

## SUCCESSFUL KIDS



### MEET DREW & MIKE

Mike is a volunteer at a local Tacoma elementary school helping tutor young students with reading. Volunteering and giving back to his community has always been an important part of Mike's life, but this past years' experience with tutoring brought him a moment that made him see his work in new light.

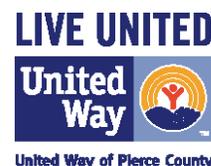
Mike's student Drew grew up living with just his dad, and had been really struggling staying on track with his reading. One day, Mike and Drew were working on "ug" words: slug, bug, hug... and drug.

At the sound of the word drug, Drew immediately asked if they could skip that word. A few moments later, he went on to share that drugs were the reason that he couldn't see his mom anymore.

"This was a major ah-hah moment for me" Mike recalled. "I realized just how important this work really is. Giving kids like Drew great opportunities and the care needed to be successful in school."

When Drew took his reading proficiency test, he passed and is now officially reading at grade level. On the last day of tutoring, Drew's dad couldn't stop talking about how proud he was of his son. And Mike agreed.

*By focusing on programs that help young children and their families, we can remove the barriers preventing them from breaking the cycle of poverty.*



Supporting students in the early grades so they have the skills to be successful in school and in life.

### Why It Matters

**One out of four students** in Pierce County is not meeting the third grade reading standard.

**Missing just one to two days each month**, even as early as kindergarten, can significantly lower academic achievement.

Kids who don't have access to books over the summer can lose **up to two months of learning**.