



MAKING GOOD
on our PROMISE

TAKING
ACTION
FOR CHILDREN

2012

— Celebrating 40 Years —





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Dear Friends and Supporters of Action for Children,

What a year this has been! In celebrating 40 years, we have had the chance to look back and look forward. Our work has been foundational. Our footprint has been visible in the change that we have witnessed in attitudes about child care and the early learning experiences children need to be ready for kindergarten, school and lifelong success.

In February, we were proud to be announced as the first nonprofit organization to receive the Champion of Children Award. In presenting the award, Linda Kass, founder and chairperson of Champion of Children, said, *"Action for Children embodies every quality we sought in our first Champion of Children Nonprofit Organization. The organization has pioneered innovative ways to help children learn, and caregivers and educators teach effectively. Generations of students in central Ohio have benefited tremendously from the work of Action for Children, and we are fortunate to have such a dedicated group of professionals as champions for all of our children."*



CELEBRATING 4 DECADES: MAKING GOOD ON OUR PROMISE

It was a time when webs were the products of spiders, windows were for sunlight, texts were manuscripts, gas prices were 55 cents a gallon and a hand-held calculator was introduced at the cost of \$395. It was also a time when the Women's Movement was gaining strength and more moms were going into the workforce – nearly 50 percent when their children entered school and about 30 percent when their children were infants and toddlers.

The year was 1972 in Columbus, Ohio. What was our community to do about the children of working moms? Who was going to care for them when their parents worked and how would parents know where to find these child care options? This was a critical issue for our city. Its solution would require courage, vision, boldness, passion, and a spirit of adventure. This would require the work of dedicated men and women.

Both of us are nostalgic about our roots—forged by Cee Cullman, a mentoring grandma (Gammy) and a “founding mom” of Action for Children, along with Rosa Hightower, then the executive director of Central Community House. Cee and Rosa were two passionate and committed social workers who worked with United Way to establish what was first called 4C, Community Coordinated Child Care, a resource and referral agency for child care.

In 1979, our agency was renamed Action for Children. And, there has been continued action taken in behalf of children over the past four decades.

In April of this year, we released a 60-page report, *Progress Made, Ground Lost*, prepared by Community Research Partners with funding from The Columbus Foundation. The findings confirmed that “The need for child care is greater than ever.”

And when we look back at our mission those 40 years ago, Cee and Rosa recognized a need that was greater than ever for available, affordable quality child care experiences to support the increasing number of moms entering the workforce. While the demand is great, the cost of available, quality child care is well beyond many family’s ability to pay—one out of three children under the age of six lives in poverty.

On the side of progress, today the parents who look for child care programs focus on learning. They want “more than a babysitter” for their children when they are at work or school. (Gammy would be so proud.)

In response to the findings, Action for Children developed a list of recommendations that will shape its work in the months and years ahead. Of course, they embody our Action for Children mission from our inception—accelerating the creation of quality programs to provide parents access to available, affordable quality child care.

This year’s community report puts our 2012 highlights in the context of the past four decades. We hope that you enjoy the historic perspective running at the bottom of the pages of this report—a tribute to our strong foundation.

Through your connection with Action for Children, you are a part of the story and the success. We thank you for your support for today’s children and our hope for their healthy, peaceful and productive future.

**Sincerely,
Jeff and Diane**



Jeffrey Cullman
President
Board of Directors



Diane Bennett
CEO

P.S. In the theme of our 40th anniversary celebration—Making Good on Our Promise—with your support we will continue to make good on our promise to all children as we enter our fifth decade.

Action for Children, central Ohio’s resource and referral agency for quality child care and early learning programs and services, is an advocate for children and families. Since its founding in 1972, the agency has shifted the child care paradigm—first to acceptance of the reality of moms in the workforce, next to child care being more than babysitting, then to awareness that child care and education go hand-in-hand. As we entered the 21st century, we shifted the paradigm once again to reflect the crucial role of child care from infancy, creating a vision of “transforming the future of child care into quality early learning experiences for every child in 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 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 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.
- A qualified early childhood workforce is essential in 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.
- 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.



OUR ACTION FOR CHILDREN MAPP FOR CENTRAL OHIO

MISSION:

ADVOCACY FOR QUALITY CHILD CARE AND
EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

PARENT SERVICES INCLUDING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES
AND THE ART OF POSITIVE PARENTING

PROVIDER EDUCATION INCLUDING STEP UP TO QUALITY
APPROVED CLASSES

A vibrant illustration of a young child with curly hair, wearing a white sleeveless top and shorts, sitting on a wooden swing. The swing is suspended from a large, leafy green tree. The background features a bright blue sky with fluffy white clouds and rolling green hills at the bottom. The overall scene is cheerful and represents a positive childhood experience.

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

Since 1972, Action for Children has provided information and resource services to 500,000 people, The Art of Positive Parenting (TAPP) workshops to 10,000; provider workshops to 250,000 and touched the lives of three generations of children. The agency's work continues to bring voice, awareness and action to the importance of all children receiving quality care and early learning experiences so that they can be ready for kindergarten, school and lifelong success.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

PARENT SERVICES

14,955 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 at Directions for Youth and Families
- TAPP at Columbus Housing Partnership
- Information and Resources I&R via phone, fax, e-mail and e-Search
- The Father Factor (English & Spanish classes)
- Woodward Family Resource Center in Delaware
- Learning Begins Right From the Start® Early Learning Kits for Families
- Parents Who Parent Separately
- Putting the Children First (in-person and online)
- Caring for 2 (through Columbus Public Health)
- Family Wellness through Columbus Kids (A program of United Way of Central Ohio and Columbus City Schools Foundation)
- Employer Dependent Care
- Tapestry Hope

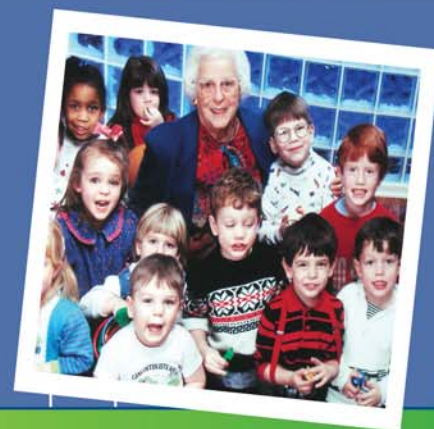
1972 - 1982

PRESIDENTS:

