

2014-2015



Photo by Chi Leung

Childcare Learning Centers Annual Report





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Childcare Learning Centers' mission is to give every child/family in our community access to affordable, high quality, early childhood education and care.

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A Message from our CEO and Board President

It was an exciting year of growth for CLC. We celebrated the opening of CLC's Lockwood Wing and the 50th Anniversary of Head Start – important milestones made even more significant by the fact that we're now able to serve more children in our Head Start, Early Head Start, and School Readiness Programs.

Program and curriculum enrichments are also expanding, supporting the growth and development of the children we serve. We are proud to be Yale's partner in developing Preschool RULER and are excited to see this important program supporting social and emotional development expand and have even greater impact. We also continue to grow program enrichments like the Sandak Garden and volunteer reading programs and are excited to introduce music to the children across the agency.

We've also actively reached beyond our four walls to build community collaborations that support our mission of closing the achievement gap. We participate in several collective impact efforts such as STRIVE Cradle to Career led by United Way of Western Connecticut. We're also piloting a Parents as Co-Educators Project with VITA Health District and our partners at Family Centers, Neighbors Link, Stamford Hospital, and Charter Oak Communities. A new collaboration on a parenting center at Inspirica will enable us to support their mission to break the cycle of homelessness.

CLC has expanded its Board and Leadership Council with new members from Stamford, Greenwich, and Darien. We launched a constituency outreach program with the establishment of an Alumni Hall of Fame and raised our profile with a successful public relations effort.

We're excited about our growth and the future and appreciate your loyal support.



Marc E. Jaffe
CEO



Robert J. Mattis, Jr.
Board President



Children & Curriculum

CLC has been caring for and educating working families' children since 1902. Providing access to high-quality and affordable services to the entire community has always been our mission.

We offer comprehensive programs for children six weeks to five years old. Our programs are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children or monitored through the Office of Head Start review process.

Our curriculum is play-based, inviting, stimulating and fun. It encourages curiosity about the world to instill a love of learning.

Our infant, toddler and preschool classrooms all use the Creative Curriculum, which rests on a foundation of theory and research. The framework has five components: The Teacher's Role, The Family's Role, How Children Develop and Learn, The Learning Environment, and What Children Learn.

Teachers use children's needs and interests, along with specific learning standards, to plan lessons and activities that help students make sense of their experiences.

Our lead teachers have either an Associate's degree with an Early Childhood Teaching Credential or a Bachelor's degree. Eleven percent have earned their Master's degree.

The Creative Curriculum, along with the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework seek to support all children to be creative, inquisitive, flexible, critical thinkers who are purposeful, social learners.

Family Service Staff are available to support families with enrollment, transitions, and referrals to community agencies for any additional support services they need.

Our Student Body Includes 1,000 Children & Families

- 68% Hispanic
- 21% African American
- 5% White
- 6% Asian/other
- 49% Single Parent Families
- 47 Countries Represented
- 28 Languages Spoken by Families



Yale Preschool RULER

We've partnered with Yale University on an innovative, breakthrough program that helps our staff develop children's social and emotional skills.

The Yale University Center for Emotional Intelligence created the RULER program to promote emotional intelligence. Recognize, Understand, Label, Express and Regulate – is a powerful and effective method for harnessing emotions in a way that promotes health, compassion, productivity and happiness.

Yale researchers teamed with our teachers, administrators, children and families to develop the first preschool version of the RULER approach. It teaches students specific tools and strategies they can apply in and out of school.

Group lessons and activities, role-plays, read-alouds, songs and games help teachers lay the foundation and introduce RULER concepts that can be embedded into daily classroom routines.

What CLC Teachers Say About RULER

“Children are better able to express their feelings to teachers and peers.”

“When another child is angry, the other children remind them to calm down and think of a solution.”

“I feel overall the classroom is calmer.”

Children participating in the preschool RULER program made significant gains in emotional intelligence above and beyond children at a control site who did not participate in the program.

The program has expanded to all of our sites. We're currently training staff teams in each of our programs to lead implementation of RULER into the future, helping our children enter kindergarten with the social and academic skills they need to succeed.



Nutrition & Health

CLC helps children and parents establish healthy habits for a lifetime. We offer movement and exercise programs for children, families and staff in addition to general health services. Nurses on staff assist teachers in monitoring children's health and we develop individual health plans when needed, too.

Our programs reinforce the best practices of Michelle Obama's *Let's Move* initiative, Head Start's *I'm Moving, I'm Learning* program, and the 5-2-1-0 message supported by Stamford Hospital and United Way of Western Connecticut.

