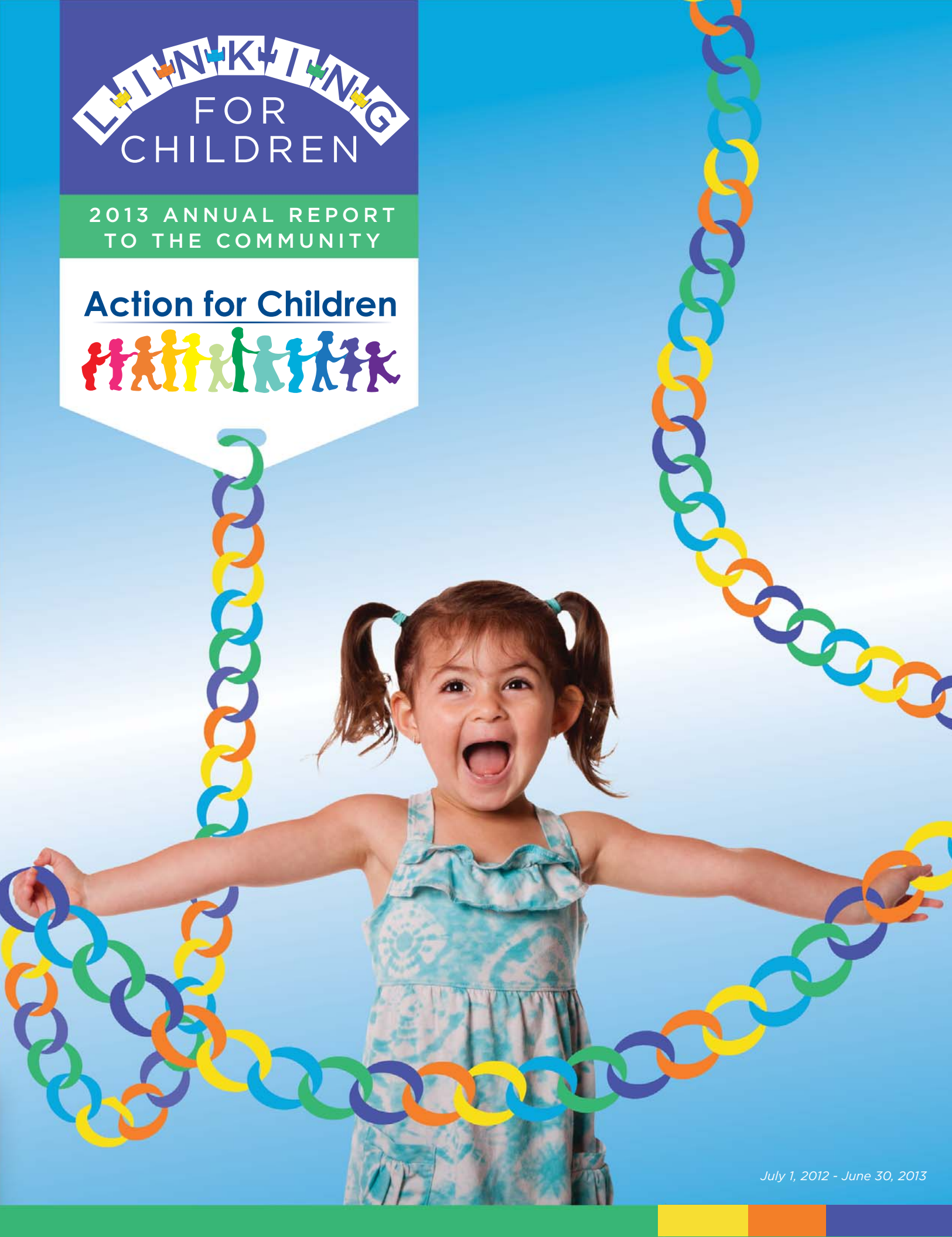




2013 ANNUAL REPORT
TO THE COMMUNITY

Action for Children



July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013

DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS OF ACTION FOR CHILDREN



Jeffrey Cullman
President
Board of Directors

This reporting year has been important for linking children, parents, and child care professionals with resources and research highlighting the importance of quality early childhood experiences and

kindergarten readiness.

