

A BOLD VISION FOR OUR FUTURE



ANNUAL
IMPACT
REPORT
2018-2019

TO OUR COMMUNITY

Dear Friends of the Children's Council,

On June 3, 2019 I stepped into the front doors of the agency, as the new Executive Director. I was excited and curious about what to expect. I'd left an organization in my home community, a fantastic staff and a high functioning workplace with a positive culture that I thought I might never experience again. I used to call that job my "pinch me" job because I couldn't believe I got to wake up and do it every day. So, I walked in and was pleasantly surprised to feel like I'd walked right into a group of friends and family. The Children's Council is a very special place. The love and caring are palpable and I would find it hard to believe you could walk in and out of these doors and not feel cared for and important - not if you'd interacted with any of our staff. This flows out of pure excitement about, and passion for, our work and the children and families we are privileged to support and serve.



I stepped in at a pivotal time in the history of the Children's Council in our community. One of the first meetings I attended was that of a group of stakeholders representing the various sectors and systems of the community, who've been meeting over the past two years to develop strategies on how to best take care of Watauga County's youngest children. The work of this team has generated much local excitement and support, has attracted state-wide attention, and is part of a national collaborative for infants and young children. With the Children's Council at the helm, you've cast a bold and exciting vision for children in our county, and you've taken important steps to breathe life into your dream. It's inspiring and something I encourage you to get involved with if you haven't already. Stay tuned this year for more information about Watauga County's early childhood initiative, Elevate Watauga!

In 2020, over 375 babies will be born in Watauga County. Can you imagine what would happen if every one of those children had safe homes, strong families and a system of support that helped them grow up happy and healthy?

Early childhood is the single most vulnerable, teachable and definable period in a person's life. By the time we were three years old, 90% of our brain had been developed, laying the foundation for our future growth and learning. That's where we are making our investments...from the beginning...so things start off right, and before problems get worse and before solutions are more expensive. Serving children in their first years of life, means you serve their caregivers. Parents and early care and education providers can find education, mentoring, training, and support at the Children's Council.

The Children's Council is making investments in our community by focusing on serving children in the first years of life, building strong and resilient families, supporting families in times of crisis, fostering children's growth and development so they are ready for school and life, supporting our local workforce by ensuring a quality early childhood infrastructure, and working with our community leaders to create an early childhood system so that every child who lives and grows up in this community can live to their fullest potential.

Leadership change is not always easy for an organization, but it feels like I just hopped on a moving bus, headed for great things. I hope you'll get on board with us! This annual report highlights some of our achievements from the past year. Support from our donors keeps us moving forward toward our vision.

Thank you for your continued support of this important work!
Elisha Childers

The early childhood phase from infancy to five years of age has been found to be the single most vulnerable, teachable, and definable point in a person's life. Infants' brains form rapidly during these first few years of life. In fact, there are twice as many brain synapses occurring in a 2-3 year-old's brain than that of an adult. The more a child is exposed to certain things, like language, the stronger those synapses are. A child's interactions and surroundings during this time have a dramatic effect on the pace and strength of these advances.

Recent neuroscience research has been able to show us that during this most formative time in a child's life, the presence of toxic stress caused by poverty, neglect, abuse, or lack of attentive caregivers has a dangerously negative effect on a child. According to the NC Child 1018 Data Card, 46% of children in Watauga County are living in poor or low-income households. Access to early education and support has a profound impact on families. There are only 2,000 days between the time a baby is born and when that child begins kindergarten. Experiences during that time have a lasting impact on later learning, health, and success.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018-2019

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Stephanie deKeyzer, Administrative Assistant
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Megan Hudson, Adolescent Parenting Program Coordinator
Jeannie Parsons, Resource Specialist
Sophie Dansereau, D.U.A.L. School Lead Teacher
Hellem Stamm, Bilingual Parent Educator
Tasha Fuller, Nurtured Beginnings Coordinator
Mat Powell, Front Desk and Child Care

CONTRACTED STAFF 2018-2019

Sophie Rudisill, Moms for Moms Parent Educator
Jennifer Phillips, Incredible Years Facilitator
Angela Weaver, Incredible Years Facilitator
Shawna Duvall, Circle of Parents Facilitator

46% of children in Watauga County live in poor or low income homes

OUR VISION

We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to develop to his or her fullest potential in a community that supports, nurtures, and empowers children and families.

