



2017
Annual
Report

*Support.
Enrich. Inspire.*

Our 2020 Vision

4C for Children educates and supports the adults caring for young children so that every child receives the care and early education they need.



One million.

That's how many synapses baby's brains have the ability to develop every second of life. If those synapses develop and **what** those synapses contain has everything to do with the care they receive in their earliest years.

We are at a moment of profound change that will affect our young children for the next decade. The State of Ohio is mandating that every child care program that accepts families that qualify for publicly-funded child care attain a minimum of a one-star quality rating by June 30, 2020. While helping child care providers in Ohio and Kentucky raise quality ratings has been part of our work for decades, it's become a more urgent part of our mission in light of this Ohio mandate—it's become our 2020 Vision.

What happens if providers don't meet the deadline? The programs may continue operating but will no longer be allowed to accept subsidy from working families—or they may simply shut down. We are already seeing impact. For example, in Clermont County, Ohio, there are only two Family Child Care programs and a handful of centers serving families.

As I write this letter, 70% of child care centers and 90% of family child care programs still need to reach the one-star goal in the next 24 months. That represents tens of thousands of children and countless low and mid-income working families.

Our staff of early childhood experts are taking concrete steps to implement accelerated programs for providers to help them meet this deadline—but there is still much work to do. I hope you will join us in advocating, supporting and driving our 2020 Vision, working to ensure universal quality child care for all families.

Thank you for your generous support over the years, which has helped us meet challenges in the past and will help us continue to support, enrich and inspire as we move through this decade and beyond. Every child deserves to have access to quality child care options that they need to get the best possible start in life. With your help, we can make that happen!

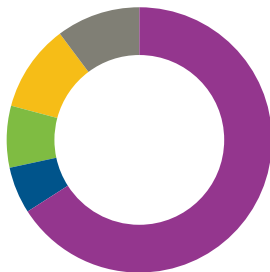
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2017 Financial Information

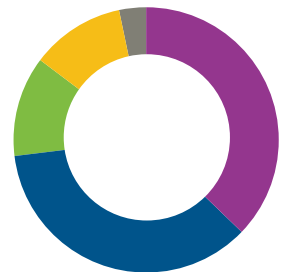
Revenue

State Funding	66%
County/City Funding	5.9%
Fundraising/ Non-Gov't Grants	7.5%
Fees for Service	10.6%
United Ways	10%



Expenses

Child Care Professional/ Training & Coaching	37.3%
Child Nutrition Program	35.9%
Child Care Referral/ Family Programs	12.2%
Administration	11.3%
Fundraising	3.3%



Supporting parents benefits children and family life

Russell Diaz, 4, gives hugs when he's introduced to people. His eyes light up when he begins playing with the play dough that he and his mom, Leticia, made earlier in the week.

As a stay-at-home mom, Leticia spends a lot of time playing with Russell and helping him complete the early learning activities and "homework" that have helped him get ready for kindergarten. But she felt isolated and needed time to be with other adults. She found that time at the 4C Parent Café held at Boone County Public Library.



The Cafés are awesome. They allow me to meet people in similar parenting situations, learn from their experiences and discover possible solutions to challenges in a nonjudgmental space.

"Sometimes I wonder if I'm doing an OK job as a parent," she says. "When I hear other parents talk about their struggles it helps me realize that I'm OK."

4C Parent Cafés are free events where parents share meaningful, reflective conversations.



Leticia liked the Boone County Café so much that she began attending a Café in Newport.

Spanish is her first language and although her English-language skills are excellent, having both Cafés in Spanish "made it easier to express myself."

Her Parent Café experience has benefited her entire family. She has realized the benefits of spending one-on-one uninterrupted time with Russell. And she encouraged Russell's dad to do the same, even after a long day at work.

"I hope these programs continue well into the future," she says. "4C's Parent Cafés really help people who are parenting get the information and additional skills they need to be the best they can be, which benefits everyone in the family."

The First Five Years *Shaping the Future*

The first five years of a child's life form a critical foundation that shapes their future health, happiness, growth, development, and success in school and life. The adults who care for young children play vital roles in supporting children's development through those years and beyond.

The following illustrates the many ways 4C's staff of early childhood experts support, enrich and inspire the adults who care for young children, ensuring the adults have the resources they need so all children reach their full potential.



Young Infants (0-9 months) *Seeking Security*

Alicia and her husband welcome a baby girl, Maria, and Alicia is a stay-at-home mom. As a first-time mom, Alicia learns about developmental milestones from the 4C age-specific information cards she received from her friend.

When Maria is 6 months old, Alicia discovers a 4C Play & Learn group in her neighborhood. During the Play & Learn sessions Alicia learns ways to support Maria's early learning through sensory activities and play time and receives resources she can use at home to extend the learning and fun.



