

**CHILD CARE
RESOURCES**



*“The happiness a person remembers as a child
is reflected in their adult lives.”*



It's all about the children

With the economy slowing and budget cuts on the horizon, 2001 was a year for Child Care Resources (CCR) to stay focused on the basics: accessible, affordable, quality care for children.

Toward this end our 42 staff members in 3 offices across King County continued to find new child care solutions for parents and providers alike:

- Our Parent Services division helped 6,720 families find child care.
- Provider Services helped 2,225 providers meet state training requirements.
- We assisted more than 100 people in obtaining licenses and starting in-home child care businesses.

No matter which side of the issue we dealt with, we had a single goal in mind – to make child care secure and enriching for all children.



A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Speaking up for child care



Child Care Resources' 11th year was full of opportunities and challenges. We participated in a number of new programs that promise to unite our early childhood community and further our work together towards improving the quality and affordability of child care. Of particular note is Project Lift-off, of which Child Care Resources is a lead partner. Another effort, the Pooled Opportunity Fund, is a group of private grant-makers that awarded us funds to coordinate efforts in the county with family, friends and neighbor caregivers. And we continued our work through the state of Washington to recruit and train new child care providers. These are just a few examples.

However, from the CEO's chair, 2001 was heavy on the challenge side of things. It began with the County Executive's decision, based on a severe budget deficit, to phase out the King County Child Care Program (KCCCCP), an exemplary program that has funded local subsidies for families who are just beyond the eligibility for state subsidies. The KCCCCP also provides basic operating funding for our agency. CCR played a major role in advocating for the continuation of the KCCCCP. While we were able to help save the KCCCCP from total extinction this year, the long-term picture for county funding in general does not look promising.

Just as that effort was winding down we learned that there were to be significant cuts in the Washington State 2002 Supplemental Budget to Human Services. There was also a serious over-expenditure in the 2001 budget that was leading the Governor to consider immediate drastic cuts. As Co-Chair of Child Care Works for Washington, the state's primary advocacy organization for child care, I helped lead an extensive e-mail and phone campaign to minimize these cuts. Again, we were only partially successful. Some programs were saved and others were lost, and the bottom line is that many families in 2002 will either lose eligibility for state subsidy or have to pay a higher co-payment.

Although the current economic situation continues to look bleak, we learned through this process that advocacy can have a positive impact (as the cuts would surely have been worse without our efforts) and that we have many allies. As we look into 2002, we know that the City of Seattle, King County and the state still face overwhelming budget deficits and that further ground may be lost, not just to child care but to many other vital human services. I continue to become more and more convinced of the importance of joining with our colleagues in human services to give a united message to our governments that they must maintain their responsibility to vulnerable children and families in our region. I thank all of you in the business community, philanthropic community and as individuals who stepped forward and will continue to step forward to keep our network of child care and human services strong.

Nina Auerbach, Chief Executive Officer

A Message from the President

Appreciative inquiry focuses on our strengths



In 2001, the Child Care Resources board of directors set out to update our strategic plan. It had been three years since the previous plan had been developed. We were pleased that great progress had been made toward many of the goals on that plan, but years had passed and it was time to take a fresh look.

We decided to use an “appreciative inquiry” process. This process uses stories and positive input to focus on the agency’s strengths. The process was time consuming but well worth the effort. Every board member interviewed at least one staff person as well as someone in the community. Each Board member was also interviewed. (Throughout this report you will read some of the comments made during this interview process.) We then invited the staff and some community members to a retreat in late September.

At that very sobering time, we bonded in the knowledge that the work we do is vitally important to the children, their families, and the community as a whole. This set the stage for a thought-provoking and exhilarating two days during which we reaffirmed our core services while determining that we must reach out even more.

Our vision is to ensure that all children have access to safe, affordable, quality child care. I am pleased that we will be expanding our reach in several ways. First, we decided to increase our work with family, friend, and neighbor caregivers, realizing that the majority of children are in this type of care. Second, we decided to reach out to more isolated caregivers by bringing our staff and resources to the communities instead of expecting them to come to us. Third, we realized that we needed to work harder to increase community awareness of CCR and child care issues. Finally, we decided to devote some resources to working with the Northwest Finance Circle to work on solutions to child care financing issues.

I want to thank the staff for all their hard work this past year. I am proud of the way you rallied the child care community and all its friends to lobby first the county and then the state to minimize cuts made to child care programs. I also think you did a great job preparing internally for the cuts should they have been made. Fortunately, many of our efforts worked. So I want to close by thanking all of you – the friends and supporters of CCR – for your help and support this past year.

Janet Levinger, Board President

“People are a product of nature *and* nurture.
All people are affected by poor quality child care.
The whole community is impacted.”