Cee Cullman, James Horan, Shirley Rhodes, Elizabeth Schilling, Nappy Hetzler, Ann Farrell Hughes, Russell Jordan, Betty Macintosh

EXECUTIVES:

Dorothy Reynolds, Hannah Dillard, Margaret Hamilton



PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

9,829 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
- National Program for After School Science (NPASS)
- Caring Communities: Birth to 3
- Limited Certification orientations
- Child Abuse Curriculum train-the-trainer workshops
- Nurturing Nature Through the Foods We Eat for After School educators
- Home Care Business Recruitment
- Limited Certification orientations
- Somali Limited Certified Provider assistance
- How to Start a Child Care Center workshop
- Nutrition Education Through Healthy Child Care Ohio
- USDA Child and Adult Food Care 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

ADVOCACY

Publication of Progress Made. Ground Lost.

First of its kind comprehensive analysis of child care supply and demand in Franklin County that includes fine-grained data on child care providers and the population potentially in need of child care services, today and future years.

TAKING ACTION IN BEHALF OF
144,359 YOUNG CHILDREN IN CENTRAL OHIO



Founded in 1972, Community Coordinated Child Care (4C) was the vision of social worker and philanthropist, Cee Cullman, and her colleague Rosa Hightower, executive director of Central Community House Day Care Center. In the '70s as more and more women began entering the workforce, Cee and Rosa recognized the need for young children to be in quality settings when their mothers were at work.

Renamed Action for Children (AfC) in 1979, the agency was established as a resource and referral agency with a mission of helping parents find available, affordable, quality child care options.

Cee was the first president of the board.

Early resource materials produced by AfC



TAKING ACTION FOR PARENTS



BACKGROUND

Parents need child care so that they can go to work, attend school or receive job training or retraining. These parents seeking child care and early education programs for their children are as diverse as the programs that serve them. They include parents paying the full cost of child care, income-eligible parents receiving a subsidy to help pay for child care, parents who enroll their children in part-time public preschool, and parents who are relying on family, friends and neighbors to fill the gap between existing capacity for their child's age, what they can afford, the hours outside of part-time programs, and their hours of employment. Increasingly, they are ethnically and culturally diverse. Finding high quality child care and early education programs and knowing what to look for are among the most stressful experiences in any parent's life.

The programs that care for children are diverse. They include publicly funded and private pay programs, licensed child care centers, preschools, Head Start programs, county certified family child care homes, and school age programs. They operate year-round; part-time, full-time, and a small percentage during non-traditional hours to meet the needs of working parents. They provide school readiness for three- and four-year olds and, at best, skilled teaching and good quality environments for children from infancy thru school age.

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.



1982 - 1992

PRESIDENTS:

Floradelle Pfahl, Muriel Tice, Don Bender,
Lou Briggs, Mary Lazarus

EXECUTIVES:

Margaret Hamilton, Diane Bennett (1983 – present)



*The Cecilia S. Cullman Center for Children
Building for the Future of Today's Children*



THE FATHER FACTOR

Funded by Ohio Commission on Fatherhood and in partnership with faith-based and community organizations, Ohio Commission on African Males, and the national Daddy's Promise organization, Action for Children (AfC) has provided The Art of Positive Parenting: Father Factor education and outreach program for at-risk fathers in Franklin County since 2010. The program has grown from initially being offered in one church site to being offered in 13 church and community sites.

Through the classes and mentoring provided in the program, the participating fathers—some single, some not living with their children, some who do not have positive memories of their own father, and others who recognize the importance of being a positive influence—are guided in techniques that help them become nurturing, caring fathers and a positive force in the lives of their children.

This year the agency was also awarded funding from the state to continue to expand the Father Factor program. Additionally, we received funding from The Columbus Foundation allowing translation of The Father Factor curriculum into Spanish for fathers in the Hispanic/Latino community.

By year-end, under this funding, AfC had held Father Factor classes at three sites with 45 fathers participating, including one class in Spanish, and is poised to provide nine additional programs, including classes for incarcerated fathers.

The Father Factor graduated 15 Latino men on Father's Day at Christ the King Church in Columbus. The facilitator, Pedro Chroroco blended the program's educational information with the cultural perspective of the fathers. In an article printed in the *Catholic Times*, Mr. Chroroco reported that "some of the biggest things the men say they have learned are how to listen more to their children instead of just giving advice, how to be more patient and how to have more real family conversations."

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Action for Children's Family Resource Center (FRC) provides families in the Laura Woodward Elementary School neighborhood in Delaware County with support and services

needed to allow their children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities provided at the school. Located on the grounds of the school, the FRC provides access to, and encourages use of, a comprehensive menu of family support programs, services and activities. Funded by United Way of Delaware County in collaboration with the Delaware City School District, the program is offered at no cost to participants.

During this year, the FRC had contact with 20,638 community residents, including those receiving newsletters, attending presentations, attending partnership meetings and advisory board meetings, and those contacted through school and community center functions. Of these overall contacts, 6,444 were general participants (those who responded to a message by seeking out and participating in a service offered by the FRC). Another 390 were participants who had a well-defined high need and sought assistance from the FRC, which either provided that service or linked them to services to meet their identified need.

TAPESTRY HOPE

AfC began working with CompDrug in January 2012 to provide parent education workshops for women who are custodial and non-custodial parents in the Tapestry Hope, pre-release program at the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW). The expectation is that mentors—women, who have been released from ORW but want to stay connected to the Tapestry program—will also be served through the parent education workshops.

According to information shared in early correspondences with CompDrug, a study supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services revealed that "family connections—and responsible and engaged parenting—improve public safety." This is the ultimate goal of the program and partnership.

The first in-house session took place at ORW in February, 2012, with 64 women in attendance, and the first community session took place at the CompDrug facility in Columbus in May, with seven mentors in attendance. Subsequent sessions have been held at ORW. A total of 101 women attended the parent education sessions between February and June.

The threads of its history are seen throughout the community. In 1986, the School Age Child Care (SACC) program was begun and by 1995 all Franklin County school districts had an after school program. Today many schools and organizations have after school programs that arose through consultation and technical assistance from Action for Children's School Age Child Care Specialist.