In December 2012, Action for Children unveiled its newly renovated Columbus office to the community. Originally known as The Cecilia Cullman Center for Children the location first opened its doors in 1991. It is nostalgic for me as it links back to my grandmother Cee Cullman, a founder (with Rosa Thompson Hightower) and our first Board president. I know she would be proud because she remained closely linked to the work of Action for Children until her death in 2004.

The improvements, as Phase One in our partnership in the Kids Come First Campaign (Phase II, South Side Learning & Development Centers; Phase III, Columbus Early Learning Centers), have made a major difference in our look and our ability to expand our professional services and programs.

This has also been a year of leadership change. Diane Bennett retired as CEO in February. During her amazing 30 years of leadership, including the first three-quarters of this reporting year, she guided us in prioritizing our work to serve the best interests of children and their right to quality child care and early learning experiences, linking us to many of our public and private partners and collaborators.

In her honor, we established The Diane Bennett Fund for the Advancement of Early Childhood Development at Action for Children (see donor section).

Under Diane's leadership, the agency grew regionally to serve the seven central Ohio counties and influenced public policy at the state and national levels. Our national presence created the link that brought Diane's distinguished successor, Eric Karolak, from Washington DC, where he was most recently the founding Executive Director of the Early Care and Education Consortium, back to his Ohio roots, where he was born and holds his Ph.D. from The Ohio State University.



Eric J. Karolak, Ph.D., CAE
CEO

I'm delighted to return to central Ohio and appreciate the opportunity to carry forward the work of Action for Children. I first met Diane Bennett as an advocate who arranged a focus group of family child care providers for a research project

I was conducting. It has been a fun challenge to follow in the footsteps of such a "force of nature." For decades, Action for Children has delivered vital services and advocated for opportunities for children and working families. I look forward to building on that foundation with you and other partners.

Since I began in March 2013, I have been able to see what a pivotal role we have played in this community on behalf of quality early care and education. This year alone our central Ohio programs and services were instrumental in reaching 20,526 parents and early childhood professionals, affecting the lives of more than 110,000 children. We have been innovators and collaborators and this report highlights our work.

My career began here in central Ohio where I taught for Columbus City Schools and later worked for the Legislative Budget Office. Since then, I've headed the nation's largest association of early care and learning schools, and run the federal government's largest clearinghouse for early childhood education. For much of the last 15 years, I've been learning about the needs of working families and their developing children, the realities of child care and early childhood programs, and advocating for access to quality early learning and school-age programs in Washington DC and more than a dozen other states.

I understand firsthand what the early childhood workforce means to young children and working families. I know that quality child care, early learning and afterschool programs are community assets that add to our region's collective economy and social well-being. And, like you, I've seen what a difference confident, caring, committed and capable parents can make in the lives of our children. This is what drives the mission of this great agency and unites all of us as advocates for children.

Please peruse our annual report in its new poster format and look for the links to issues, programs, services and handy information that illustrate our work and impact. If you have any questions or thoughts, we want to hear from you. Our doors are open.

On behalf of the Board and Staff of Action for Children, we thank you for your contributions of time, talent and treasure. You are the strength in our link for children.

Sincerely,
Jeff and Eric



THE IMPORTANCE OF LINKS

Links are described as connections or connectors. When we were children, we linked hands to form a circle that began many a game. Remember Ring Around the Rosey? We often linked arms as we prepared to form a line that might start us dancing. Linking hands and arms are also a show of support. They help us to physically connect with one another.

For more than four decades, our Action for Children programs and services have always been about linking and connecting for children. Indeed, the idea of linking is graphically represented in our logo. Our diverse children are linked together—hand to shoulder—as they lead us into the future.

Today, we more commonly think of the word link in website terms—our web connections. And, at Action for Children, we provide those important online links, as well as links that connect us by phone and in person.

This publication highlights Action for Children 2013 programs and services for parents, professionals and the general community—the links that support quality care and early learning experiences for the children of central Ohio.

Action for Children



OUR VISION

Action for Children will be the community leader in transforming the future of child care into quality learning experiences for every child in central Ohio.

