



## Leading the Way in Early Childhood Education

2022–23 Impact Report



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# Making a Difference

When 2022 kicked off, so did the celebration of our 50th anniversary. It was a wonderful year looking back at moments in our history, recognizing our growth and getting excited for what lies ahead. Since 1972, there has been a thread that ties all the decades together: our ability to adapt, innovate and change to educate and support the adults who care for young children and advocate for quality early education and care for all children.



Our work has changed over the decades as we addressed the key issues impacting the local child care system and the needs that grew from those issues. I'm thrilled to report that since the pandemic's end, much of our pre-pandemic work has resumed. But like in so many sectors, the pandemic created another set of critical challenges that continue to hinder quality child care in our region. Those areas we're focused on include:

- Addressing the staffing crisis by recruiting new people to the early childhood field and providing the foundational training needed to quickly move into a child care role.
- Replenishing the supply of affordable, accessible child care by supporting the successful launch of new programs.
- Stabilizing existing child care programs to ensure further closures were curtailed.
- Providing coaching to ensure child care programs continue Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) progress.

4C for Children staff are leading new cutting-edge approaches to address these challenges. You'll read about all the stellar work being done by our program areas in this impact report, especially the Business Services and Child Care Career programs. These two newly launched programs were created to meet the need of staffing shortages and increase the number of quality child care programs. And, as you'll see, the results are quite amazing!

I am honored to lead an agency with a commitment to ensure that ALL the adults who care for children have the support and resources they need so that every child has the opportunity to thrive. This report is filled with just a few stories that highlight those services. But I assure you, for each story in this report, there are many others that we could share that show the scope and impact this agency plays in the lives of early childhood professionals, working families and children.

I'm also incredibly grateful for your support and that of our community partners. You are the engine that powers all the services we deliver on a daily basis. We recently had T-shirts made for staff that say "It takes a big ❤️ to shape young minds." Thank you for having a big heart.

**Vanessa Freytag**

President/CEO • 4C for Children

PS—This impact report covers 18 months, from January, 2022 to June 30, 2023, because we've changed our fiscal year from January to December to July 1–June 30. This change helps us align with the state of Ohio's fiscal year and with the majority of our funders.

# OUR MISSION

To educate and support the adults who care for young children and advocate for public support for quality early education and care for all children.





Serving the Community for 50 Years

BUSINESS SERVICES



CHILD CARE CAREERS



CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM



CHILDREN SERVICES HUB



COACHING



FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES



TRAINING





## BUSINESS SERVICES

4C for Children has developed tools, documents, training and coaching that will successfully guide those interested in launching a child care business. Our early childhood experts walk with entrepreneurs to make the journey as easy as possible, from helping obtain the required training classes to providing business support and coaching.

49

child care businesses  
earned new/  
expanded licenses  
resulting in 510 new  
child care seats

60

training sessions held  
for 110 attendees

58

licensing applications  
in process, which will  
add 348 child care  
seats

# IMPACT

## Supporting Her Dream

Valerie McKinney put on a big smile while standing at the top of the steps to her new child care center in Mt. Auburn.

She looked out and saw her friends, family and other early childhood educators cheering her on as she took oversized scissors and officially cut the ribbon to the Shawn Lewis Learning Center. The center was named after her 15-year-old nephew who passed away last year.

"The support that I received today was a lot. It was overwhelming," Valerie said. "These are the same people who have been supporting me throughout the whole process. To see them still here with me is really good."

Among those supporting Valerie and the launch of her new business was the 4C for Children Business Services Team that provided her step-by-step guidance to launch her new business. She received in-depth business training from the team that focused on everything from financial management to marketing to funding for essentials like furnishings and early learning materials.

She was thankful to have that support when she decided to expand her family child care home into a center-based program to make a greater impact on more children in her community.



Valerie McKinney

"(4C for Children) comes in and helps you with training, the budget, different classes and just a whole lot of things," Valerie said. "I wouldn't have been able to do this without 4C."

"Kids are my passion. You can get so much out of (children) when you love on them. That's the easiest thing to do to get the kids to follow you and learn."

Helping her "love on children" is Eri'Anna Turner who recently completed the

4C for Children Child Care Careers Program. This program provided the training and preparation she needed to become a productive staff member when she walked into Valerie's program.