Before the days of computers and cell phones, in 1986, PhoneFriend was started by Action for Children to provide a warmline for children home alone. Action for Children staff trained volunteers who provided the reassuring voice, along with activities and homework help, for thousands of children who called Monday through Friday from 3:30 until 5:30. This was valuable since Ohio has no legal age when children can stay home alone. This spurred the creation and publication of the widely used booklet, *When Can My Child Stay Home Alone*.



THE ART OF POSITIVE PARENTING

Part of AfC's parent education program since 2001, The Art of Positive Parenting (TAPP) provides three- and six-week interactive classes designed to help today's parents listen to children's problems, identify and express feelings, set limits on behavior, resolve conflict effectively, engage children's cooperation, encourage responsibility, and manage stress. While fee-based for the three- and six-week classes, the TAPP program also includes neighborhood programs and community workshops.

During the year, the TAPP program served 2,943 parents through the three- and six-week classes offered throughout Franklin County, divorce seminars, and community workshops (including parent tables and community visibility events).

Under an agreement with Gladden Community House, TAPP continued to be the provider of parent education programs for its Family 2 Family program; providing 67 TAPP workshops, Resource Management and Education Advocacy workshops for 501 participating parents. The program at Gladden has grown significantly through word-of-mouth due to TAPP's consistent presence there, the high quality programming, and the relevant information for parents.

Additional community training included work with Columbus Housing Partnership where AfC conducted four back-to-school events and provided a three-hour, in-service training for their after school program staff.

More than 90 percent of parents who took the TAPP classes during the year reported that they are using the skills learned and finding them helpful. More than 76% of the parents reported that their relationship with their children has improved.

Parents attending the classes were often surprised at changes that occur. One parent commented, "I love the Limit-Choice-Action. It helps move things forward and reduce conflict—even with all ages." Another parent, court-ordered to attend the class as part of the terms of their probation, said "This has become a blessing in disguise. I learned so much about myself, as well as other parents' stories, and this has changed my perspective on how I personally feel about being a parent and the relationship with my children."

PUTTING THE CHILDREN FIRST

Since 2010, AfC has been the designated provider for the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas, Division of Domestic Relations and Juvenile Justice Branch of this parent education seminar for parents going through divorce or dissolution. The curriculum for the in-person seminar was enhanced in May 2012, following careful analysis of participant feedback. Each parent's situation and challenges are unique, with many circumstances to be considered when trying to decide how to respond to, or resolve, difficult situations. A decision-making model was added as a tool for parents to use when considering the best course of action for their child's well-being. More than 77% of parents who took the seminar this year reported that they gained a better understanding of how to help their children go through the divorce process. Parent comments included, "This seminar helped me better understand how my kids are feeling and how I can better help them through their feelings and let them know it is okay to feel this way."

Putting the Children First was offered only as an in-person seminar. In August, AfC added an online version of the seminar to expand access for parents. Since then, 481 parents registered for the class—exceeding projections by 35%. An online feedback survey, which uses a scale of 1 – 5 (strongly disagree—strongly agree), shows an average score of 4.37 for content being helpful and relevant to parents going through divorce and satisfaction with the seminar format. One parent commented, "This was a good and helpful presentation and easy to follow online."



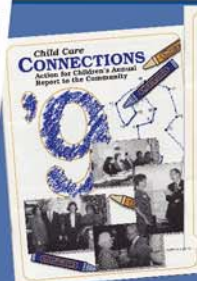
1992 - 2002

PRESIDENTS:

Sam Koon, Judy Fountain, Ann Pizzuti, Adam Troy, Tanny Crane

The agency has been transformative in raising the view of a child care worker from "baby sitter" to a child care and early learning professional—offering classes in child development, child management, health and safety. Over the years, the agency has recruited, registered and trained thousands of family home child care providers. This was critical in Ohio, when even today, Ohio is one of only five states that does not license home child care.

In 1993, AfC was selected by the Dayton Hudson Foundation and Target Stores for the Family to Family program that provided nationally recognized training that led to provider home accreditation and a more professional family home provider.



LEARNING BEGINS RIGHT FROM THE START® EARLY LEARNING KITS

In response to parent demand for early learning tools to help them prepare their young children for school, we began the Learning Begins Right From the Start® Early Learning Kits program eight years ago with funding from local foundations and corporations. The program provides parents of young children, ages two to five years, with research-based early learning tools in the form of play-based, content-specific activities and guidebooks that align with Ohio's PreKindergarten Standards for English Language Arts, Math, and Science.

In 2008, AEP Foundation partnered with AfC in the development of the materials and guidebook for Learning Begins Right From the Start® Adventures in Science. This funding helped our staff create and distribute 1,200 of the early learning kits to families in Franklin County and surrounding communities. With the success of this initial distribution and its relevance nationwide, AEP Foundation provided funding to fulfill and distribute an additional 5,000 kits during 2010 and 2011 in AEP's footprint communities in Ohio, West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Texas.

This year 1,250 science kits went out to families in south Texas, with the AEP representative in Corpus Christi organizing distribution to preschools and schools in high need neighborhoods within a 100 mile radius of the city. Another 2,200 kits have been prepared for distribution to low-income families in AEP footprint communities in the areas of South Bend, Indiana and St. Joseph, Michigan.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES (I&R)

A core service, our information and resources are provided at no charge to families in central Ohio who are searching for child care and quality early learning options for their children ages birth thru school age. As part of this service, we maintain a comprehensive database of more than 1,600 for-profit and non-profit child care and early education programs in the region that include child care centers, preschools, Head Start programs, school age programs and family child care homes. This database is accessed by families via telephone consultation with our counselors or self-directed eSearch on our website. AfC's I&R service delivery area encompasses Delaware, Franklin, Fairfield, Licking, Madison, Pickaway and Union counties, with funding provided by United Way of Central Ohio, United Way of Delaware County, and Ohio Department of Job & Family Services.

As part of the I&R process, our counselors provide linkage to resources that include developmental assessments, general information on child development, and financial assistance to pay for care.