CCR board member

Childhood: a time to learn and grow



“I’ve only had one provider for my children, and I love the consistency and family-like feel the program offers. Both of my children are in care together and will be so through elementary school even though they are three years apart. My provider guided me as a new parent and is a resource about stages of development.”

Parent

During their first years of life most children grow by leaps and bounds, learn to walk and run, master a language or even two, and begin to comprehend the basics of reading, math and the world around them. It’s a time of unparalleled development and an opportunity that never comes again.

Child Care Resources’ longtime focus on quality arises from the conviction that society must make the most of these early years. Children thrive in environments that offer age appropriate opportunities for exploration and discovery and in order to ensure that more children had access to this kind of care in 2001 CCR educated parents, trained providers, and enlisted the support of employers.

Employer Champions For Children

The Employer Champions campaign took center stage in the CCR effort to promote quality care in 2001. Conceived by Project Lift-off and led by The Boeing Company and the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce with the support of the City of Seattle and King County, this initiative calls on local employers to help improve child care quality in our region. While recent studies have demonstrated that national accreditation is a hallmark of child care excellence, local statistics reveal that only 10 percent of licensed programs in our area hold national accreditation. In response to this disappointing statistic, Employer Champions set out to help licensed child care programs secure accreditation. In a pilot project launched in March 2001, eight local providers began the process of obtaining accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). In addition to helping plan and implement the Employer Champions campaign, Child Care Resources recruited participants and supplied technical assistance to programs enrolled in the pilot project.

Provider training

In 2001, Child Care Resources helped providers comply with state training requirements and offered classes on health and safety as well as special interest workshops on topics such as infant and toddler sign language, creative curriculum and “offbeat science.” By making classes available in Spanish, CCR further extended its efforts to improve child care quality and underlined the necessity for programs that embrace all cultures and respond to the needs of our diverse community.



“Having a nearby center to take their children allows them to work better at their jobs because they know their children are safe.”

CCR staff member

Quality care for all children

Through contracts with government agencies and certain employers, we were able to offer hundreds of families more than just basic referral information. In 2001 our enhanced services included vacancy checks, site visits and counseling parents about the variety of characteristics – the facilities standards, teacher training, parental involvement, toys and equipment, program structure, curriculum and overall atmosphere – that constitute quality care. When parents make informed decisions, their children benefit. As a CCR Parent Services staff member says, “I remember a parent who felt she didn’t have a right to complain about her care because she was a subsidy parent, and her kid was in a place that she didn’t really like. We were able to say this is what quality care is and what you have a right to.”



Working families need support

Although the prevalence of the working family is widely acknowledged – 70 percent of women with young children work outside the home – parents still face difficult challenges in finding and affording quality care. Rates, particularly in urban areas, are extremely high. Few centers accommodate non-traditional work hours – late shifts and weekends for example. Many centers can’t cope with special needs children. All too often parents miss work, are distracted from their jobs or experience enormous stress when child care arrangements prove unreliable.

www.childcare.org

We reach out to working families in many ways – through our web-site, over the phone lines, and by contracting with government agencies and employers. In 2001, 3,137 families utilized our 24-hour online searchable database to find out about child care programs available in their areas. 3,583 families contacted us by phone. With funding from U. S. Bank we started to break down language barriers and helped increase awareness of child care options by translating key pages of our web-site into Spanish and Russian.



Business Leadership Project

2001 was the first full year of the Business Leadership Project, a CCR initiative that encouraged businesses throughout the county to adopt a more active role in helping their employees find quality care. The Business Leadership Project helped the Muckleshoot Tribe start an on-site program, informed businesses about new tax incentives to increase child care availability for employees, and met with human resources professionals across the county to discuss how their companies treat child care benefits.

“When child care workers are happy and well compensated it benefits the kids and families that they serve.”

CCR board member

“There was a family at my daughter’s school whose son was acting out. They found a child care that did wonders for him. They worked directly with the family on the issue, at home and at school. The boy needed attention. They spent time with him and completely turned him around. It showed me that quality care makes a difference.... It was a great partnership between the parents and the provider.”

Parent

Recruitment and retention

The fact remains – one of the best ways to help working families is to increase the number of child care choices available. As CCR Recruitment and Special Projects Coordinator Faye Melton says, “There are never enough slots. There is always a need for infant care, for before and after hours care and for special needs care.” To help meet this need, CCR trained more than 140 people – mothers coming off of welfare, refugees and others – for careers in child care. Vietnamese, Russian, East African and other immigrant communities responded enthusiastically to this chance to gain expertise on local child care practices. Those who obtained licenses continued to receive guidance and support through CCR on everything from marketing their services to improving their curriculum. In turn, these providers offered culturally appealing, quality care to working families in many under-served communities.

