Helping feed Cami is a good, immediate fix, but doesn’t address the root of the problem. Cami’s family remains trapped in poverty, and Cami still needs that backpack, year after year.

One day, Cami’s teacher sees something wrong and wants to help.

Hunger is about more than food, but Cami’s teacher has limited access to services. So, she sends food home with Cami through a backpack meal program.

Cami and her family stand outside a complex system of services. And historically, United Way has funded one approach, like the backpack program.

Meanwhile, Tisha’s school is part of a Collaborative—partners working together on education, childcare, parent support, and mental health—to surround her whole family with services and make sure there’s always food on the table.

Cami and her family remain trapped in poverty, and Cami still needs that backpack, year after year.

But Tisha’s mom shares her unique struggles with someone from the Collaborative: siblings with different needs, couch surfing, and—without a car—Tisha’s mom isn’t able to find childcare and put in a full shift at work.

Moving forward, United Way’s new CORE Approach places Tisha and her family at the center of a Collaborative, funded by United Way, working together to address not only Tisha’s needs but her whole family’s.

Over for how you can help.

Over for more of Tisha’s story.
She also surprises her kids with an apartment of their own for the holidays. Through this Collaborative approach, Tisha's mom is able to change her question from, "What am I going to feed my family?" to, "What am I going to be?"

With the kids stable and a car donated from a Collaborative partner, Tisha's mom is able to work a full shift and make more money.

Tisha no longer comes to school hungry and can focus on learning. Her older brother gets better grades. And her younger brother receives a child care scholarship and attends a quality preschool.

Help change Cami's story by placing families like hers at the core of this new, collaborative approach: Creating Open Roads to Equity (CORE).