Enriching children through nutrition and learning

Children can be picky eaters. But thanks to 4C’s Child Nutrition Program (CNP), Rita Thompson is learning new ways to make sure she’s providing the most nutritious meals for the kids in her care. “I love being educated about nutrition,” she says.



I need ideas about how to feed the kids healthy meals and the CNP has been a great support.

4C’s Child Nutrition Program administers the federal meal reimbursement program for child care providers, and a 4C specialist works with each provider to help plan menus and budget for food.

Because of her husband’s military career Rita has cared for children across the United States. “Family child care is something that I could always do no matter where I have lived,” she says. She currently cares for four children (she’s licensed for up to six) in her home, including two with special needs who require extra attention.

Her drive to always improve as a child care provider, combined with a love of learning, led her to 4C and the CNP. Rita’s 4C CNP Specialist



recognized this drive and encouraged her to pursue a quality rating for her child care program through Ohio’s quality-rating system, Step Up To Quality. With hard work and assistance from 4C coaches, Rita became the first five-star rated family child care program in Greene County, Ohio.

She points out though that receiving the stars isn’t the main reason she pursued the rating. It’s about helping kids by implementing all she has learned and increasing the quality of care she is providing. “Parents want the comfort of knowing that you are providing the best care for their children,” she says. Providing that care is Rita’s passion and what keeps her in the child care business.

Mobile Infants (8–18 months) *Exploring & Discovering*

Alicia and Maria’s circumstances change dramatically when Alicia becomes a single parent and needs to return to work. Now needing child care, Alicia is overwhelmed with the search. Then she remembers the information she received from 4C and contacts a 4C specialist for help.

The specialist gives Alicia information about what quality child care looks like and provides her with a list of child care programs that have openings near her new employer. Alicia finds a great child care provider as a result.

Toddlers (16–36 months) *Developing Self Identity*



Maria, now 16 months old, is cutting teeth and is miserable. She screams whenever Alicia leaves her at child care and struggles with every transition during the day. A 4C coach observes the struggle that Ms. Vicky, Maria’s teacher, is experiencing. The coach offers suggestions to ease transition times and make morning drop-off easier. The next weeks go smoother!

Ms. Sarah, the administrator of the child care program, attends a 4C workshop about parent engagement and uses what she learns to implement 4C Parent Cafés for her families. Alicia attends the Parent Café and meets other parents experiencing similar challenges.

Inspiring child care providers to reach for the stars

Traci Poellnitz's day is spent bouncing back and forth between the two classrooms filled with children of various ages.

As the owner/director of Cozy Care Nursery School and Childcare, she wears many hats that include teacher, cook, human resource and business manager, counselor, mediator and janitor.

Traci has dedicated her life to child care for more than 24 years but admits that the long days need to start with coffee "or else my day is just not right!" She and her staff offer child care from her home, seven days a week and oftentimes 24 hours a day. "We try to adjust our hours to match the work schedules of the parents," she says. "And sometimes that means providing care for second- and third-shift work schedules."

Traci holds the distinction of being the only in-home child care provider licensed to care for seven to 12 children in Hamilton County to earn four stars in Ohio's quality rating system. "4C has been and continues to be a tremendous resource to me," Traci says. "My coach and the continuing education classes they offer ensure I'm being the best administrator and provider I can be."

Her success is based on the quality care she provides and the relationships she nurtures with families and children. For many low-income



families, working and keeping food on the table and a roof over their heads takes all their energy. "I'm here to give them support by ensuring their kids are safe and learning," she says.

“

I firmly believe that just because kids come from a low-income family doesn't mean they need to be in a low-income child care environment.

"No matter a child's circumstances in life, they—and their families—deserve the chance to be the best they can be. That's my mission here on earth to help them do just that!" Traci says.

Preschoolers (3–4 years)

Experimenting & Transitioning to Kindergarten

Ms. Vicky attends a Kindergarten Readiness Summit supported by 4C for Children. She networks with kindergarten teachers and discusses ideas to help the children in her care get prepared for kindergarten.

Ms. Sarah holds a kindergarten information night for families to meet the elementary school principal. Alicia meets the principal and attends "Ready Set School" kindergarten orientation, hosted by the elementary school with support from 4C. She loves meeting other parents, asks lots of questions and learns what she will need to do to help Maria have a smooth transition.

School-Age (5 years and beyond)

Setting a Foundation for Success

Maria enters kindergarten with a solid academic and social/emotional foundation that will help her read successfully by the end of third grade, excel in school, and graduate from high school prepared for college and a career.

The support and resources Alicia, Ms. Sarah and Ms. Vicky received from 4C during the critical first years of Maria's life made—and will continue to make—all the difference.

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Supported 435
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Provided 1,497
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Trained 20,588
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