



ANNUAL REPORT

Year Ending December 31, 2018



Connecting
for Children & Families

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Children & Families**

Dear Families,

This past year we dove into opportunities to strengthen our programs and build greater supports for the families we serve.

It was an honor to be appointed to the new Out of School Time Learning Commission at the State House. This group was convened to make recommendations to improve and increase the number of quality out-of-school time opportunities in the state. The Commission will present a final report of its findings in the Summer/Fall of 2019.

We were honored to be selected by Jim Hummel's Rhode Island Spotlight as his featured nonprofit organization for his summer feature. After more than 25 years with the Providence Journal and ABC Channel 6 News, Jim founded Rhode Island Spotlight to highlight and celebrate the stories of community heroes who are making a significant and positive difference across our state. CCF's story was shared with Rhode Island PBS Television and was featured in the Providence Journal Sunday Edition. We are thankful to Jim for the opportunity to

share our story in such an impactful way!

As part of Governor Raimondo's Real Jobs Initiative, CCF's NRI Career Academy was approached by the RI Department of Labor and Training with a request to expand one of our



highly successful workforce training programs and provide customized training for a new employer partner. We were thrilled to offer customized training, with a focus on job readiness, customer service, and call center skills

to Pawtucket area residents.

Thanks to unique grant opportunities with the Rhode Island Foundation and Local Initiative Support Corporation, we received \$15,000 in funding to redesign Stan "The Bull Dog" Eason Park, our neighborhood park. This special opportunity not only will give our school-age program a new outdoor space to utilize, but also the chance to give back to our neighborhood by recreating a beautiful, usable green park space. We can't wait to unveil the newly designed space in 2019!

I am very proud of our team's accomplishments, and the many CCF children, youth and families engaged in our services. Thank you to all of the organizations, businesses, and individuals who continue to make our work possible—we're grateful for your partnership.

Sincerely,

Terese Curtin, MSW
Executive Director

School-Linked Programs

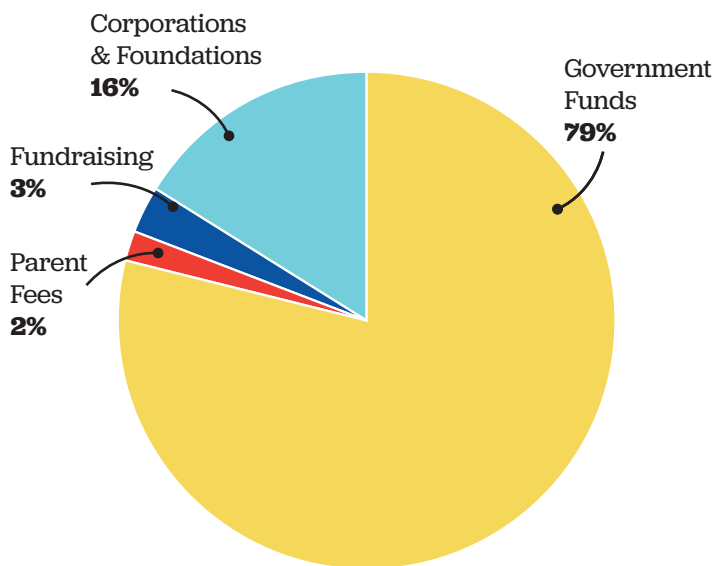


Our 21st Century Community Learning Centers offer after-school enrichment through homework assistance, reading and math remediation, as well as instruction in the arts and music, robotics, cooking classes, physical activity programs, and more. We also offer classes in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) through a SMILE (Science and Math Investigative Learning Experience) partnership with URI. We also teach a wide variety of physical activity programs and community service programming, encouraging students to give back to our community. We partner with Citizens' Memorial, Governor Aram J. Pothier Elementary, Kevin K. Coleman Elementary, Woonsocket Middle, and Woonsocket High Schools



The Year in Numbers

Sources of Funds



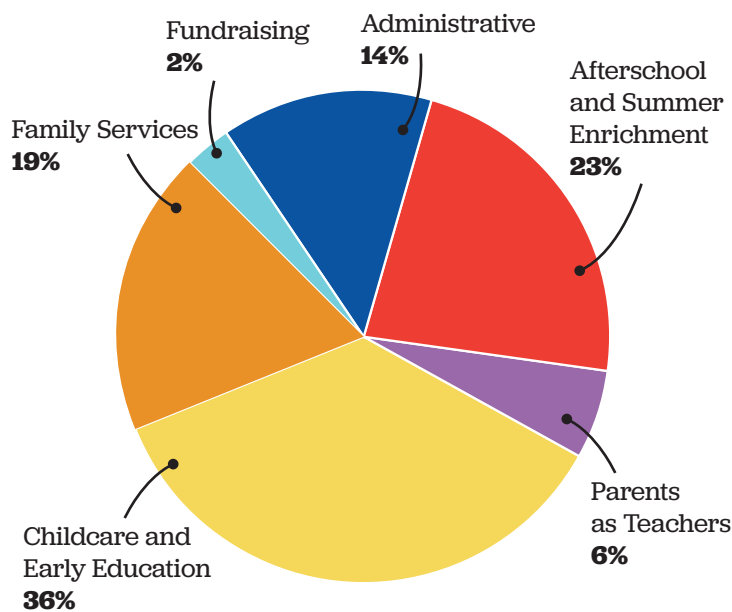
to operate our programs on-site at school, removing access and transportation barriers for families. Operating the programs on-site also encourages communication and a strong collaboration with the schools. “After-school is different from the school day because you learn other stuff besides just math and reading,” shared Angel*, a seven-year-old enrolled in our after-school program at Kevin K. Coleman Elementary during a recent focus group study on our program’s effectiveness. “The science stuff is cool because they let us try it out for ourselves.” Our programs allow children the opportunity to learn in new ways, supporting their school-day curriculum and lessons.

