

# United Way adds focus on prevention

■ Eighteen emerging social-service programs will receive first-time funding from the United Way.

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When the doors open at Charles Drew Elementary School next fall, second-graders will have something extra to look forward to: three hours of after-school tutoring, twice a week, every week.

The new program, called Steps to Success, will tutor about 40 students in reading and technology literacy. It is one of 18 new programs that will receive two-year grants in July from United Way of Miami-Dade.

"This is the first time we'll be able to provide a program that lasts the entire school year and has such a concentrated time with kids," said Andrea Kilpatrick, president of Cool Kids Learn, which runs Steps to Success.

The Charles Drew tutoring program will expand in the second year and work with both second and third graders. The goal: Help them perform at grade level and increase their passing rate on Florida's Comprehensive Assessment Test.

In total, the United Way will dole out \$760,000 in two-year grants, ranging from \$9,000 to \$100,000, from its Response Fund. The agency chose programs to help close

the gap between existing services and community needs in three areas: education, health and income.

"We really care about changing the system, getting into prevention, working with programs that can have an impact on people," said Harve Mogul, chief executive of United Way of Miami-Dade.

The grants will go to nonprofit groups across the county, including Homestead, Hialeah, Overtown and Liberty City.

The Response Fund, started four years ago, has changed how United Way allocates money, Mogul said. The fund seeks emerging community service programs that might otherwise have

had little chance of getting a grant.

Half of the 18 programs chosen are run by agencies that have received United Way funding in the past. Others are new partners, such as the University of Miami's Linda Ray Intervention Center, which will launch a Creole parenting program for Haitian families.

That program will receive a total of \$100,000 for two years. Dr. Lynne Katz, the center's director, said existing parenting programs are offered in English and Spanish, but there wasn't an equivalent one in Creole. Simply translating current programs into Creole isn't enough, Katz said.

"Their cultural issues are different," she said.

Other initiatives to be funded include a variety of services for senior citizens and a new program at Overtown Youth Center that will help 75 youths improve school attendance, behavior and academic success.

The nonprofit group Community Smiles will expand its children services and provide dental exams to more than 250 students at Phillis Wheatley Elementary School in Overtown.

"We're very excited about treating more underserved children in the community," said Dr. Robert Wolf, the clinical director of Community Smiles.