



**UNITED WAY**  
Lowcountry

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# EQUIPPING STUDENTS TO SUCCEED

## Women United Programs Help Students & Families Thrive

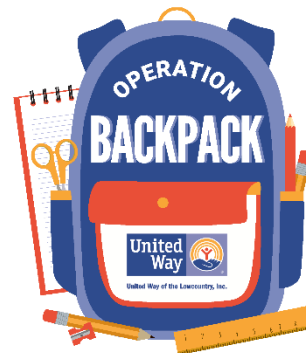
At **United Way of the Lowcountry**, we are committed to advancing self-sufficiency across Beaufort and Jasper counties. Through **Women United**, we help students overcome everyday barriers to learning—so they can focus on thriving in school and in life.

**Women United** is a passionate group of local women leaders who support United Way's mission by investing in programs that break down barriers to education and promote long-term self-sufficiency for families in the Lowcountry.

Two key programs—**Operation Backpack** and **Mimi's Closets**—provide direct support to students and families, in partnership with school staff and social workers.

### What These Programs Do

- Deliver essential supplies and personal items to students who need them most
- Support students identified by school social workers in Beaufort and Jasper County school districts
- Serve thousands of students each year
- Operate in collaboration with the Women United Steering Committee and United Way's Education Impact Team



### Operation Backpack

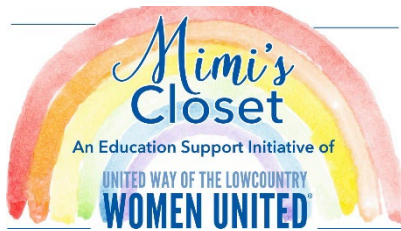
#### Back-to-School Support I Launched in 2012

Operation Backpack helps students begin the school year ready to learn by providing:

- **Backpacks stocked with essential school supplies**, such as paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, binders, and glue
- **New school uniforms**, a new addition for 2025, to help ease a common financial strain on families

Social workers at each school help identify eligible students, and supplies are delivered directly to schools for distribution before the school year begins.

**This program is especially helpful for families who may not qualify for other assistance programs but are still struggling to make ends meet.**



## Mimi's Closets

### School Year Support I Launched in 2023

Mimi's Closets are small, school-based resource closets stocked with frequently needed items to address unexpected student needs throughout the year, including:

- **Hygiene supplies** (toothbrushes, soap, deodorant, hand sanitizer, tissues)
- **Snacks and water bottles**
- **School supplies** (replacements and extras for classroom use)
- **Clothing essentials** such as socks, underwear, diapers, and uniforms

Teachers and nurses often step in to meet these needs themselves. Mimi's Closets aim to **alleviate that burden**, so educators can focus on teaching—and students can focus on learning.

Currently available at **five schools**, with plans to expand based on need and community support.

## How to Access Support

If you recognize a student who may benefit from either program:

- **Contact your school's social worker**
- They will determine eligibility and coordinate with United Way to provide needed items
- Supplies are delivered to the school in a discreet, student-centered way

## Why It Matters

By removing small but significant obstacles—like a missing notebook, lack of clean clothes, or a forgotten snack—these programs help keep students in the classroom, focused and confident. This not only supports immediate academic success but helps **build the foundation for long-term independence and self-sufficiency.**

**Thank you for all you do to advocate for your students. Your role is essential in helping us deliver meaningful support where it's needed most.**



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