

Child & Youth Success

Children have a strong start and a strong foundation for success in school, work and life.

Greater Connections Newsletter I



Greetings! We periodically send newsletters to keep you informed of the latest “happenings” in one of the following community impact areas:

- I. Basic Needs
- II. Behavioral Health & Mental Well-Being
- III. Child & Youth Success
- IV. Senior Stability

The focus of this first newsletter is about Child & Youth Success. If you would like to automatically receive it through our eNews feed, please subscribe by going to www.greatergallatinunitedway.org/connect-us

Please enjoy!

Greater Gallatin United Way kidsLINK Afterschool Program Highlights

2018-2023 kidsLINK Impact Goals Outlined in Our 2018-2023 Strategic Plan

- I. Every student has a safe, nurturing, and engaging place to be out of school regardless of ability to pay
- II. Families experience improved financial stability
- III. Parents experience less stress as a result of their child participating in kidsLINK
- IV. Students discover a spark or passion for learning
- V. Parents are [ACES-informed](#) and are know how to access community resources

2018-19 Enrollment & Expansion

- Bozeman 2018-19 YTD Enrollment: 816 Families / 1,094 Children
- Belgrade 2018-19 YTD Enrollment: 290 Families / 366 Kids
- 2 NEW sites in Gallatin Gateway and Shields Valley: 31 kidsLINK Afterschool Program Sites

kidsLINK Kid’s Service Projects & Activities

- Saddle Peak students decorate and deliver “Adopt a Sox” STARS for Vets in honor of Veteran’s Day
- Ridge View students create fleece-tie blankets for homeless persons in honor of November “Homeless Youth Awareness Month”
- Gallatin Valley Farm To School deliver kale and carrots and brings fun and nutrition education to family nights



kidsLINK Volunteers

- 400+ families volunteered to provide snacks, host events, offer programming and help to raise money for the kidsLINK Afterschool Scholarship Fund.
- Volunteers are making a positive impact on grade-level-reading by volunteering to read with children in the program. We know that our entire community needs to be involved to improve early literacy and grade-level-reading rates. Reading must happen during out-of-school time - evenings, weekends and summer break to make a positive impact.
- 15 volunteers from First Interstate Bank provided fun learning activities focused on spending and saving money during kidsLINK October 8th PIR day. Check out VolunteerMT.org

kidsLINK Staff Professional Development

- [“Trauma Informed Care and Resiliency”](#) Training
- Monthly “Community of Practice” provides staff opportunity to connect, exchange ideas, and receive support and inspiration for programming
- [“Destination Imagination”](#) training provides the staff with great skill building activities including team-work, critical thinking, problem solving and building independence. One such activity - 5 kids stand in a circle with a large rope up around them on the outside of the circle. The group has to determine how to move the rope from around their ankles up to their shoulders without using their hands. How would you accomplish this with 4 other adults?



Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library Launched in November



Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth until they begin school.

The first five years of a child's life are vitally important to their development. From 0 to 3 years, 90 percent of a child's brain is developed. A child develops language skills before being able to speak. Literacy skills develop long before a child is able to read. Reading is essential to brain development, as well as healthy physical and additional responses in children.



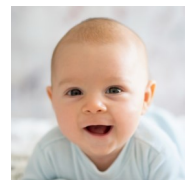
The program is entirely funded by donors. We received generous startup funds to launch the program for residents of 59715 and 59718. Local champions include, author, Mark Sullivan and his wife Betsy Sullivan, Bozeman Noon Rotary, The Dairy Keep Project, Joan and Dean McSweeney, and Bozeman Public Library Foundation. Within 5 years, we aspire to enroll 2,000 children annually in the program.

We need your help to grow and expand the program to neighbor communities in Gallatin, Park, Meagher and Madison Counties. Mark & Betsy Sullivan provided a **\$15,000 Annual Matching Gift Challenge** for zip codes 59715 and 59718. [Help us meet the match!](#)

To learn more about how to support or review impact reports, call 406.587.2194 or visit www.GreaterGallatinUnitedWay.org/imagination_library

New Early Child Care Provider Fund

Because of you, we were able to launch the “New Early Child Care Provider Fund” working through our Gallatin Early Childhood Council and with our long-time partner, Child Care Connections. Lack of quality early child care in our community is a critical issue. The ability to access quality child care affects a families financial stability and with limited or no options, can have an affect a child’s social emotional skills and ability to thrive in school.



Gallatin County has a 2 year waiting list for infants child care slots. This is true for every county we serve. With your help, we were able to provide startup funds to incentivize individuals to open early child care programs. The results are great! We have 66 new slots in Gallatin County (24 new spots in Belgrade, 12 in Three Forks, 12 in Manhattan, and 12-18 in Bozeman). With your help, we can continue to provide funds for this project and grow and expand to meet the needs of families, children - - our community.

Greater Gallatin United Way offers many opportunities to connect your passion with making a healthy impact on our community. Please contact us - We are here to help you make a difference in improving lives in our community. Call us 406.587.2194