[Watch Valerie's ribbon cutting ceremony here.](#)



## CHILD CARE CAREERS

An innovative program launched by 4C for Children in 2023, Child Care Careers focuses on attracting new people to the early childhood education field with 4C staff dedicated to helping them get the foundational training needed to quickly move into a child care role. This program's goal is to help reduce the staffing crisis faced by child care programs in the regions we serve.



93

individuals  
signed  
agreements  
to participate

23

individuals  
completed  
the program

13

new early childhood  
educators completed  
the program and are  
employed

*\*Please note the Child Care Careers Program started in January 2023. This reporting reflects six months of work.*



# IMPACT

## ► Grandmother's Sweet Spirit Lives On

Eri'Anna Turner was raised by her grandmother, Susan Joan Turner. She not only cared for Eri'Anna but fostered more than 100 children throughout her lifetime.

"What stood out to me was (my grandmother) had kids from all different backgrounds," Eri'Anna said. "She never treated any of them different. She stuck by them, encouraged them and did a lot for them."

Inspired by her grandmother's legacy, Eri'Anna is now working as an early childhood educator after graduating from the [4C for Children Child Care Careers Program](#) in May 2023. She is

embracing that same compassion for children that her grandmother had.

4C for Children's Career Navigator, Linda Hicks coached Eri'Anna and helped her jump into the world of child care.

"Linda has been so awesome," Eri'Anna said. "She has stuck with me, stayed on me, asked me how I was doing if we haven't talked in a while. From the first day I talked to Linda up until now, it's been nothing but good vibes. I would recommend anyone to 4C for Children who wants to become a child care provider."

The Child Care Careers Program recruits and supports people like Eri'Anna and helps them discover the personal reward of providing early childhood education and high-quality care to children in our community.

"The kids need a model, someone to be there for them," Eri'Anna said. "They need somebody to stand up for what's right to show them the right way. (Child care) is a way for me to continue to spread (my grandmother's) love."

Eri'Anna is working towards earning her Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential and teaches at the Shawn Lewis Learning Center. [Her goal is to open her own child care center.](#)



Eri'Anna Turner



## CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

4C for Children administers the child care component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program for licensed family child care providers and child care centers in Southwest Ohio and the Miami Valley. The 4C Child Nutrition Program (CNP) focuses on improving the diets of children under the age of 13 by helping child care providers deliver nutritious, well-balanced meals and helping children develop good eating habits.

387

participating child  
care programs

Served

2,893,273 meals

# IMPACT

## ▶ Building the Foundation to Healthy Eating

You can see children lining up around the vegetable garden at the Loving Kindness Education and Learning Center in Mt. Auburn. Elnora Morgan, the family child care program director, asks each child to pick one fruit or vegetable to taste and learn about during their Wednesday cooking class.

"I hear the children say, 'Look that one has gotten really big!'" she said. "When I cut something open and ask the children what's inside the pumpkin or pepper, they say there's a tree or a flower. We have a lot of fun in their hats and aprons."

Elnora joined the [4C for Children Child Nutrition Program \(CNP\)](#) more than 15 years ago and has been helping children and families set the foundation for healthy eating ever since. The CNP program provides resources like a recipe book, guidelines on how to read nutrition labels, one-on-one coaching from specialists to providers—who then pass along those resources to families.

Many years ago Ke'Anna, a then new mother in the neighborhood, chose Loving Kindness as her son's child care program. She quickly realized the advantages the food program had for both her and her son.

"I remember my son didn't like proteins at that time," Ke'Anna said. "He would gravitate towards



Elnora Morgan

fruits and veggies, but (Elnora) found a way to work in nuts (crushed) and other proteins for Kaleb. We all got on the same plan and introduced foods in small strides."

Elnora remembers that she and Ke'Anna did, "Everything we could to lay that foundation for Kaleb." Today, he's 21 years old and living a healthy lifestyle.

Elnora and the CNP program had a lifelong impact on Ke'Anna and her son.

"The time (Elnora) spent to make sure my son got the right nutrition helped make me a better mom," Ke'Anna said. "It's funny because to this day my son remembers the talks that we had about 'eating the rainbow.'" (This is a phrase that describes eating colorful fruits and vegetables.)

Through the coaching and resources provided by CNP coaches, Elnora and other local early childhood educators are helping hundreds of children discover their own rainbows.