Recognizing the people who nurture our children

A child’s bond with a caregiver creates a foundation for learning. Although child care quality is closely linked to staff training, experience and continuity, the child care industry is plagued by low salaries and high turn-over, a situation which can be devastating to young children.

Improving compensation

CCR has been a tireless advocate for better wages and benefits for providers. In 2001 we continued to speak up for TEACH (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) and for the state’s Career Development Ladder which strives to boost early childhood education salaries. Our Business/Child Care Partnership, in its eighth year in 2001, raised more than \$60,000 in business contributions that went directly into increased wages, benefits and training in 19 different child care programs in the Seattle area.

Technical help

CCR is a source of guidance and encouragement for providers. Through our “Warm Line” we answered more than 20 queries a day in 2001, giving advice on budgeting, early learning environments, classroom management and other issues. Our resource rooms, quarterly newsletters and classes help equip providers to meet the demands of their challenging work and advance a more accurate view of the profession. As one provider commented during our appreciative inquiry process in 2001, “I would like to improve the opinion of child care providers as professionals – sure they are loving, warm and sensitive, but they also have extensive child development training.”



“It’s not just child care, but a place where your children grow up.”

Parent

“An infant room teacher I know has been teaching for over 20 years. When each of her infant groups moves up to the next room, she presents their parents with baby books with pictures and all of their first experiences in the infant program. Recently a young woman stopped in. With her she had the infant book that was now 17 years old and she was heading off to college the next day. It was so touching to know the impact we have on young children and that this young woman took the time to come back and say thank you.”

Early childhood professional

Family, friends and neighbors

In 2001, the CCR effort to support providers reached beyond licensed child care to a much larger group – the family, friends and neighbors (FFN) who in fact are responsible for the majority of non-parental care received by children 12 and under in the state of Washington. A recent University of Washington study of FFN care indicated that many of these providers would welcome services. Indeed, many stated that they often felt isolated, worked irregular hours, earned low pay and experienced difficulties in communicating with parents and in dealing with misbehaving or withdrawn children. As a leader in the movement to include FFN providers in the quest for quality care, CCR worked with a grandparents support group in South Seattle in 2001. We will use this experience as a blueprint for similar groups in other types of communities in the coming year.

Starting with the children

The new millennium brought dramatic changes to our region as economic uncertainty replaced the unbridled optimism of the nineties. In the midst of the downturn, the tragic events of September 2001 reminded us that our strength derives from working together.

Although the current climate presents major obstacles to CCR we have continued to make strides by collaborating with other groups and agencies that believe in the wisdom of putting children first. As part of the Northwest Finance Circle that is looking for new ways to finance child care, we have developed a single subsidy application to give families easier access to child care assistance. By working with our partners in Project Lift-off we have helped to make early learning and out-of-school-time care important priorities in the greater Seattle area and we have attracted federal grant money to the region. An Early Learning Opportunities grant from the United States Department of Education will enable us to continue our successful venture into developing grass-roots, community-based support groups for FFN providers.

There is much work to do. But luckily in this business, we never have to look too far for inspiration. A visit to any one of the 2000 child care and out-of-school time programs listed in our database makes the purpose of our work very clear. It’s a dozen little faces in rapt attention at story time; a tiny hand grasping an oversized brush to paint a line; a couple of eight-year-olds huddled at a computer to finish their homework. It’s the future.



Financial Statement

2001 Statement of Unrestricted Activity

The financial records and accounts of Child Care Resources are audited annually by Jacobson Jarvis & Co, PLLC. The audited financial statements are available upon request.

Unrestricted Public Support and Revenue

Unrestricted Public Support

Government Contracts and Grants	\$2,543,916
United Way of King County	100,763
Contributions and Private Grants	177,658
In-Kind Contributions	<u>12,987</u>
Total Unrestricted Public Support	<u>2,835,324</u>

Revenue

Employer Fees	80,045
Program Services Fees	213,483
Investment Income	27,678
Other Income	<u>6,081</u>
Total Revenue	<u>327,287</u>

Total Unrestricted Public Support and Revenue 3,162,611

Net Assets Released from Restriction

Total Unrestricted Public Support, Revenue and Other Support 3,279,516

Expenses

Program Services	2,584,253
Employer Contracts	1,291,206
Management and General	336,177
Fund Raising	<u>153,169</u>
Total Expenses	<u>3,073,599</u>

Change in Unrestricted Net Assets \$ 205,917

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Child Care Resources is extremely grateful for the generous support received from the community in 2001.

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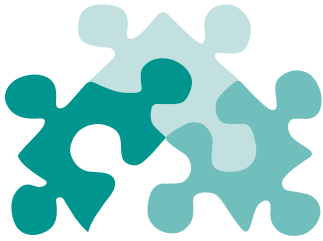
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