



Annual Report 2019



Arapahoe County
**Early
Childhood
Council**

Who We Are

Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council is a collaborative promoting high quality programs and services which support a safe, smart, and healthy start for young children and their families in Arapahoe County. We are rooted in the values of community, collaboration, and leadership on behalf of children from birth through age eight. We work hard to promote an innovative network that links practice to policy and child to community.

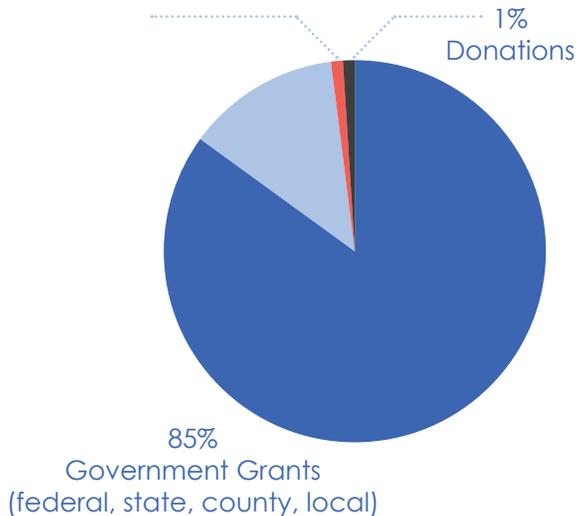
As an independent nonprofit and one of the largest early childhood councils in Colorado, we're uniquely positioned to serve as a hub for local partners, providers, caregivers, policymakers, and business leaders. We coordinate, collaborate, and align resources that support kids, families, and early childhood professionals.

When we "connect the dots" between other community organizations, we empower families and foster high quality early childhood services in Arapahoe County.

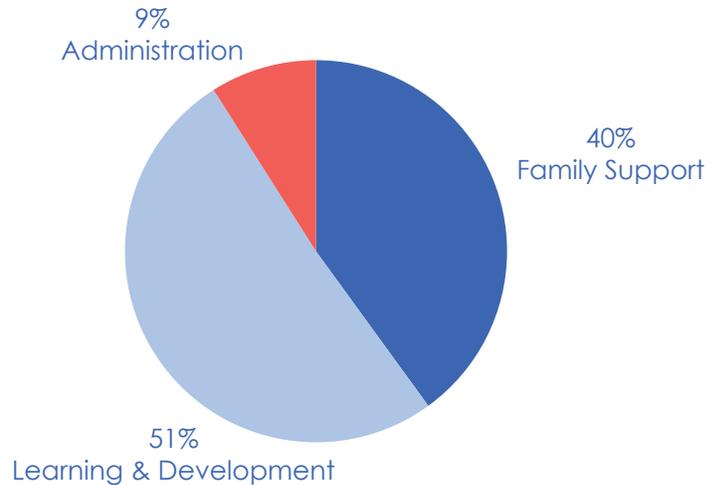


Financials for 2017/18 Fiscal Year

Revenue & Support



Expenses



Generational Success

Kids and Families in Arapahoe County



98,914 households with kids
in Arapahoe County



An estimated **40,993 kids under 5** in
Arapahoe County



Approximately **1 in 6** Arapahoe
County children living in poverty

Modern-day families are more likely to be single-parent households, face increased pressure to balance work with raising their kids, and often struggle finding child care that's both affordable and high quality. These are problems for every family, regardless of income level.

Making a Difference

That's why we offer parenting classes, in-home visitation programs, child care navigation services, and coaching to improve the quality of early childhood programs and environments. In 2017/18, we continued to offer quality support for early childhood professionals and grew our direct services to families and children.



2,340

home visits with vulnerable families



3,545

hours of coaching



118

sites served

supported over
10,000
families and kids in
Arapahoe County

This is how you can support families & kids as they grow:

1. **Support our programs** directly through a financial contribution
2. **Share information** about our family support programs with families you know
3. **Speak up** about the importance of high quality early childhood services

★ Learning & Development ★

Our learning and development initiatives support early childhood professionals throughout Arapahoe County, giving them the tools and support they need to continually improve the quality of their learning environments for young children.

Quality Improvement

Through our Colorado Shines Quality Improvement program, we walk alongside early childhood care and education providers in their quality journey. Working within the Colorado Shines framework, our state's quality rating and licensing system, our coaches provide face-to-face coaching, curriculum support, developmentally appropriate classroom supplies, and individualized services based on the needs of each program.



\$73,264

worth of developmentally-appropriate supplies donated to centers



118

childcare and education sites served

Expanding Quality in Infant & Toddler Care

Our EQIT courses are part of a statewide Expanding Quality in Infant and Toddler Care (EQ) Initiative. The EQ Initiative was initially developed after a 1990s study found that 42% of infant and toddler rooms actually endangered children's health and safety. Although the state of early childhood has improved since then, caregivers still need training and support to create high quality environments for their children. Our affordable, interactive courses satisfy state requirements.

