



ALL-AMERICA CITY FINALIST

SALT LAKE CITY REGION

Community Snapshot

The Salt Lake area was founded in 1847 by pioneers fleeing religious persecution in the East. Today, it is home to more than 1 million people and has become home to a growing number of both immigrants and refugees. From 1990-2000, Utah's foreign-born population grew by 171 percent. In 2009, the foreign born represented 7.9 percent of Utah's total population, compared to 3.4 percent in 1990. In 2009, people of color made up about 26 percent of the population. These dramatic demographic changes have presented new challenges. United Way of Salt Lake has been instrumental in developing practices and creating partnerships to address educational challenges such as the achievement gap for low-income and students of color. The communities involved in the United Way's work are Clearfield, Kearns, Park City and South Salt Lake.

Community Solutions Action Plan

Partners are working together to ensure coordinated activities, programs and initiatives that will improve school readiness, student attendance, summer learning retention and third grade reading scores. Objectives include:

- Establishing a system for measuring reading ability from kindergarten to third grade
- Reporting the percentage of students reading at or above grade level standards on a district level to the public and media, on a school basis to the public, principals, and teachers and individual student achievement to parents at regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences
- Engaging parents by encouraging them to read with their children at least 20 minutes per day

Partnerships

To accomplish this work, United Way of Salt Lake has partnered with dozens of local agencies and community organizations including: Clearfield City, Davis School District, Davis Behavioral Health and the Family Connection Center, Davis Community Learning Center, Community Nursing Services, The Boys and Girls Clubs of Weber-Davis Counties, the Boys & Girls Club of South Valley, Salt Lake CAP Head Start, Community Action Partnership of Utah, SSL Coalition for Drug Free Youth, Salt Lake Community College, University of Utah Department of Social Work, Westminster College, Salt Lake County Refugee Services, Social Marketing Consultants, Salt Lake Valley Health Department, AmeriCorps and Wasatch Steel.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 85,558 residents
- 587,745 students statewide
- 33 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals
- 77 percent of students reading at grade level by third grade
- 8 percent are English language learners
- 76 percent graduation rate
- 95 percent of students attend school daily
- Summer programming available

GOALS

- Launch home visitation programs to identify at-risk families and provide them with resources and strategies
- Collaborate with Head Start and other organizations to give children access to high-quality preschool programs
- Enlist volunteer reading mentors for targeted students to help achieve grade-level reading and prevent summer learning loss

"We have learned that each community must develop in its own way ... and that the African proverb – 'If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together' – is absolutely true."