## CHILDREN SERVICES HUB

The Children Services Hub is a resource for families who are interested in providing a stable and loving home for children. The department partners with public and private agencies to recruit, support and retain foster, adoptive and kinship care families in Southwest Ohio and Miami Valley.

**591** inquiries to help families connect to a foster care agency

**49** community partnerships initiated

**45** partnerships created with public and private foster agencies

# IMPACT

## ► The Decision to Adopt

Earlier this year, an inquiry popped up in the Children Services Hub inbox from Christopher Abbott, a resident of Troy, Ohio. He was ready to fulfill his dream of becoming a dad but was unsure about the adoption or fostering process. He was searching for guidance and next steps.

"During my conversation with the specialist, I was just like a person starting with zero information," Christopher said. "She helped me distinguish the difference between fostering and adoption."

Christopher grew up watching his grandparents foster more than 100 children. Now at 29 years old, he's comfortable in his career and ready to carry on his grandparents' legacy by welcoming a child into his life and starting a family.

"My goal is to become an adoptive parent," Christopher said. "I always wanted to be a parent. Even when I was growing up, I knew I wanted to be a dad one day. There are kids out there that are in need."

4C for Children supported Christopher by giving him resources for his home study and helped him complete the additional steps along his journey.

"It was a big comfort," Christopher said. "When I got off the phone, I felt way better about this process."

Children Services Hub Team Lead Lakisha Ancrum says it's very rewarding to be able to help families decide which route to take.

"It makes me feel good knowing we can support others to keep moving forward in whatever route they choose (foster or adoption) or whatever route chooses them (kinship) and that we're supporting these adults who are going to impact a child's life."

Christopher will start the process of fulfilling his dream to become an adoptive parent in January of 2024.



Christopher Abbott





## COACHING

4C for Children offers individualized coaching to help Southwest Ohio and Miami Valley early childhood professionals develop and implement strategies that enhance the quality of care for children. Coaching is free and provided one-on-one or in a group setting.

Coached

# 1,704

child care programs that serve  
58,450 children

Provided

# 15,855

coaching visits



# IMPACT

## An Infant's Leap Forward

Tia Brooks is the lead infant teacher at Generation Hope Childcare and Preschool. She brings her 3-month-old daughter, Kari, to work with her each day.

Tia is among the staff at Generation Hope that Marlo Parlin, a 4C for Children coach, works with to enhance the quality of care they deliver each day. One of the tools she recently introduced was the [Learning Environment Analysis \(LENA\) program](#).

The program has had an impact on Tia not only as a teacher, but as a mom.

LENA empowers early childhood educators to increase the rate of conversational turns with the children in their care. *A conversational turn is a back-and-forth interaction.* In the case of an infant, a turn is considered any non-cry sound like a coo or babble.

According to LENA research, every increase of two turns per an hour is associated with a one-point increase in Full-Scale IQ.

In the first week of data collection, Tia learned her daughter's conversation turns were very low at 14. Marlo and Tia collaborated to create *SMART* goals to increase Kari's turns and language development.

This resulted in some amazing results. Kari's vocalization doubled in just two weeks, and she peaked at 25 plus conversational turns by week three.

"When (Marlo) gave me those LENA talking tips, I was able to test those things at the program and at home," Tia said. "I connected the teaching to my daughter's progression and now she's making sounds, clapping and moving her legs."

Tia and Kari's journey is just one example of the impact [4C for Children's child care coaches](#) make every day as they work with local child care providers.

"Tia is having a profound impact not only her daughter's early learning development but the other children in her care too," Marlo said.



Tia and Kari Brooks



## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

4C for Children's Family & Community Services Department focuses on helping families find and choose quality child care, while empowering them with the resources they need to choose the best care for their children. This department brings parent workshops to local communities to give families additional strategies to care for children.

1,502

families served (workshops,  
referrals, resources)

~510

vacancy checks per month

Maintains database with  
~2,200  
child care programs

# IMPACT

## ▶ Meeting Families Where They Are

Everyday 4C for Children specialists connect with local families to help them find quality child care options that meet their needs and connect to resources that help promote family well-being.

Among those resources is a series of workshops specifically designed for those adults who fill parenting roles in the lives of children throughout Southwest Ohio and Miami Valley.

Michelle VanBergen, a Norwood parent, attended one such workshop in February 2023. In this specific workshop, the 4C for Children team used [Pax Tools](#) to share science-based strategies that help create supportive and safe environments that ultimately help children thrive.