Achieving this vision is a shared responsibility. Action for Children will work with others by developing leadership and providing access to comprehensive information for community decision making. Our partners include: families, employers, child-care providers, human service and social service organizations, neighborhoods, educators, funders, policymakers, and faith-based organizations.

OUR MISSION

- To develop and advocate for early childhood education initiatives;
- To foster the growth of early learning environments and assure their availability to all children in central Ohio; and
- To help families endow their children with quality early learning experiences.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

- **Parents:** Improve the quality of interactions between parent and child
- **Providers:** Improve the quality of interactions between caregiver (teachers, directors, home providers) and child
- **Environment:** Implementation of quality early care and education environments as defined through national research (i.e. National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Association for Family Child Care) and Ohio's quality rating system Step Up to Quality
- **Advocacy:** The development of state licensing for all child care by 2016; standards of care for Kith and Kin by 2016; new finance mechanism to support quality early care and education

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

PARENT SERVICES

9,956

Community Parents

- The Art of Positive Parenting (TAPP) seminars, classes and parenting workshops:
 - Family 2 Family at Gladden Community House includes TAPP workshops, Resource Management workshops and Education Advocacy workshops
 - TAPP: Father Factor—English & Spanish classes (funded by Ohio Commission on Fatherhood)
 - TAPP: Mothers Matter with Tapestry Hope
 - Parents Who Parent Separately
 - Putting the Children First (in-person and online)
- Information and Resources (I&R) via phone, fax, e-mail and e-Search
- Caring for 2 (through Columbus Public Health)
- Learning Begins Right From the Start® Early Learning Kits for Families
- Family Wellness through Columbus Kids (A program of United Way of Central Ohio and Columbus City Schools Foundation)
- Employer Dependent Care

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PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

10,567

Child Care and Early Learning Professionals

- Professional Development core training and technical assistance
- Step Up to Quality technical assistance for child care centers
- National Accreditation technical assistance for child care centers and family home providers
- Child Development Associate (CDA) credential preparation and coaching
- Caring Communities: Birth to 3 (in partnership with ECAL)
- Child Abuse Curriculum train-the-trainer workshops
- Nurturing Nature: Happy, Healthy Children
- Home Care Business Recruitment
- How to Start a Child Care Center workshop
- Nutrition Education Through Healthy Child Care Ohio
- USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (funded by the United States Department of Agriculture) in 12 counties (Allen, Crawford, Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Pickaway, Richland and Union)
- Ready to Read with Family Child Care Home Providers
- Developmental Assets in Early Childhood (funded by PNC Foundation)



PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ON BEHALF OF

110,008

YOUNG CHILDREN IN CENTRAL OHIO

Note: Numbers represent our seven-county central Ohio region: Franklin, Delaware, Madison, Union, Fairfield, Licking and Pickaway counties