2012 Average Weekly Cost (full-time, part-time and schoolage) Child Care in the Seven-County Central Ohio Region

State Licensed Child Care Center

Infants	\$192.24
Toddlers	\$171.74
Preschoolers	\$153.72
Schoolage	\$130.98

County Certified Family Child Care Home Provider

Infants	\$141.10
Toddlers	\$134.74
Preschoolers	\$122.96
Schoolage	\$119.12

In addition to resources delivered to parents by the counselors, a parent resource library on our website includes information about choosing quality child care, child development materials, and resource materials.

This year I&R served 3,993 families in the central Ohio region seeking child care and early education programs for 4,873 children. Care for infants or toddlers, which combined comprise 68.5% of all referral requests, remains the area of highest demand—43% for infants and 25.6% for toddlers. On follow-up during the year, 88% of clients reported that I&R services helped them in their search and 83% reported that they received increased knowledge from speaking with the counselor.

In January 2012, *Columbus Parent*, in partnership with AfC, featured a child care section that included all of the nationally accredited and Step Up to Quality star-rated centers in our seven-county region.

Right From the Start (RFS) was launched by Action for Children to draw attention to the importance of good quality care and education as a foundation for improved school readiness, lifelong learning and a skilled future workforce. Models for three- and four-year-olds were developed in collaboration with public schools, higher education, child care centers, MR/DD and Head Start. The Columbus Foundation provided the financial support.

The Learning Begins Right From the Start community awareness program was developed as an integral part of RFS. It was established within the landscape of emerging brain research that underscored the importance of stimulating and nurturing children from birth. One result was the creation of three research-based manuals for quality in child care and early education settings, precursors to the Ohio Standards for Early Childhood Education. The first, Program Guidelines for Preschool-Age Children was released in 1992, followed by Program Guidelines for School-Age Children and in 1997, Program Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers.



TAKING ACTION FOR PROVIDERS

BACKGROUND

The child care and early education provider is key to enabling parents to work and attend education programs to upgrade job skills. And as the child's second most important teacher next to the parents they are critical for the healthy growth and development of young children.

While they are vital to high-quality programs and child outcomes, yet in any given child care program or preschool, in Ohio and across the nation, we find extremes in the skills and knowledge that caregivers bring to their work with young children. Some have earned college or graduate degrees, while others possess a high school diploma or equivalent; some have studied early childhood education or child development, while others have not; some have a great deal of experience working with young children, while others do not. Regardless of their credentials or knowledge, the average income for those working in the field remains the lowest of almost any profession. Moving this widely diverse field towards new, higher standards and accountability is neither simple, nor without cost.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

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

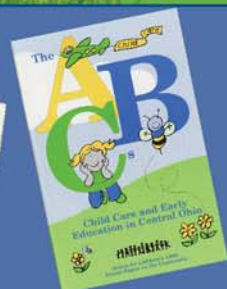
Early care and education environments must be constructed so children have opportunities to interact, engage and investigate to fully develop in all early childhood domains (physical, mental, cognitive, social-emotional) in order to lay the foundation for success in school and in life.



1992 - 2002 cont'd

As a United Way member agency and Start Smart participant, AfC has provided programming for national accreditation for centers and the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential program preparation for center teachers and home providers to increase their skills and knowledge.

In 2001, The Art of Positive Parenting (TAPP) program joined Action for Children to offer classes and workshops for community parents.



NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR AFTER SCHOOL SCIENCE (NPASS)

Ohio was one of seven states selected by the National Program for After School Science to implement this prestigious program, which includes professional development and training for hands-on science in after school programs. The program was funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation.

The workshops stress best practices in informal science learning and youth development with a focus on making science enjoyable and accessible to all children. Participants receive a materials kit for each project. Our work includes delivery of trainings across central Ohio. These trainings are always well received and continue to be in high demand.

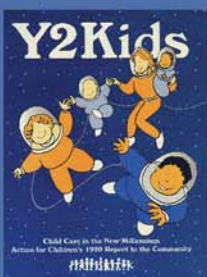
CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE (CDA)

The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™, administered by the national Council for Professional Recognition, is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education and is a key stepping stone on the path of career advancement in the field. The CDA Credential is based on a core set of competency standards that guide early care professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children.

Our CDA program, available to support center- and home-based providers in central Ohio, offers 120 hours of coursework to meet requirements in each of the CDA content areas. The program includes twelve 10-hour modules, cost of materials, cost of continuing education units, CDA application packet, CDA preparation sessions, limited individualized coaching, and an advisor to complete the observation instrument.

T.E.A.C.H. scholarships are available for CDA candidates through the Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association. Credentialing scholarships were made available for participants through United Way of Central Ohio Start Smart.

We provided the program for 60 participants. Those completing the course during the period between October 2011 and June 2012 (25 participants) were eligible to apply for their CDA credential in July 2012. There are 35 participants in process in the CDA program that began in February 2012 and ends in October 2012.



Publications include its time-honored guide and checklist for parents—Take the Time, The Five Cs of Choosing Child Care; Recognizing Sexual Abuse, When Can Your Child Stay Home Alone; Tip Cards for Working Parents and a three-part series of cards addressing the risk factors for Shaken Baby Syndrome and the ways to handle typical infant/toddler developmental issues like crying, temper tantrums and fears and anxieties.

During this decade two major reports were issued to provide information to funders and policymakers: African-American Child Care in Columbus and Child Care in Greater Columbus, Issues for the '90s. Additionally, five Right From the Start issues papers were completed that looked into the status, quality and cost-effectiveness of child care.





LIMITED CERTIFICATION ORIENTATION

All state-subsidized family child care homes in Ohio must be certified by their local county. Providers can be either Certified Type B, meaning that they can care for children of any parent, or Limited Certified, meaning they are limited to providing care for the children of legal relatives or the children of one friend. The certification process requires background checks, home inspections, a medical statement verifying the applicant's ability to provide child care, and completion of initial and ongoing training.

Funded by Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services, our Limited Certification Orientation program provides a three-hour training session, which must be attended by both the Limited Certification applicant provider and the child's parent/s. The program includes information about the application process and submission of application documents. Our Limited Certification staff includes a Somali staff member to work with the Somali providers. There is no charge for participants in this program.

