum for three students plus three summer reading kits
- \$100 Supplies a year curriculum for one student
- \$75 Provides three summer reading kits

Join others in supporting ReadingPals:

Carol and Barney Barnett
 The A.D. Henderson Foundation
 The Children's Movement of Florida
 Broward County Public Schools
 United Way of Broward County's Women United
 Early Learning Coalition of Broward County
 Children's Services Council
 Local Libraries

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

United Way of Broward County fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in our community.

Health: Ensuring people have the opportunity to achieve optimal health

Education: Helping people achieve their greatest potential through early learning and leadership programs

Financial Stability: Empowering people to earn, keep and grow assets