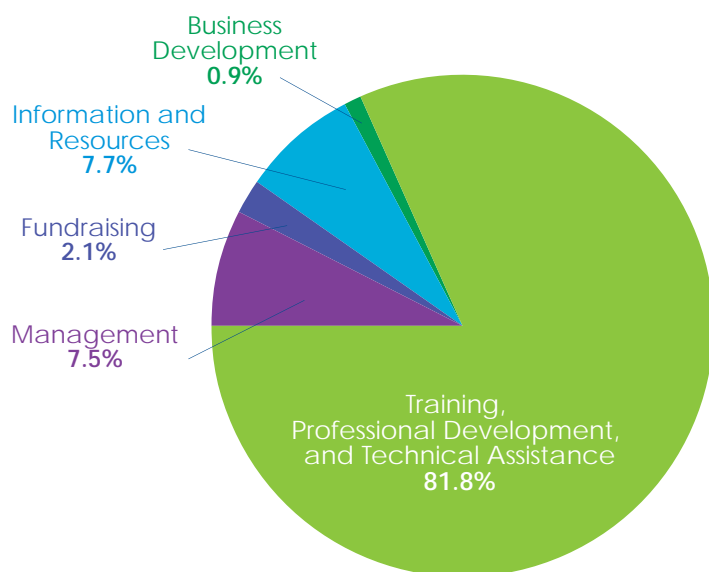
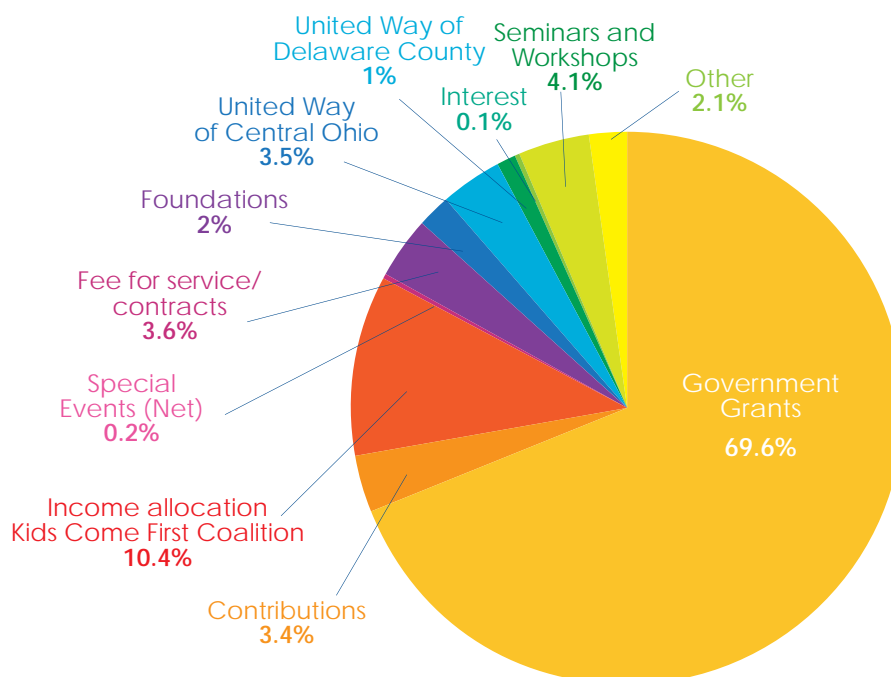
PROGRAM FUNDING

2013 Financial Statement

All funding (except 7.5 percent administrative costs) goes directly to programs and services, which during this year reached 9,956 parents and 10,567 providers affecting the lives of more than 110,000 children.

The June 30, 2013 financial statements were audited by Saltz, Shamis & Goldfarb, Certified Public Accountants, who expressed an unqualified opinion on them. The audited financial statements are available on request by calling Action for Children, 614-224-0222, ext. 138

Program Revenue \$3,464,874



Program Expenses \$3,257,699



LINKING WITH PARENTS

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Parents need access to information and resources to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to support their children and to help them succeed in school and life.

The Art of Positive Parenting (TAPP), our three- and six-week parenting skills education classes, were attended by 2,755 parents. These include those in partnership with Gladden Community House's **Family 2 Family**, providing 54 workshops on Resource Management and Education Advocacy to 437 parents.

TAPP: Father Factor classes were attended by 211 fathers; 168 through programs hosted at churches and community organizations. Additionally, 50 fathers attended Spanish Father Factor classes. This year we formed a new collaboration with **Starts Within**, a program to decrease the recidivism rate of incarcerated fathers by providing programming that takes a holistic approach to re-entry.

TAPP: Mothers Matter had 133 participants in 18 workshops provided in cooperation with **Tapestry Hope**, a pre-release program at the Ohio Reformatory for Women, for women who are custodial and non-custodial parents.

Putting the Children First is an education seminar for parents going through divorce or dissolution presented by Action for Children—the designated provider for the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas, Division of Domestic Relations and Juvenile Justice Branch. With the contract up for renewal, we were again selected by the Court as their designated provider.

This year 1,878 parents participated in either the in-person or online options. Sixty-six percent of the attendees responded that they are dealing with family challenges ranging from health and safety concerns, to financial issues, to children struggling with being parented out of two homes. More than 80 percent of the parents taking the seminar reported that they gained a better understanding of how to help their children go through the divorce process.