Our funding was limited to three months, during which time we conducted 40 Limited Certification Orientation classes.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Under contract with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, we provide professional development and technical assistance for child care and early education center staff and family child care home providers in the seven-county region of central Ohio. The Regional Core Services include the following:

Infants and Toddlers (I/T) – Our I/T Specialists provide coaching, mentoring and training to caregivers, focusing on the importance of responsive relationships, optimal environments and intentional experiences.

Preschool Age – Our Preschool Specialists work with child care and early education professionals in the region, assisting programs in developing action plans, and providing group and onsite instructional and environmental support and resources.

School Age – Our After School Specialist assists program staff in developing action plans and provides group and onsite instructional and environmental support and resources.

This year our staff and county regional partners provided more than 3,000 hours of technical assistance and delivered 584 professional development trainings, attended by 8,089 early childhood professionals in the region.

STEP UP TO QUALITY

Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) is Ohio's voluntary three-star quality rating system for child care centers that are licensed by the state. SUTQ helps parents and families identify child care centers of high quality and assists centers in implementing standards of quality in their programs. Recognizing that centers are at various stages of preparation to seek star ratings – from one star, the first level in SUTQ, to, currently, three stars, the top SUTQ level – AfC supports child care centers in a process of continuous quality improvement. Staff provide technical assistance that supports child care centers in developing a Quality Improvement Plan, in completion of the Program Administrative Scale (PAS) and Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) assessments, and by providing on-site technical assistance around quality improvement/enhancement and the SUTQ process.



During the year, we received funding from Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to provide technical assistance for centers in the seven-county central Ohio region seeking to become star-rated or to increase their current SUTQ rating. By year end, 76 centers had achieved their goal.

We received additional funding from United Way of Central Ohio Start Smart to support centers in Franklin County seeking SUTQ ratings. During the year, this funding allowed us to provide 829 hours of technical assistance to 54 Franklin County child care centers.

2002 - 2012

PRESIDENTS:

Tanny Crane, Mary Cusick, Steve Johnston, Carole Watkins, Rhonda Fraas, Jeff Cullman (The presidency has gone full circle—from Cee in 1972 to grandson Jeffrey S. Cullman in 2012.)



DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

The Developmental Assets project, funded through PNC Bank Foundation, was launched in January 2012. Ten PNC approved child care centers and their teachers accepted the invitation to participate in the project.

Between February and May 2012, AfC's Technical Assistance Specialists held orientation meetings at each of the 10 centers.

Over 200 children were assessed.

ACCREDITATION

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the world's largest organization of early childhood educators, established its accreditation system to raise the quality of early childhood education and to help families and others identify high quality early childhood center programs. Our NAEYC Accreditation program in Franklin County is funded by United Way of Central Ohio Start Smart. Through this program, we assist child care centers with technical assistance and lending library materials to support them in achieving NAEYC accreditation. This year we worked with 24 centers in Franklin County; providing 151 technical assistance hours to support the centers in seeking accreditation. Four of the centers achieved NAEYC accreditation. The remaining centers are continuing to receive technical assistance.

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) is the accreditation body for family child care home providers in the United States. This voluntary accreditation system was created to verify the quality of services provided for children and families. In Ohio, family child care homes are not as yet included in Step Up to Quality, therefore, national accreditation offers a valuable standard of quality for which providers can strive. We continue to support family child care providers who are interested in being NAFCC accredited.

CARING COMMUNITIES BIRTH TO THREE (CC:B-3)

AfC partners with Early Care and Learning, Inc. (ECAL) and five Franklin County child care centers in the Caring Communities: Birth to Three initiative. CC:B-3 has been working with the five centers to provide infants and toddlers in their programs (ages six weeks to three years) with consistent skilled teachers in family style, intimate communities. The children are cared for in small, mixed age groups, by one primary caregiver, from the time they enter the center until they are three years of age, providing a continuity of care that is especially important for at-risk children and families whose lives are less stable due to poverty, illness, job loss, and frequent moves. Each of the centers is urban and offers comprehensive programs for children birth to six and serves many lower income children, including those receiving state subsidies.

The centers – Kids Care Academy, Our Play Station and Learning Center, Starting Point Learning Center, Columbus Montessori Education Center, and The Schoenbaum Family Center at Weinland Park (OSU) – have each committed to structuring their infant/toddler programs to provide continuity of care in a family style setting. Our infant/toddler specialist provides training and technical support to the participating centers and their staff.

The initial year of the three-year project was spent defining appropriate space at the centers for the mixed age classrooms, receiving training and technical assistance, and assigning staff. During the second year, four of the five centers began implementing the mixed age classrooms at their sites. And now during the project's third year, the fifth center began implementing a mixed age classroom. All five centers participated in a celebration at the end of the year, sharing the highlights of their project and celebrating their successes. Remarks from teachers, directors and parents included: "The classroom is so peaceful, it is very different from typical infant/toddler child care classrooms." And, "This was the best choice for my children that I could make!"



With the rising cost of child care at the turn of the century (The average cost of quality child care for infants and toddlers is equivalent to college tuition at an Ohio public institution.), Action for Children has been leading the state in finance reform efforts, studying the costs and impacts of different approaches to financing quality child care and early learning.

We began working with partners statewide on a plan for an integrated early childhood system. In 2002, we released a 10-year plan, a strategic framework to build an early learning system for Ohio's children from birth through five, resting on the research that shows that early experiences, including child-care relationships, strongly influence school readiness.



HOME NETWORK

Ohio is one of five states that do not license family child care home businesses. In Ohio, Type B family child care home providers who receive a subsidy to care for children from low income families are required to be certified by their local county Department of Job and Family Services to assure minimum health and safety standards are met. Home providers not providing subsidized child care operate outside the regulatory system.

Our Home Network program, a core service, is designed to engage unregulated home providers in a network of support, classes that include basic health and safety, and opportunity to pursue a process of continuous quality improvement through technical assistance and professional development. This voluntary registration process includes background checks, fire and health inspections, medical check, and references. Those completing the process are included in our I&R database.

USDA FOOD PROGRAM

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (administered by the Ohio Department of Education) to allow family child care home providers to serve nutritious meals and snacks to children (ages 12 and under) in their care at no additional cost to parents. We are a program sponsor for the CACFP in 12 Ohio counties— Allen, Crawford, Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Pickaway, Richland, and Union. As a program sponsor, we provide ongoing technical assistance to the providers, process claims and reimbursements, and provide program monitoring for the Ohio Department of Education.

