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QUESTIONS? WE HAVE ANSWERS!

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WHAT IS K-READY KIDS?

OVERVIEW

United Way’s Commitment to Early Learning: We all win when our community’s children enter kindergarten with a strong foundation for literacy. Reading is the most influential factor related to summer learning, and children who enter kindergarten ready to learn are more likely to attain their 3rd grade reading level and graduate from high school. That’s why United Way is investing in programs and initiatives like K-Ready Kids that support educational success for the youngest in our local communities.

Our Goal: Fill and distribute 1750 backpacks for children (ages 4-5) entering kindergarten this fall.

How We’ll Make it Happen: Volunteer team leaders from companies, schools, faith communities, clubs, and groups will be recruited to run literacy kit supply drives, fundraise, and/or donate to our virtual book drive. The drives will lead up to a two day event where volunteers will sort items into backpacks and deliver them to local child care centers, Head Starts, and nonprofits (located in United Way’s catchment area).

KEY DATES

✔ Brainstorm and plan your event March or early April
✔ Literacy kit supply drive and online book drive Anytime in April
✔ Deliver items to Seacoast Media Group May 1
✔ Volunteer opportunities to sort supplies May 7, 8, 9
✔ Pack and distribute K-Ready Kids backpacks May 15
✔ Pack and distribute K-Ready Kids backpacks May 16

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

✔ Help 1750 children enter kindergarten ready to learn
✔ Strengthen team-building and leadership skills
✔ Gain awareness of the Seacoast region’s needs and improve the quality of life in our communities
✔ Market your business’ community involvement to the public (ask about our sponsorship opportunities!)
K-READY KIDS BACKPACKS

1750 PRESCHOOLERS IN THE SEACOAST REGION WILL RECEIVE...

- 1 red backpack
- 1 parent resource packet with activities and access to discounted internet services through Comcast
- 1 kindergarten readiness calendar activities for parents to do with their children every day of the year
- 5 brand new books
- 1 literacy kit

TO REACH OUR GOAL, UNITED WAY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS TO...

COLLECT SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND ASSEMBLE GREAT LITERACY KITS! EVERY KIT NEEDS...

- **Something to write on (choose one)**
  - Construction paper
  - Drawing paper
  - Writing tablets (one-inch wide line, no spiral)
- **Something to write with (choose one)**
  - Markers
  - Crayons
  - Colored pencils with sharpener
- **Something to build fine motor skills (all three items)**
  - Child-sized scissors with rounded tips
  - Glue sticks
  - Play dough
- **Something fun!**
  - Stickers (no cartoon characters please)
  - Foam shapes

CONTRIBUTE DONATIONS TO PURCHASE BOOKS ([WWW.UWGS.ORG/KREADYKIDS](http://WWW.UWGS.ORG/KREADYKIDS)). EVERY $5 WILL PURCHASE ONE BRAND NEW BOOK!
MARCH: PLANNING YOUR PARTICIPATION

I'M IN. HOW SHOULD MY COMPANY OR GROUP PARTICIPATE?

Your company’s characteristics (i.e. size, culture, and customer interaction) will help determine the best way you can contribute to K-Ready Kids. United Way has built this event with complete flexibility so you can find the best way for your company to participate. If you come across any challenges, please contact us. We appreciate your commitment to educational success and are happy to provide any guidance that we can.

STEP ONE: OBTAIN PERMISSION

Make sure you have approval and buy-in from the leadership if your company, school or group. Corporate volunteers may need special permission for the organizing team to meet during the work day.

STEP TWO: WEIGH YOUR OPTIONS

✓ **Pledge to collect money for a specific number of backpacks**
  □ Each backpack costs approximately $45

✓ **Pledge to collect literacy kits for a specific number of backpacks**
  □ Collect scissors, glue sticks, paper, crayons/markers, and stickers for a certain number of backpacks (see curated list on previous page)
  □ Create collection boxes to be placed in strategic locations across your company (lunch room, front desk area, conference room, and if you have multiple locations, be sure to have them everywhere!)
  □ Hold fundraisers to purchase items you need to complete kits at the end of the drive
  □ You do not have to sort your collected items into kits but we do ask for a final count of items when you turn everything in.
  □ If you want to sort kits at your site – **great!** Please use two gallon clear plastic Ziploc bags

✓ **Pledge to collect books for a specific number of backpacks**
  □ Provide the link to our website [www.uwgs.org/kreadykids](http://www.uwgs.org/kreadykids) so individuals can choose to donate. United Way will purchase new, pre-selected book titles chosen by early childhood specialists
  □ Hold fundraisers to purchase books via the virtual book drive
  □ A donation of $5 will purchase a brand new book!

✓ **Sponsor K-Ready Kids – Multiple levels and benefits available for any company’s budget!** Contact United Way for more details.
APRIL: K-READY KIDS DRIVES

CREATE AN EVENT PLANNING TEAM

✓ Recruit a core group of coworkers, classmates, club members, or friends; the number on your team will depend on the size of the drive you’re planning
✓ Provide them with a clear understanding of their role and time commitment to...
  □ Plan and market the drive
  □ Recruit volunteers
  □ Adjust activities and monitor donations to reach goals
  □ Recognize and thank donors
  □ Deliver donations to United Way’s designated drop off (Seacoast Media Group)

COLLECTION DRIVE IDEAS

✓ Giving Cards: You’ve probably seen trees decorated with stars with gift ideas around the holidays. Individuals select a star from the tree and purchase that gift. The same idea works for literacy drives!
✓ Signs/Posters/Collection Boxes: Do you have customers who frequent your business? Set up a public display with literacy kit lists and encourage customers to donate (See a great display from People’s United Bank).
✓ Jeans Day: Donate a certain amount, and wear jeans to work!
✓ Have a Friendly Competition: Which department, class, or team can collect the most items? Offer fun incentives or prizes...
  □ Time off with pay to volunteer at an opportunity of the winner’s choice
  □ Lunch or coffee for the winning team
  □ Choice parking place
MAY: THE BIG EVENT!

PRIOR TO DELIVERY DATES

✓ **OPTION 1**: Deliver items as is – unsorted, in boxes that are easy to lift and transport

✓ **OPTION 2**: Engage volunteers at your company to sort supplies into literacy kits as a team building event. Please reach out to us if this is something you are interested in. United Way staff would love the opportunity to attend, speak about the importance of your company’s participation and their impact on the community. *Note: If you are sorting supplies into literacy kits please follow the directions on page 3 and use clear, **two gallon** Ziploc style bags*

✓ **Don’t forget!** No matter which option you choose, please provide a count of what you have collected (a form can be found in the K-Ready Kids toolkit – [www.uwgs.org/kreadykids](http://www.uwgs.org/kreadykids))

DELIVERY OF SUPPLIES

✓ Deliver collected supplies to Seacoast Media Group (111 New Hampshire Avenue, Portsmouth) on **May 1st between 9am and 2pm**.

✓ Be sure to have your submission form in hand and ready to be turned in with a count of supplies, money, and/or completed literacy kits!

SORTING, PACKING, AND DISTRIBUTION

There are still ways for your company to get involved after dropping off supplies. United Way of the Greater Seacoast organizes multiple volunteer opportunities throughout May leading up to the big distribution days!

✓ **SORTING** –
  - Tuesday, May 7th
  - Wednesday, May 8th
  - Thursday, May 9th

✓ **PACKING/DISTRIBUTION** –
  - Wednesday, May 15th
  - Thursday, May 16th