CORE VALUES

Innovation
Professionalism
Accountability
Caring
Giving
Collaboration
Respect
Family-Friendliness

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Children's Council of Watauga County is to build a strong foundation for children's learning and development by strengthening families, the early childhood system, and the wider community.

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

- * **Pathways to Accreditation Program** Pathways to Accreditation is an innovative program currently offered only in Watauga County. Staff of local early learning centers and home receive high-quality training, professional development, and financial enhancements. This program uses evidence-based assessment tools (CLASS and PAS) to help child care centers increase the quality of their programs and the quality of their interactions.
- * **Monthly Newsletter and Calendar** Each month an informative newsletter and calendar is distributed to providers, families, and the community to increase awareness of current child care issues, parenting tips, and happenings.
- * **Resource Corner** The in-house library contains books, materials and hands-on learning kits as a resource for early childhood college students, child care providers, families, and the community.
- * **WAGES** This program provides education-based salary supplements to early childhood teachers and directors working with children between the ages of birth-5.
- * **NC Pre-K** The North Carolina pre-kindergarten program (NC Pre-K) provides high quality educational experiences for eligible four-year-olds in order to enhance their kindergarten readiness. In Watauga County we had 5 NC Pre-K classrooms.
- * **D.U.A.L. School (Diverse Unified Appropriate Learning)** Boone's Bilingual Preschool serves 3-4 year olds and is made up of four English-speaking and four Spanish-speaking children who are actively engaged in a developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- * **Back to School Festival** The Children's Council served as the fiscal manager and is involved in the executive planning of this event that offers school supplies, backpacks, clothing, shoes and haircuts to all children in Watauga County.
- * **Children and Baby Fair** The Children's Council hosted it's annual Children and Baby Fair in conjunction with The Week of the Young Child. The fair offered educational materials and lots of fun for parents, early childhood professionals and children.

“ Before beginning Pathways I was a rookie to the early education field. My only experience with children had been my journey of raising my two daughters. As a newly single mom of two, I began my early childhood career solely out of the convenience of being able to work a job that my youngest daughter could attend with me. Since beginning Pathways a year ago, I now know that I have truly found my passion and purpose. Consistent trainings, assistance, advice, classroom resources, compensation, are just a few of the ways Pathways has allowed me to know that I am making a difference in the children I work with. After a 10 year college journey, I am also now continuing my education as an early childhood educator with the support of this program. Not only am I grateful to be a part of such an awesome community that understands the importance of education and raising our country's future leaders, but I am thankful that this is the community that I am raising my children to be apart of. ”

Pathways to Accreditation Teacher Participant

IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY



60%

...of licensed child care programs chose to participate and benefit from the Pathways to Accreditation Program (15 out of 26).

189

...Early Childhood Teachers attended trainings and workshops offered by our agency.

160

...parents checked out materials from our Family Resource Library.



37

...child care providers received salary supplements through the WAGES program over the course of the year.

1200

Over 1200 children received free supplies at the Back to School Festival.

132

...children in 11 preschool classrooms received a weekly rotating bag of Raising A Reader books.

FAMILY SUPPORT

- * **Family Literacy Program** GED and ESL classes are offered in partnership with Caldwell Community College and include free child care, transportation, parenting education and support to enrolled parents.
- * **Diaper Bank** The Children's Council maintains the county's only free diaper bank to provide diapers to local families in need. This program is community supported and all diapers come in through diaper drives and monetary donations.
- * **Adolescent Parenting Program (APP)** Serves pregnant and parenting teens between the ages of 13 and 19 to support them staying in school, delaying a second pregnancy, and provide support with home visits and group meetings.
- * **Circle of Parents** Three weekly support groups are offered that encourage leadership and mutual self-help on topics important to parents.
- * **Incredible Years Parenting Class** Class is for parents of children 3-12 years old that fosters healthy development in young children through a 14-week-long series focusing on strengthening parenting competencies.
- * **Triple P--Positive Parenting Program** One-on-one parenting consultation for families seeking help with typical child behaviors. Ideal for parents with children ages 3-18 years.
- * **Raising A Reader** High quality books are provided to NC Pre-K and Headstart students to be rotated on a weekly basis throughout the school year to assist in kindergarten readiness.
- * **Dolly Parton Imagination Library** Each month a new, free book is mailed to any registered child in Watauga County from birth up to five years of age.
- * **Child Care Subsidy** Distributed through a partnership with Watauga County DSS, this program offers funds for working parents with young children to obtain child care in a high quality, 4 or 5 star center.
- * **Nurtured Beginnings** A program that provides one to three free, in-home visits to parents of newborns up to 12-weeks-old, along with resources, a free meal, goodie bag, baby blanket and a postpartum depression screening.
- * **MOMS for MOMS** A perinatal and postpartum distress support group that aims to provide nonjudgmental peer support for mothers experiencing perinatal and postpartum distress in an effort to improve maternal mental health.