Nutritional trainings required by the USDA have been integrated into our core services professional development. The Food Program workshops also meet Child Development Associate requirements.

During the year, AfC facilitated provision of 803,473 nutritious meals and snacks for children with 245 providers participating.

COLUMBUS KIDS

In February 2010, our staff began working with Columbus Kids: Ready. Set. Learn, a program designed to increase the early detection of developmental delays and potential learning obstacles; including speech, hearing and vision problems, among future Columbus City Schools students. The program, a partnership between United Way of Central Ohio, Columbus City Schools Education Foundation, and Columbus City Schools, is aimed at reaching every child of preschool age in the district. All of the children in the target age group receive a Learning Checkup every six months and parents are directed to resources if the results of the Learning Checkup identify a need. United Way is working with child care centers, libraries, faith-based organizations, Nationwide Children's Hospital, and more than 125 community partners, including Action for Children, to ensure that all eligible children receive a Learning Checkup.

The project began in Columbus central city and the Weinland Park neighborhood in 2010, expanded to the Linden and South Columbus neighborhoods in 2011, and was implemented on the Columbus West Side in 2012. Our Wellness Coordinators assist in recruiting participants for the project, teaching parents (and center staff) how to administer the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) child assessment, and providing resources for parents needing assistance with ASQ results. Engagement Specialists help reconnect with families so that the project can continue to follow families until their child(ren) enter kindergarten.

Since the inception of the Columbus Kids program in 2010, more than 5,200 children between 2 ½ and 4 years of age, have been administered Learning Checkups. Because Columbus Kids is reconnecting with each child every six months, over 7,000 Learning Checkups have been completed. Approximately 1,000 of the total Learning Checkups completed were children identified as “maybe needing further assessment with a professional” and 650 were identified as “maybe needing further assessment in more than one area.”



2002 - 2012 cont'd

Finance reform and the strategic framework formed the foundation for an action plan authorized by the Ohio Board of Education to assure that all children, birth to five, would be “kindergarten ready.” The action plan was released in 2006 by the School Readiness Solutions Group, a 50-member task force that included Diane Bennett and board presidents Tanny Crane, Mary Cusick and Carole Watkins. Diane co-chaired the Finance Committee with Dr. Mark Sniderman, Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland.



HEALTHY AND FIT AT HOME

Healthy and Fit at Home was a collaboration with Children's Hunger Alliance. We provided one-on-one technical assistance to providers that included specific ideas and activities and materials targeted to get children physically engaged and involved in nutritional meal preparation. The providers received kits to give to the parents of the children in the program.

READY TO READ

The Columbus Metropolitan Library Ready to Read project focuses on early literacy and educating family child care home providers about the importance of early learning. In partnership with the library, our staff delivered books and other early learning activities to providers in their home settings. In addition to sturdy board books geared toward infants, toddlers and preschool children; the kits included finger puppets, crayons and foam letters.

Providers were educated on the six early literacy skills children must have in place before learning how to read and write. Additional resources were offered such as information about the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L) and Columbus Kids. Through this program, 75 bags were distributed in targeted low-income zip codes. The providers were very grateful to receive high quality materials for their family child care homes.

FRANKLIN COUNTY CORE TRAININGS

Funded by Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services, we provide mandatory trainings (those required for county certification) for family child care home providers in Franklin County.

Classes offered include Child Abuse Reporting and Prevention (6 hours), Child Development 101 (2 hours), Communicable Disease (6 hours), and Health & Safety (8 hours). The classes are offered at no charge to participants. At least once a month, Health & Safety classes are offered in Somali. Five hundred twenty-two family child care home providers attended the mandatory training classes.

NURTURING NATURE

We received two-year funding from the Ohio EPA Environmental Education Fund in December 2009 to develop and implement Nurturing Nature Through the Foods We Eat. This pilot program provides after school educators with standards-based professional development focused on environmental and agricultural education. The program consists of four major areas: a 10-hour curriculum module linking food and the environment; technical assistance to support implementation within the after school setting; field experiences bringing the educators, children and parents to environmental/agricultural education sites; and a statewide train-the-trainer module to disseminate the curriculum throughout Ohio. The curriculum is Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) approved and teachers can receive continuing education credit for the coursework.

During the year, 48 after school educators participated in the Nurturing Nature Through the Foods We Eat program. The second funding year of the program was completed on February 2, 2012, with 37 after school educators completing the coursework. Twenty-seven participants received a minimum of one- to two-on-site technical assistance visits during the program and a post visit to assist them with program assessment. Sixteen (16) of the educators attended a two-hour field visit to Stratford Ecological Center, Slate Run Historical Farm or Franklin Park Conservatory with 15 parents and children.

Two downloadable programs were created based on Nurturing Nature Through the Foods We Eat. The programs have recipes and activities for children that can be used by both parents and providers.

Additionally, AfC is a partner in Phase 1 of the Healthy Weight Collaborative, a public-private, multi-sector collaborative established in 2011 by Nationwide Children's Hospital that includes Columbus City Schools, Columbus Public Health, Children's Hunger Alliance, Action for Healthy Kids, and The Ohio State University Prevention Research Center. The Healthy Weight Collaborative is a local response to a national quality improvement effort to share clinical and community interventions to prevent and treat obesity for children and families.

Action for Children was selected by the state (2005) to pilot and then continue providing Step Up to Quality assistance to centers. From 2005 until funding was cut in 2010, AfC was an active participant in the ELI (Ohio's Early Learning Initiative) program, taking the lead with the YMCA of Central Ohio to form a successful center collaboration known as the Franklin County Early Learning Consortium.

In 2010, the state adopted our revised, Child Abuse and Neglect Training for Child Care Providers, for Ohio's curriculum. We also received funding from the Governor's Office of Faith-Based Initiatives to develop and write the curriculum, The Father Factor, a program to enhance the role of fathers in the lives of their young children.



TAKING ACTION

IN THE COMMUNITY



BACKGROUND

While child care is key for parents to work or continue school, the community is facing child care shortages. In part this can be explained by the fact that the child care and early education sector has continued to experience challenges presented by the effects of the economy, government budget cuts, and lowered revenue from all sources. Like other businesses in a tight economy, early childhood programs are reducing staff or re-assigning staff to part-time. Many are finding it necessary, due to cost and shortage of staff time, to delay their participation in professional development and technical assistance that supports continuous quality improvement.