Columbus Kids links us in a partnership (United Way of Central Ohio, Columbus City Schools Education Foundation and Columbus City Schools) to increase the early detection of developmental delays and potential learning obstacles, such as speech, hearing and vision problems, before children are slated to enter the Columbus City Schools. All of the children in the target-age group, 2 1/2 to 4 years, receive the Learning Checkup every six months and parents are directed to resources if the results identify a need.

Since the program began, 9,926 children have received the Learning Checkup and including the six-month recheck, 14,456 Learning Checkups have been completed. Of these, 2,024 (13.9 percent) of the children were identified with a single area of need and 1,396 (9.6 percent) with multiple areas of need. Their families are referred to such resources as Columbus City Schools, Columbus Speech and Hearing, Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Nationwide Children's Hospital, St. Vincent Family Center or other appropriate community agencies. Of the children referred, 75.9 percent have been linked with services.

Our Wellness Coordinators teach parents and center staff how to administer the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), a comprehensive child assessment tool for children six months to five years, and provide appropriate resources for parents needing assistance with the results. Our Engagement Specialists reconnect with the families until their children enter kindergarten.

“There can never be enough help for a parent. This class really defines how to parent successfully, and what skills to implement in your daily life as a mom or dad. This course illuminates how parenting choices can have a positive or negative effect on the child.”
- TAPP Parent



www.actionforchildren.org



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LINKING WITH PROVIDERS

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

A qualified early childhood workforce is essential to providing high quality early care and education outside the home.

Early care and education environments must be constructed so children have opportunities to interact, engage and investigate to fully develop in all early childhood domains (physical, mental, cognitive, social-emotional) in order to lay the foundation for success in school and in life.

Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) is Ohio's voluntary 3-star rating system (changed from 3-star to 5-star in 2013). Action for Children provides the technical assistance to those centers seeking star status as an important quality indicator. In addition, Action for Children provides SUTQ approved classes for providers, teachers and administrators. We provided 9,000 hours of technical assistance in the seven-county region, resulting in 81 centers becoming star-rated or increasing their star rating.

Child Development Associate (CDA) administered by the Council for Professional Recognition is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education and is key to career advancement in the field. Our CDA program, available to center-and home-based providers in central Ohio, offers 120 hours of coursework to meet the requirements in each of the content areas. T.E.A.C.H. scholarships are available through Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA) to offset the \$1,250 participant cost. This year 25 individuals received their CDA credential.

Nurturing Nature: Happy, Healthy Children funded by Cardinal Health Foundation, is a program that works to help eliminate the presence of childhood obesity in our community. The program was conducted in two phases with the overall goal of helping participants improve

their outdoor spaces and introduce good eating habits. The first phase reached 51 participants representing 21 centers. The second reached 30 participants representing 12 centers and five family child-care homes.

USDA Food Program is managed by Action for Children in a 12-county region to allow family child care home providers to serve nutritious meals and snacks to young children in their care at no additional cost to the families. This year 245 participating providers served 784,885 nutritious meals and snacks that follow the USDA guidelines.

Ready 4 Success links us as a collaborative partner with Learn 4 Life, Learning Circle Education Services and nine early care and education agencies that are working in partnership with center-based early care and education programs to help them achieve school readiness goals for the children they serve.

We screened 487 preschool-age children—attending centers in the Columbus City Schools area, using Get Ready to Read, a literacy assessment. The goal for the Fall of 2013 is to evaluate 1,000 preschoolers. We also provide classroom-based coaching and professional development classes that help teachers implement strategies to improve kindergarten readiness.

**"I like the easy access to the curriculum, the comprehensive on-site technical assistance provided to support integrated learning, the renewed energy we saw in staff, and that my teachers gained confidence and knowledge to build on their classroom ideas."
- Child-Care Center Director**



LINKING IN THE COMMUNITY

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

A system for early childhood that supports universal access to quality services, equal opportunities for learning, and an effective finance mechanism to create a sustainable and integrated system is needed in Ohio to support and sustain the work on behalf of children.