A breakfast, lunch and snack that together provide 80% of children's daily nutritional needs are offered to each child daily - that's more than 500,000 meals a year!

Through our nutrition services and *Healthy Bodies* program - funded in part by United Way of Western Connecticut - children are getting healthier and parents are receiving the support and tools they need to implement healthy lifestyle choices at home.

Results:

- Children are achieving a healthier weight: In Fall 2013, 30% of children enrolled at CLC were overweight or obese. In Spring 2014, 22% of children were overweight or obese- a 27% reduction from the Fall.
- Children are moving more: In Fall 2013, only 17% of CLC parents reported that their children actively played outside of school every day. By Spring 2015, the number of parents who reported their children played outside of school every day had more than doubled!
- Families are learning about the importance of good nutrition and exercise thanks to events like Family Nights, where fun fitness activities like Zumba and International Dance get children and adults moving.
- Parent workshops and cooking classes provide practical advice, tools, and recipes to help busy families eat healthier and make fitness fun.



Program Enrichments

At CLC, we bring learning to life through hands-on experiences in our centers. We partner with a variety of organizations to enhance classroom learning throughout the year, often providing a child's first interaction with subjects ranging from art to sea life.

Arts and Culture: Through partnerships with organizations like the Bruce Museum, children have the opportunity to see and study art and create their own masterpieces. In 2015, the Stamford School Readiness Council sponsored a trip to the Palace Theatre. Every CLC student saw *Dino-Train*, which is based on the popular PBS show *Dinosaur Train*.

Literacy: We welcome opportunities to support children's language development in addition to our teachers' regular efforts building reading and writing skills. The Ferguson Library Bookmobile stops at CLC often and helps graduating preschoolers and their families register for library cards. Volunteer readers support the fun and value in reading, too. We're grateful for the leadership provided by Legg Mason and Edgehill Senior Living in our Volunteer Reading Program.

Science and Math: What's more fun than playing in dirt, studying sea life or petting a goat? Discovering the world through hands-on experiences comes naturally to children. We're pleased to partner with organizations like Bartlett Arboretum, Stamford Museum and Nature Center, SoundWaters, and Fairgate Farm to bring learning to life. Through these enrichments and CLC's Sandak Garden Program, children are able to make predictions, test hypotheses and have fun learning about the world.

Music: New for 2015-2016, CLC is partnering with Stamford Young Artists Philharmonic to pilot a music program that will introduce children to different types of music and instruments. In the process, they will develop competency in music (and math!) related concepts like rhythm, patterning and more!



Child Development Program Highlights

Our Child Development Program provides early care and education for children 6 weeks to 5 years old. Through state funding, CLC is able to offer a sliding scale for eligible families of 3-4 year old children.

Highlights

- CLC Palmer's Hill earned high marks in accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC Accreditation is recognized as the "mark of quality" for early childhood programs nationwide. All of CLC's Child Development sites went through accreditation recently.
- Legg Mason completed its 7th year sending volunteers to read to children in the classroom. Each month, 15-20 volunteers visit CLC Palmer's Hill to help children develop a love of reading and learn language skills. The program has been so successful that we're expanding to other centers in the year ahead.
- We're celebrating a 10 year partnership with Edgehill senior living community! For the past 9 years, children from CLC Palmer's Hill have visited their senior friends at Edgehill monthly. The two groups come together for a variety of planned experiences ranging from reading books, playing games, art, dancing or just visiting. This year for the first time, Edgehill residents started visiting CLC Palmer's Hill. The intergenerational partnership supports young children's social emotional and cognitive development.
- Our Sandak Garden went organic! Young children learn through actively exploring their environments and the garden provides stimulating and challenging experiences. Children actively participate in planting and caring for vegetables while observing life cycles and how things grow.



Head Start and Early Head Start Highlights

Both nationally and locally, Head Start celebrated its 50th year in 2015. CLC's program was one of the first in Connecticut.

CLC provides Early Head Start and Head Start programs to Stamford, Darien and Greenwich families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level. We serve 256 children ages birth to 5. Part-day Early Head Start and Head Start programs are provided free of charge to families. Full day services are available on a sliding scale.

Three and four-year-olds receive education and care through the Head Start program. Early Head Start serves infants and toddlers to promote healthy child development.