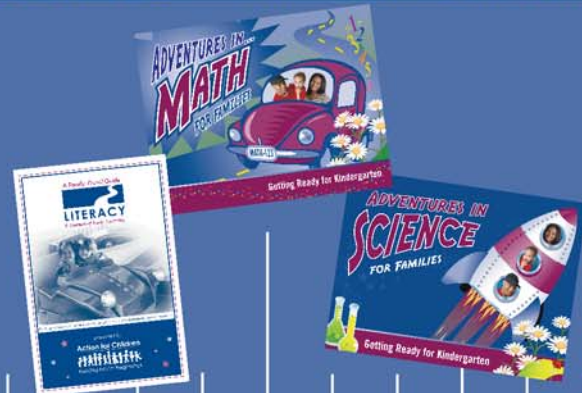
GUIDING PRINCIPLE

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.



2002 - 2012 cont'd

Beginning in 2005, three Learning Begins Right From the Start® early learning kits for parents were created based on the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards. These kits: Adventures in Literacy, Adventures in Math and Adventures in Science have been widely distributed to families in child care centers serving low-income children.



RESEARCH: PROGRESS MADE. GROUND LOST.

In response to growing demand for quality child care in Franklin County and the concern that our best programs were losing ground because of the nation's serious financial stresses, Action for Children, with funding from The Columbus Foundation, commissioned Community Research Partners to prepare an analysis of child care supply and demand in Franklin County. In April 2012, Action for Children released the findings in a report, *Progress Made. Ground Lost.* in a press conference held at The Columbus Foundation.

The comprehensive report, the first of its kind in Franklin County, includes data on child care providers and the population potentially in need of child care services. Focus groups and surveys were used to gather insights into parents' decision-making process in seeking child care and the child care perspectives of local employers.

The findings in the report confirm that the need for quality child care has increased, with more parents recognizing the importance of quality and demanding it for their children. At the same time, many families are struggling financially, with more than one in three children under age six now living in poverty. The cost of high-quality is unaffordable for many even if it is available, which is not always the case. Only one third of all available child care slots are high-quality, i.e. accredited/Step Up to Quality rated. In two of the planning areas there are no high-quality slots.

Action for Children developed the following recommendations, based on the report's findings, to guide the agency's work now and over the next five years:

- Develop Franklin County and State of Ohio licensing standards for family child care home programs.
- Improve cultural competency of child care professionals to support the effectiveness of their work with minority and foreign-born children and families.
- Develop a more active, easy to access parent-coaching program to help families understand early childhood development and the experiences/activities that spur success in school.
- Focus resources on the planning areas that show high demand and low supply of accredited/Step Up to Quality rated programs.
- Streamline the processes that families must complete in order to receive public child care assistance.
- Create more child care slots for children with disabilities and those whose families work evening and weekend jobs.
- Identify ways to create need-based scholarships for children to attend quality programs.

Action for Children convened task forces to take action on three of the recommendations advanced in the report.

The complete report, which includes an executive summary, is available on our website.



Over the years, the agency has worked with multiple stakeholders—parents, the early childhood professional community, area schools and colleges, funders, legislators, and community leaders—to drive higher quality in child care and early learning and to effectively influence policy decisions. It has made the issue a part of the conversation locally, statewide and nationally.

Today our work continues for a new generation of children and their parents (80 percent of moms with children under 12 are in the workforce and 50 percent return to work before their child's first birthday). There are still many challenges and demands but our roots are deep and our growth is steady.



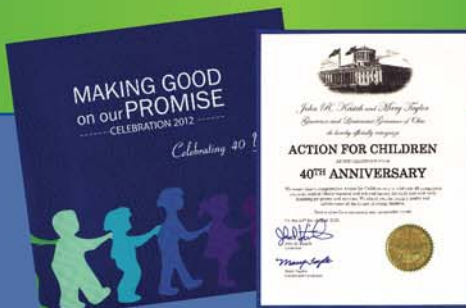
ADVOCACY

In our advocacy work, we are one of five organizations that comprise the Alliance of Early Learning Advocates in Ohio. The five organizations 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 (OCCRRA) 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;
- 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 8,000 licensed centers in every state, including more than 250 in Ohio, caring for and educating over one million children every day across the country.

The Alliance's advocacy efforts and key events include:

