



Annual Report 2020



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.

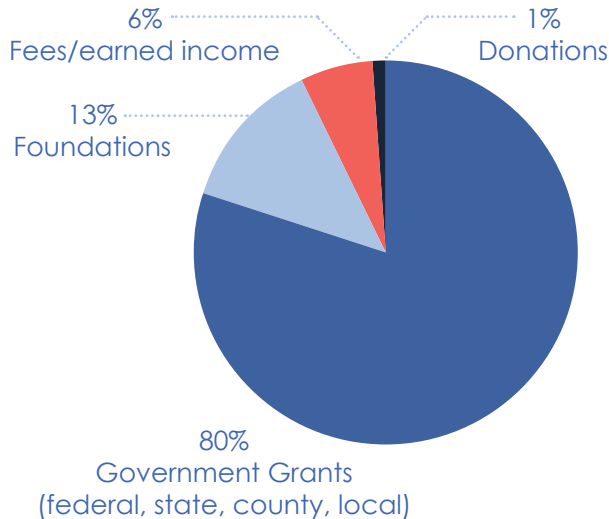
As an independent nonprofit and one of the largest early childhood councils in Colorado, we're uniquely positioned to serve as a hub for local partners, providers, caregivers, policymakers, and business leaders. We coordinate, collaborate, and align resources that support kids, families, and early childhood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

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

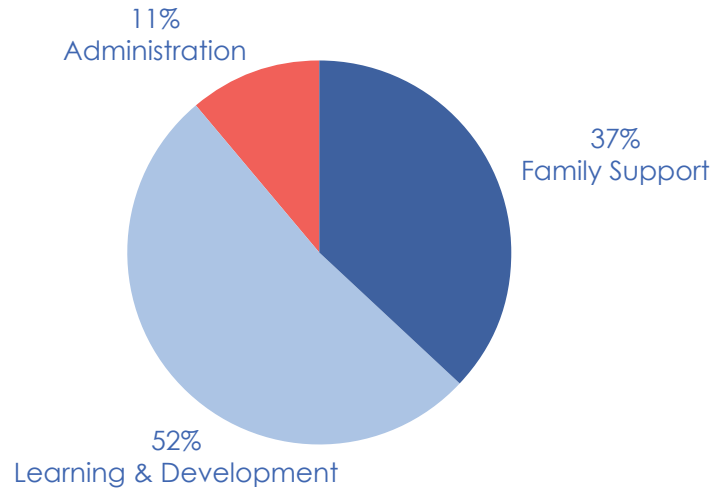


Financials for 2018/19 Fiscal Year

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 **51% of kids under 18** are children of color

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 childcare 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 2019, we grew our quality support for early childhood professionals, supporting more sites with more hours of coaching than before.



2,264

home visits with vulnerable families



4,237

hours of coaching



126

sites served

supported over
9,700
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.



\$74,119

worth of developmentally-appropriate supplies donated to centers



126

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 meet that need.

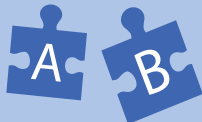
Workforce Development

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
- Shining Bright Quarterly Workshops
- Colorado Shines PDIS Onboarding
- Rating Scale Trainings

Getting Our Kids Ready for Kindergarten

In 2019, Colorado implemented free full-day kindergarten, paving the way to improve educational outcomes for all kids. But a 2019 Dept. of Education report found that just 41% of our kids are starting kindergarten with all the skills they need to succeed. Kindergarten readiness is more than knowing how to count to ten. It includes:



Language and Cognition

how to listen and follow directions



Social-Emotional Development

how to make friends and share



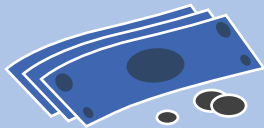
Physical Motor Skills

how to balance or hold a pencil

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 2019, we focused heavily on improving the lowest rated child care centers in Arapahoe County. We provided:



with



at



4,237

hours of site coaching

8,700

children served

126

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

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.



43 families recieved 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
1,735
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.



520 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.



43 caregivers and **52** children completed The Incredible Years parenting class

✧✧ Bridging Gaps Throughout ✧✧ the Community

In today's fast-paced world, parents and caregivers face more pressure than ever. One in four kids today live with one parent, while more than half of all parents with young kids say that it's hard to find childcare that's both affordable and high quality. **Our Child Care Navigator helps families navigate the maze of childcare.** The navigator answers questions about financial assistance like the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) and educates the community about the quality and availability of care. This service is free, confidential, and closely integrated with the Arapahoe County Department of Human Services, so families already seeking assistance are more likely to get connected with childcare. In 2019, our navigator:



made **520 referrals**
to community and
childcare resources

51% of referrals were to families in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), a time limited program designed to help families achieve self-sufficiency.

28% of referrals to families with a recent kinship placement or seeking help with Colorado's Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP).

Giving Families Tools to Succeed

Our goal is to share knowledge and empower families so that parents and kids are valued, healthy, and thriving. Often, that means connecting parents to a broader network of resources. Our Parents as Teachers home visitation program helps detect developmental delays and increase parent knowledge, but staff also connect families with community resources.

“ I've found that when our staff come in, we're not only educating parents, we're connecting them to a wider network of support that they may not know about - financial resources, job training, ESL classes, or community centers.
- Madelene Williams, Parents as Teachers Coordinator ”





Stay in Touch

Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council

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