Michelle VanBergen

Michelle was inspired by the kindness 4C staff displayed towards her and the other parents and caregivers. She left a hand-written note after the workshop:

*"It is impressive to me how welcoming you make everyone feel virtually and in-person. You appreciate everyone that shows up and don't compare them to others. It's beautiful to witness and a good model for me."*

4C for Children specialists also serve those impacted by homelessness by presenting these parenting workshops at local partner agencies such as the YWCA and Bethany House.

Always with a focus on supporting local families, specialists [provide free child care referrals](#) to families through a comprehensive database of child care centers, preschool programs, family child care homes, Head Start programs and after-school programs.





## TRAINING

4C for Children offers Ohio Approved in-person and virtual training to help early childhood professionals advance their skills, programs and careers. Health and safety trainings are also offered to better serve and protect the children in their care.

Graduated

166

child care professionals in the  
Child Development Associate  
program

Trained

4,650

early childhood professionals  
who obtained  
74,190 training hours

# IMPACT

## ► Professional Growth—Providing Exceptional Training

On April 1, 2023, 11 child care providers graduated from the 4C for Children Child Development Associate (CDA) cohort. It was truly a celebration of the hard work of those who completed the program *and* of moving past the pandemic—this cohort was the first to meet face-to-face since 2020 and featured both virtual and in-person classes.

The [4C CDA Preparation Program](#) gives individuals the opportunity to meet the requirements set by the Council for Professional Recognition to earn a CDA credential. This early childhood education credential is the only nationally recognized, portable, competency-based credential of its kind in the United States.

This specific group of graduates completed 135 hours of training that covered a range of topics such as:

- Child development
- Safety
- Child behaviors
- Building relationships with families

“Students can learn useful tools in class and then immediately apply them to their work in classrooms,” said CDA Specialist Sara Colyer.

“I look forward to seeing how the knowledge they have gained will impact their work in the world of early childhood. I’m super proud of them!”



The CDA program is just one of the ways 4C for Children provides exceptional training for early childhood professionals. No matter the need, the training offered by 4C for Children provides the most relevant continuing education options available.

Among the offerings are stand-alone workshops that cover topics like child development, curriculum, observation and assessments, equity in child care, best business practices and more.

Annual events like the two-day [Leadership and Early Childhood Conference](#) and the [Developing Early Childhood Leaders \(DECL\) Seminar](#) offer additional opportunities to grow both professionally and personally.

# Financial Information

## January 1, 2022–June 30, 2023

### Revenue



Government Grants	74%
Program Service Fees	13%
Community Philanthropy	13%

### Expenses



Child Care Professional Training & Coaching	37%
Child Nutrition Program	34%
Child Care Referral/Family Programs	7%
Fundraising	4%
Administration	18%



# 4C for Children in the Community



## 4C for Children Champions Gala

4C for Children celebrated its 50th Anniversary at the Champions Gala, presented by PNC, at Cincinnati Music Hall in October 2022. More than 400 guests gathered to celebrate the anniversary milestone and honor 50 Champions for Children and their commitment to supporting early childhood education and high-quality care and education.



[More photos on Facebook](#)



[View video on YouTube](#)



## 4C for Children Leadership and Early Childhood Conference

The annual 4C for Children Leadership and Early Childhood Conference was held in October 2022 at the Sharonville Convention Center. More than 450 early childhood professionals attended for training, career development and inspiration. The event featured keynote speakers Maryum Ali and Dan St. Romain, more than 35 breakout sessions and exhibitors.



[More photos on Facebook](#)



## Celebrating Provider Appreciation Day

4C for Children staff and volunteers delivered nearly 750 gifts to Southwest Ohio and Miami Valley family child care providers to celebrate National Provider Appreciation Day in May 2022 and 2023. These providers run in-home businesses and support families and children in their communities. They and all child care providers make a difference by providing quality care and education to our youngest children.



[More photos on Facebook](#)



[View video on YouTube](#)



## Children Explore During 4C Day at the Museum

4C for Children and our volunteers welcomed more than 800 local children, families and child care teachers who serve low-income families to a free day of fun at the Cincinnati Museum Center in June 2023. Families and teachers had an opportunity to engage with their children and discover new ways to support learning and development.



[View video on YouTube](#)



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It takes a big ❤️ to  
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Thank you!