Action for Children Provides:

- **Child Care and Early Learning information**, education and resources for families, early childhood and afterschool professionals, community organizations, businesses and government
- **Research Data** on the availability, affordability and accessibility of quality child care in central Ohio
- **Advocacy** for quality child care and early learning experiences for all children as preparation for kindergarten, school and lifelong success

Ohio was one of nine states that was a recipient of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. This prestigious award recognizes the importance placed on early learning as it relates to school readiness. At Action for Children, a Race to the Top recipient of Ohio funding, our work continues our focus on providing the education (now on the new statewide standards) to early care and learning professionals that will help to assure the availability of quality programs to meet the demand.

In our advocacy work, we are one of five organizations that comprise the Alliance of Early Learning Advocates in Ohio. Our four partners are unified to promote the success of children and youth and the quality systems that support their pathway to success. Our partners in the Alliance of Early Learning Advocates are:

Ohio Association of Child Care Providers (OACCP), which represents the directors and business owners of over 600 licensed child care centers across the state. OACCP members serve over 50,000 of Ohio's youngest citizens, including private pay and publicly funded children cared for in faith-based, for-profit and non-profit programs.

Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRRA) and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network represent a public-private partnership. Eight private non-profit agencies serve as regional hubs, providing professional development and technical assistance to the early childhood and after school workforce and support to providers, parents and communities in all of Ohio's 88 counties.

Ohio Alliance of YMCAs is a non-profit association representing the 60 corporate YMCA associations throughout Ohio; a grassroots-driven and governed organization that advocates and educates on behalf of the YMCAs. The Y is the single largest early childhood and after school provider in Ohio and the nation.

Early Care and Education Consortium is a non-profit alliance of America's leading providers of quality early learning programs. Consortium members operate more than 7,500 licensed centers in every state, including more than 250 in Ohio, caring for and educating over one million children every day across the country.



Action for Children



THE DIANE BENNETT FUND

FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Diane Bennett retired as CEO of Action for Children in February 2013 after 30 years of passionate, inspiring and visionary leadership. On April 26, 2013, we paid tribute to her commitment to early learning at an event we appropriately titled **rōast | tōast | bōast**. Proceeds from the event went to The Diane Bennett Fund for the Advancement of Early Childhood Development at Action for Children. This fund was established in Diane's honor to help us continue to offer pioneering programs and services for parents, caregivers and educators that will prepare children for school and lifelong success. As Diane would say, "...to create a community where children are a number one priority and where all children would have equal opportunity to reach their fullest potential."



images from
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July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013

Every contribution to Action for Children is important. Some of the contributions are in the form of grants, others as a result of the ABCee Fund, Seven Generations Circle of Women, the annual campaign, and gifts made in honor and in memory of someone special. We are acknowledging all of these gifts in alphabetical order, rather than by giving levels. We deeply appreciate your financial contributions to Action for Children. They help us offer our programs and services to parents, providers and the general community. They also let us provide new and innovative kinds of programming. Thanks to each and every one of you for your support that allows us to take action on behalf of the children in central Ohio.

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Action for Children



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LINKING FOR CHILDREN

Did You KNOW?



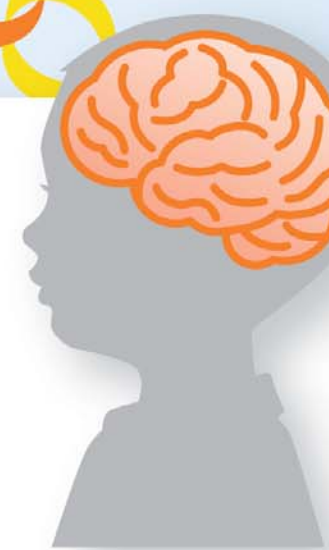
According to a 2013 Action for Children survey,

\$194 THE AVERAGE WEEKLY COST OF INFANT CARE AT A CHILD-CARE CENTER

(in the seven-county central Ohio region)

ONE YEAR'S TUITION AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY (\$10,010 resident tuition and fees).

» **85%** of brain development occurs by the age of **FIVE**



RESEARCH LINKS THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF POOR BEGINNINGS TO EVERYTHING FROM CHILDHOOD OBESITY AND HIGH SCHOOL DROP-OUT RATES TO TEEN PREGNANCY AND INCREASED JUVENILE CRIME.