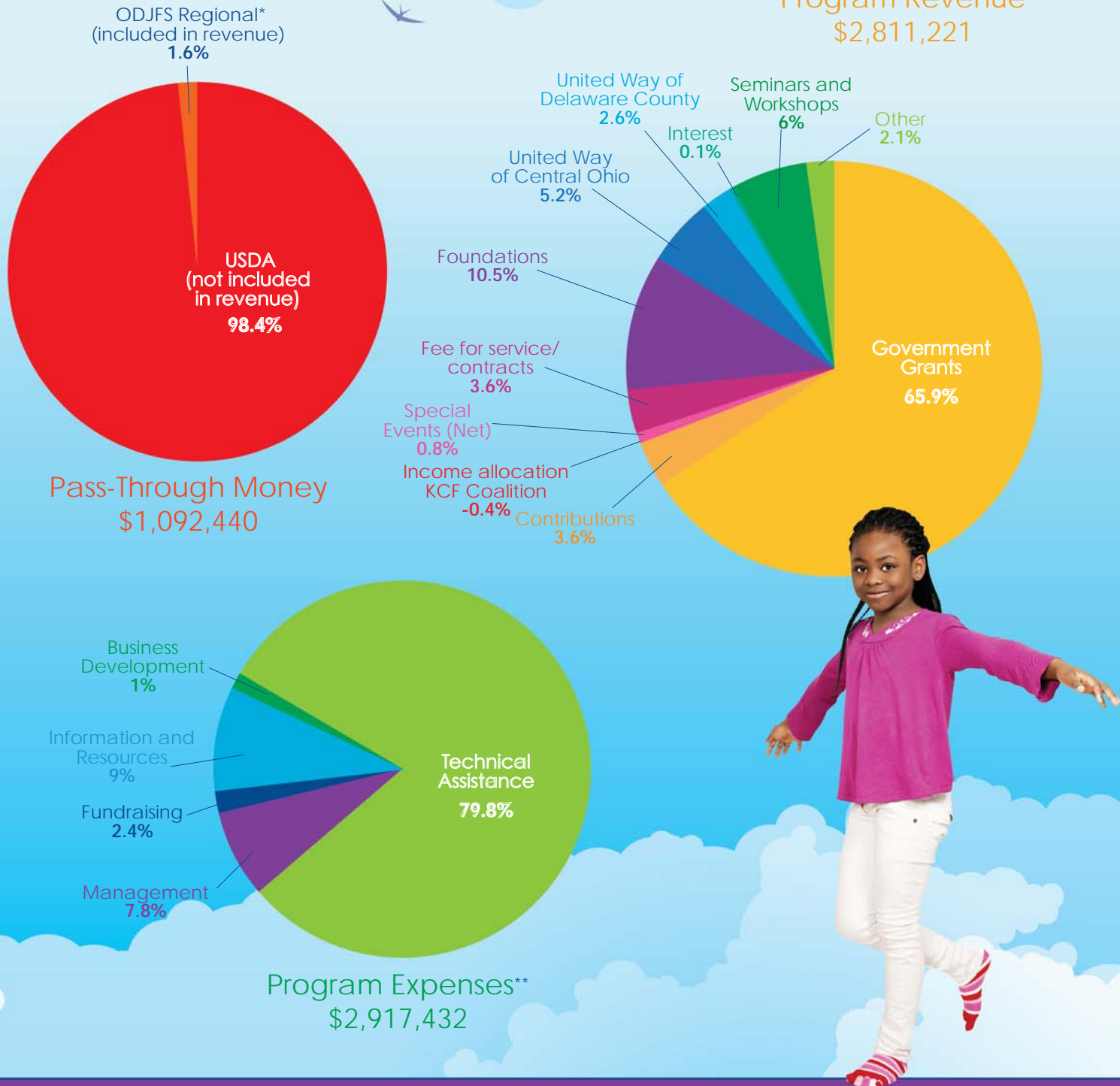
- Worked with the Governor's Common Sense Initiative Office and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to streamline and reduce current rules and regulations as well as limit new regulations.
- Worked with ODJFS to determine a system by which the rules review could work more effectively.
- With signing by the Governor of the Executive Order to implement initiatives in the Race to the Top Grant application in August 2011, worked internally and externally around quality of care provided versus number of children who have access to care.
- Worked to design grassroots plan including identifying key elected officials and message.
- Budget Corrections called the Mid-Biennial Review (MBR) bills are introduced. SB 316 and HB 487 have issues relating to child care policies. Legislative work began, including testimony, meetings with allies, meeting with key legislators.
- Presented "Advocacy 101" to five regional OACCP meetings.



We are proud of our success and appreciate all of the people who have contributed to ensuring the "promise" that our community families have access to quality child care options—quality settings that prepare young children for school and lifelong success.



Program Revenue \$2,811,221



2012 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

All funding (except 9.3 percent administrative costs) goes directly to programs and services, which during this year reached 14,955 parents and 9,829 providers affecting the lives of more than 144,359 children.

The June 30, 2012 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.

*ODJFS Regional "passed through" to Fairfield, Licking, Madison, Pickaway and Union counties

NOTE: Operations for Action for Children's Delaware office are included in program revenue and expense

**Expenses for a large special project were incurred this year and related revenue was recognized in a prior fiscal year.

LIGHTS...CAMERA...ACTION FOR CHILDREN

Lights, Camera, Action for Children spotlighted central Ohio's Child Care and Early Learning professionals. The celebration honored the work of the women and men who provide the nurturing care and quality experiences to the young children in our community. The evening program highlighted the accomplishments of National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited and Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) star-rated centers, National Association for Family Child Care Providers (NAFCC) accredited family home child care providers, and Child Development Associate (CDA) nationally credentialed home providers and center teachers.

The event was held on Wednesday, April 25, 2012 at dock580. The nearly 200 attendees enjoyed dinner and the inspirational message of motivational speaker and former educator Harvey Alston, who recognized the important work they do as teachers.







MAKING GOOD on our PROMISE

— CELEBRATION 2012 —

— Celebrating 40 Years —



40TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

On May 4, 2012, more than 300 people came together to celebrate Action for Children's 40 years at an evening that honored the past and looked to the future.

Colleen Marshall of NBC4 was the Master of Ceremonies and entertainment included the surprising, spontaneous musical renderings of The Three Waiters.

Jeff Cullman, President of the Board of Directors, paid tribute to the woman he called Gammy, Cee Cullman, an Action for Children founder, along with Rosa Hightower, and first president of the board. Cee continued her inspirational leadership until her death, in 2006, at age 92.

Action for Children saluted the work of 11 women, who played an important role in our history as leaders, visionaries and advocates for children: Rosa Hightower, Mary Lazarus, Gene Harris, Roberta Bishop, Mattie James, Sue Doody, Floradelle Pfahl, Muriel Tice, Janet Jackson, Mary Cusick and Tanny Crane. In addition, there were four honorees that were recognized for providing significant public and private partnership support: The Columbus Foundation, Douglas Kridler, President and CEO; City of Columbus, Andrew Ginther, City Council President; Huntington Bancshares Incorporated, Stephen Steinour, Chairman, President and CEO; American Electric Power, Nicholas Akins, President and CEO.

By making good on our promise, the anniversary theme, Action for Children has positively affected the lives of three generations of children. As Jeff Cullman said in thanking everyone for their support, "You care about children with your whole heart and will stand by us another 40 years as we work to make our community a better place for children—continuing to make good on our promise that all children will have the care and education they need to reach their fullest potential."

Special thanks to the chairperson of the 40th Anniversary Celebration, Don Van Meter.





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KIDS COME F1RST

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KIDS COME F1RST is a capital campaign consisting of three phases to improve the learning environments for children and their caregivers: Phase I, Action for Children; Phase II, South Side Learning & Development Centers; and Phase III, Columbus Early Learning Centers.

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July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012

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, Making Good on Our Promise gala, 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 in behalf of the children in central Ohio.

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