Workforce Development

Our wraparound services go beyond quality improvement and focus on improving overall child health and wellness, safety, parent education, and professional development. We offer affordable training for early childhood professionals, including:

- Annual Quality Forum
- Leadership Learning Community
- Quarterly Workshops
- PDIS Onboarding
- Rating Scale Trainings
- Safe Sleep, Touchpoints, and More

Why Does Quality Matter in Early Childhood?

Scientists have found that 85% of core brain development occurs by age three. In the current system, many kids lose out on critical emotional and social growth, leaving them at a disadvantage later in life. **Research from the Perry Project and Early Training Project shows that high quality programs lead to:**



Increased school attendance



Less criminal activity

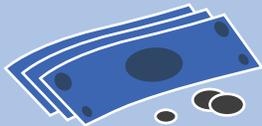


Higher incomes as adults

Challenges for the Early Childhood Workforce

Low Wages

\$12.60



In 2017, the median wage for early childhood workers was \$12.60.

Staff Turnover

60%



Over 60% of Colorado's early childhood directors said they struggle finding and keeping quality staff.

Growing Demand

+30%

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment predicts a 30% increase in need for early childhood professionals through 2025.

★ ★ A Network of Support for Early Childhood Providers ★ ★

When we support early childhood professionals in their career, we make a difference in the lives of kids, families, and our community.

Through our Colorado Shines Quality Improvement program, we act as a support system for local child care providers, building relationships and supporting people before, during, and after they have been rated through Colorado Shines.

In 2017/18, we focused heavily on improving the lowest rated child care centers in Arapahoe County. We provided:



with



at



3,545

hours of site coaching

7,700

children served

118

different sites

Our Colorado Shines Quality Improvement program provides:

- Assistance with Colorado Shines
- Face-to-face coaching
- Curriculum guidance
- Technical and administrative support
- Ongoing professional development opportunities

We believe in the importance of educating our early childhood workforce and providing support on their quality journey.



Family Support

The Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council offers a variety of family support programs that connect and empower families with the knowledge and strategies they need. Our ongoing resources and support help ensure the well-being, health, and development of kids, families, and communities in Arapahoe County.

Parents as Teachers

Parents as Teachers is a home visitation program for to families in Arapahoe County with children birth to kindergarten, who meet specific eligibility requirements. Parents as Teachers matches parents and caregivers with trained professionals who make regular personal home visits during a child's earliest years of life.



213
community resource referrals

SafeCare

Our SafeCare program reaches families at high risk of child abuse and neglect. Staff meet one-on-one with parents and caregivers of young children for several weeks and equip them with the skills and tools they need to make their home safer, better understand their children's health needs, and have more positive interactions with their kids.



Conducted
1,875
face-to-face visits

Child Care Navigator

With over 400 different childcare providers in the Arapahoe County area alone, it can be an overwhelming process for families to search for the right provider. Our child care navigator matches families with a provider that meets their unique needs, finding child care based on preschool curriculum, before and after school care, specific curriculum-based care, special needs, CCCAP availability, and proximity to work or home.



Over **1,000** support
calls for families, partners,
and providers

Promoting Safe & Stable Families

Funded through the Arapahoe County Department of Human Services, our Promoting Safe and Stable Families initiative provides advocacy, resources, and education for families. Our staff navigators also connect families in need with community resources. Through PSSF, we also offer The Incredible Years, a free, 14-week parent group where parents can learn strategies and skills known to promote children's social competence and reduce behavior problems.



100%
of parents reported an increase in
social/emotional regulation and
appropriate discipline for their kids.

★ Bridging Gaps Throughout ★ the Community

In 2011, the Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council began looking at the state of local informal child care – families, friends, and neighbors that take care of kids instead of formalized preschool programs. We found that many of these caregivers were looking for ways to help their kids learn and grow outside of the classroom. In partnership with the Arapahoe Library District, we created **Stories and More** and **Make and Take**, two free, interactive, and age-appropriate programs for caregivers to do with their kids. This pilot program continued through the 2017-2018 fiscal year, and recently the city of Glendale adopted our programs to better support informal caregivers and children within their population.



24 sessions held in the span of **three months**



424 children and 232 caregivers attended a Stories and More session



75% of kids were **18 months-5 years old**

Giving Families Tools to Succeed

There is no perfect training manual for being a parent. In today's fast-paced world, parents and caregivers face more pressure than ever. Many parents feel overwhelmed or don't know where to turn for information and support. Our goal is to promote and share knowledge and connect and empower families so that they are valued, healthy, and thriving.

“ *The resources and support brought forth by ACECC's team are beyond exceptional. The knowledge I am receiving allows me the ability to know and help my child build the skills he needs.*

– Cassandra Harris, 2018 Parents as Teachers participant





Stay in Touch

Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council

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