Mom for Moms is something every town should have, and we are very fortunate to be in a town that is offering it. If all communities had this, moms wouldn't be so distressed. We need each other, we need a place to feel safe. I think that this group is revolutionary and maybe we can set an example and empower moms in other communities to also come together and support each other. Being a part of this group is something that gives me hope, as a single mom with no family or support, things could be a lot worse for me if I didn't have this support. Thank you!

Moms for Moms Participant

IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

240

...home visits were made with the Nurtured Beginnings Program and Adolescent Parenting Program.

23

...mothers and 39 children benefited from the Moms for Moms support group

\$121,776

Over \$121,776 was awarded to working families as a child care subsidy to attend a 4 or 5 star child care facility.

40

...parents enrolled in our Family Literacy/GED program.

318

...families received diapers from our diaper bank totaling over 64,000 diapers.

323

... Positive Parenting consultations conducted.



70

...parents attended Circle of Parents group meetings and reported an increase in family functioning and knowledge of parenting/child development.

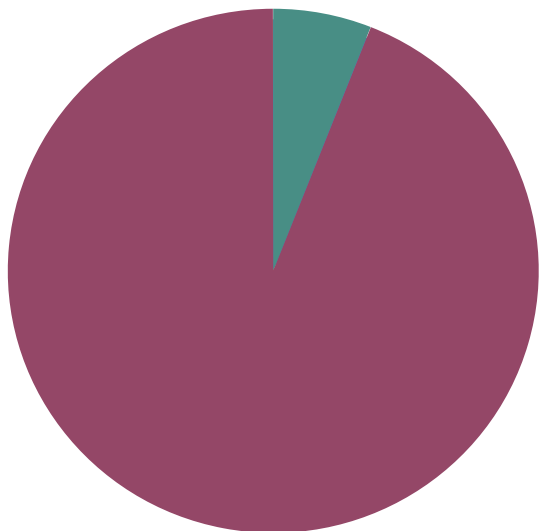
32

...parents attended Incredible Years classes and showed an increase in appropriate discipline, clear expectations, and positive parenting.

8,446

...new, high-quality books were distributed to children through the Reach Out and Read and Imagination Library programs.

EXPENSE BREAKDOWN 2018-2019



\$1,608,464.52

- **ADMINISTRATION - 6%**
\$94,277.33
- **PROGRAMS/SERVICES - 94%**
(EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION, FAMILY SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH)
\$1,514,187.19

COLLABORATING FUNDERS

North Carolina Partnership for Children	\$ 447,592.33
North Carolina Division of Child Development & Early Education	\$ 561,155.84
Private Contributions/Fundraisers	\$ 180,806.62
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services:	\$ 175,363.49
North Carolina Department of Public Health	\$ 64,055.51
Pritzker Children's Initiative:	\$ 59,461.93
National Association of Counties and Sorenson Impact Center at the University of Utah	
App Health	\$ 40,000.00
Fees for Service	\$ 25,099.23
Watauga County	\$ 25,000.00
Iredell County Partnership for Children	\$ 12,981.00
High Country United Way	\$ 10,877.00
Farris Foundation	\$ 5,000.00
Interest Earned	\$ 1,071.57
TOTAL:	\$ 1,608,464.52

APPRECIATION

Our board of directors and staff would like to extend a heartfelt "thank you" to all of the many individuals, businesses, churches and organizations who have given to The Children's Council this year. Whether the donations have been in the form of goods, services, time, energy, ideas or money, we are stronger and able to have a larger impact because of YOU! For more information about how to get involved with our work or to join the giving circle, please visit: www.thechildrenscouncil.org



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