Highlights:

- We developed 5-year goals to improve program quality, strengthen partnerships and promote community awareness.
- We engage families as lifelong educators in their children's learning and development. As part of our ongoing family partnerships, we give parents opportunities to identify strengths and needs in pursuit of their family's goals.
- We support the engagement of fathers or male figures in each child's life for their academic success and social competence.
- Parents play an important role in the program decision-making process as members of the Policy Council.
- All children receive developmental, health and behavioral screenings within the first 30 days of enrollment.
- The program established goals for improving children's school readiness based on both local elementary school expectations and parent perspectives. Children demonstrated tremendous gains in the areas of language development and literacy as a result.
- We also partnered with The Ferguson Library and the Instructional Coordinators of the Stamford Public Schools to enhance literacy skills to broaden children's learning and experiences.



School Readiness Highlights

Funded in part by the Connecticut Department of Education, the School Readiness Program serves 3-4 year old children who live in Stamford. Eligible families pay a fee based on a sliding scale.

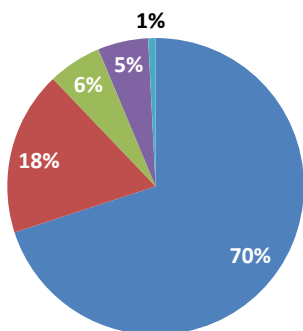
Highlights:

- Received \$1.4 million from the State of Connecticut to create CLC's Lockwood Wing. The project was complete in time for 60 students to begin the 2015-16 school year.
- Received funding for 37 new spaces for children from the Office of Early Childhood.
- Children received developmental screenings and were formally assessed three times over the course of the year. The teaching staff is able to use the information from the screenings and assessments to individualize learning experiences based on the CT Preschool Curriculum Frameworks, preparing children for kindergarten and life-long learning.
- The William Pitt Foundation grant provided *Music and Movement* with Fiona Angelov for eight weeks during the winter. Each classroom met weekly for 30 minutes. Children learned new tumbling skills, yoga, how to follow an obstacle course and more – wonderful ways to get needed exercise needed during the long winter! Curriculum for the program is geared to enhance the Early Learning Standards teachers are working on in the classroom.
- Monthly “Lunch and Learn” sessions for families. Workshops included: access to healthcare, positive parenting, curriculum overview, a variety of literacy-related topics, dental care and transitioning to kindergarten.
- Staff received five full days and two half day training experiences in: health and nutrition, working with families, special needs, curriculum, literacy and diversity. Diversity training concluded with a diversity lunch for staff with food honoring the 27 countries represented by staff.



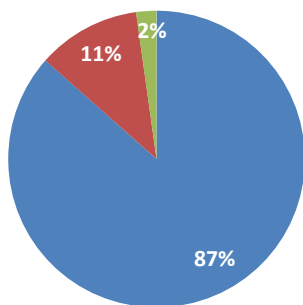
Consolidated Statement of Activities*

Revenues



Federal and State Grants	9,444,510
Program Fees	2,414,136
Fundraising	785,755
In-Kind Revenue	744,547
Investment and Other	107,821
Total	13,496,769

Expenses



Program	11,911,923
Management & General	1,546,723
Fundraising	303,868
Total	13,762,514

*Unaudited



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A gift to CLC makes a significant difference in the lives of our children.

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Personal check or cashier's check. You may also make a pledge, payable in installments.

Mail or Phone

Mail to Childcare Learning Centers, Development Department
64 Palmer's Hill Road Stamford, CT 06902
Or call (203) 653-1337.

Online

Make a donation, go to www.clcstamford.org
click donate now.

Matching Gift

Many corporations match employee gifts to charitable organizations. Contact your Human Resource Department.

Stocks & Bonds

Donate stocks that have risen in value and that you have had for more than one year.

Your Will

Deferred gifts by making a bequest naming CLC as a gift recipient in your will.

Gifts of Life Insurance

Make a substantial gift with modest premium payments.

*For details or to discuss how you can make a difference,
please contact our Development Department (203) 323-5944 x 137.*



Milestones

We are proud of our employees and their years of service. Congratulations to CLC staff members who have been with us 20 years or more. They use their expertise and passion to help children learn every day.

Jacquelyn Copeland - 42
Brenda Robinson - 38
Pearl Hudson - 36
Mary Catherine Herbert - 35
Rosebud Davis - 34
Carol Sargent - 33
Emma Cassell - 33
Sandi Docimo - 31
Mary Boone - 30
Hope Rumble - 30
Joanne Vermilyea - 29

Merlaine Opont - 27
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Pamela Dais - 24
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Anniversaries as of May 2015

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