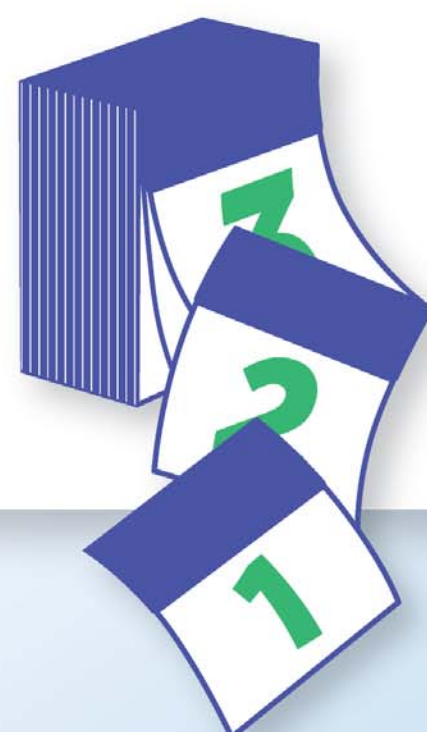


THERE ARE ONLY **1825 days**

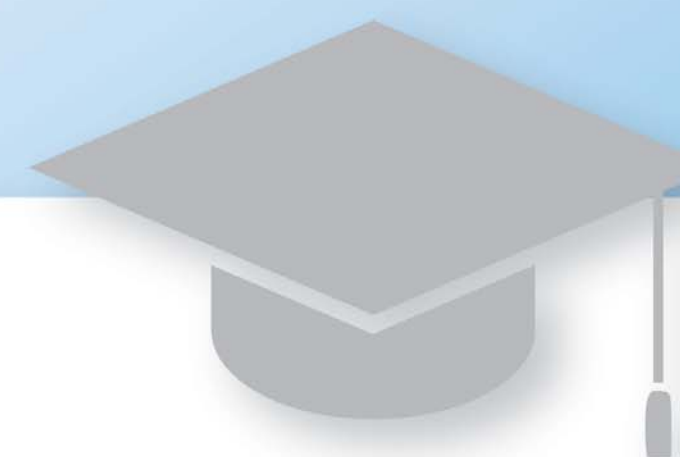
from when a child is born to their first day of kindergarten

THEN ONLY **156 months**

from kindergarten until high school graduation



Quality Early Childhood experiences link **PLAY ROLES TO PAYROLLS**



A study by Ohio's law enforcement leaders and crime survivors report that by **INCREASING OHIO'S HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION BY 10% A YEAR, VIOLENT CRIME WOULD DROP BY 21%**

The best way to do that, the report says, is to **INVEST IN QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION** because of its track record in raising graduation rates.

Nobel Prize winning University of Chicago Economics Professor James Heckman's research shows that individual productivity can be fostered by investments in young children.

SKILL BEGETS SKILL AND LEARNING BEGETS MORE LEARNING.

Because skills are accumulated, **starting early** and over time, **INVESTING IN YOUNG CHILDREN IS AN INVESTMENT IN FUTURE productivity and public safety.**



Two very important **LINKS** to a child's **KINDERGARTEN READINESS AND SCHOOL SUCCESS** are when parents and providers communicate and work together to provide healthy, safe, and nurturing care for young children.

PARENTS PROVIDERS

Evidence-based findings from the American Academy of Pediatrics and American Public Health Association **LINK CHILDREN'S EATING NUTRITIOUS FOOD, engaging in daily age-appropriate PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AND LIMITED SCREEN TIME TO MAINTAINING HEALTHY WEIGHT.**



CHILDREN WHO HEARD THE **GREATEST AMOUNT OF LANGUAGE** when they were young had the **HIGHEST ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES.**

Researchers Drs. Betty Hart and Scott Risley recommend that to build the vocabulary of young children they need to hear 30,000 words a day, the equivalent of reading Dr. Seuss' *Cat in the Hat* 18 times.



Economists Art Rolnick and Rob Gruenwald of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank **CONFIRM THAT PUBLIC SPENDING ON HIGH QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION YIELDS A MINIMUM \$8.00 return on EVERY \$1.00 INVESTMENT.**