Our team offers Parent Workshops/Family Nights to share information with parents on key topics, and provide parent-child activities to strengthen positive family relationships.

Our Summer Enrichment includes six weeks of educational programs designed to prevent summer learning loss for students in grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Students receive intensive academic assistance, as well as instruction in the arts, sports, swimming, and weekly field trips. Our Federal Summer Food Program ensures that Woonsocket children are receiving nutritious meals during the summer months. Our Chillin’ & Skillin’ program for students in grades 3-5 has been recognized with an Outstanding Program Award by the Rhode Island After-School Plus Alliance.

**Names have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.*

Uses of Funds



Center for Financial Success

Our Center for Financial Success offers a wide range of services for families striving to achieve economic success. The Center enables individuals to gain the skills they need to build self-sufficiency, stabilize their finances, and build their careers for long-term success.

The Center offers programs including financial empowerment education, financial coaching, job coaching, workforce development, and free tax preparation services for low-income families and individuals.

The Center's **financial education program** offers a wide range of courses to the community to help individuals improve their financial literacy and promote informed financial decision making. Through financial education, training, and individualized coaching, participants are able to increase their income, build savings, and learn how to gain and sustain assets. Our team also partners with Woonsocket schools to introduce youth to financial literacy basics, career exploration, and job readiness.

To complement our financial education program, CCF is a **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** Site. Through VITA, we provide low-income taxpayers with free tax counseling and tax return preparation. IRS-certified volunteers help individuals prepare both Federal and State tax returns, and E-file the return for faster refunds. We are proud to share that in 2018, our team filed federal and state tax returns for 855 taxpayers in the Northern RI community, which resulted in refunds of \$1,927,215. The national VITA program successfully enables clients to maximize their tax credits, avoid costly and unnecessary fees, and improve their financial stability. We are proud to provide this important service to our community!

The Center's **basic needs** programming offers wraparound support to families for any requests they may have, including emergency food needs, clothing, and heating assistance. In 2018 we created a partnership with Finlay Extracts & Ingredients, locally

based in Northern Rhode Island, to provide weekly take-home bags for 30 families enrolled in our Hope Street Early Learning Center for an entire year, ensuring families have access to healthy and nutritious foods.

Our **workforce development program** works in partnership with the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce to operate the NRI Career Academy. This partnership began in 2015, and we proudly graduated five classes in 2018! The NRI Career Academy curriculum builds customer service, sales, and general office skills to prepare students for career success.



Students have access to resources to build a personalized career development plan, write their resumes, and opportunities to strengthen their interview skills through mock interview sessions with our employer partners. Due to the program's success, in 2018 the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training engaged our program in a partnership with the Westerly Education Center, and we built a new partnership with Amos House in Providence, expanding our NRI Career Academy to reach new areas across our state.

Liza*, a single mother, enrolled in our NRI Career Academy in the spring of 2018. She was fully committed to gaining the skills necessary to obtain a position as a Customer Service Representative.

As a student with several barriers to overcome, Liza often struggled with self-confidence and the ability to articulate her transferable skills.

Our NRI Career Academy staff worked with Liza to develop an individual training plan, which included work readiness skills and occupational training. Liza met regularly with our workforce training specialist to focus on career goals, and she shared she felt passionate about providing customer service in a healthcare setting. Our team built a customized success plan to support her goals, and Liza was very dedicated to the program all throughout the training.

In addition to completing the workforce development curriculum, Liza attended our budgeting, credit, banking, and identity theft workshops. She also worked with one of our financial coaches one-on-one to learn how to create and stick to a budget, to understand her own credit report, and to learn how to build her credit history. Liza also utilized our food pantry program, helping to ensure she and her child had regular access to healthy food and the ability to make nutritious meals.

With support from our Success Wear program, Liza had access to professional business attire which helped build her confidence when preparing for interviews. Success Wear provides work appropriate clothing at no cost to low-income men and women who are completing job training and education programs, and seeking employment.

While enrolled, she learned interviewing techniques to set a strong first impression with our employer partners. We are proud to report that upon graduating from our NRI Career Academy, Liza was offered a full-time position as a Patient Service Representative with Thundermist Health Center. We are grateful to have been a partner with Liza on her journey to find stability and a career that truly brings her joy!

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Early Learning & School-Age Child Care

For more than ten years, CCF has ensured that children in Woonsocket get a good start in life and start school ready to learn through our early learning and school-age child care programs. Providing this critical service to families in our community empowers parents and caregivers to be able to go to work, and know their child is in a safe, nurturing space.

The Hope Street Early Learning Center is a dynamic and diverse learning environment, operating six bright, inviting classrooms for 92 children ages 18-months to five years old. Our four-star BrightStars-rated Center provides high quality and affordable early learning opportunities, engaging toddlers and preschoolers in learning and play. BrightStars is our state's tiered rating system, which is used as a quality assessment of licensed childcare programs.

Our program curriculum focuses on healthy social, emotional, physical and cognitive development, preparing children for later success in school. As our teachers work individually with children in the classroom, they are able to identify each child's strengths and areas they may need additional support in as well. One child we worked with closely, Jared*, was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. When Jared began preschool at CCF, he had difficulty learning the classroom routine and accepting any changes that came up in the daily schedule. Lillian*, his mom, often reached out to Jared's teachers and our Early Learning team for help. Our team connected Lillian with supportive resources, learned new ways to help Jared adjust to changes, and helped him develop new skills to feel comfortable in the classroom. We are pleased to share that by the end of the year, Jared was able to participate in the class' daily routine more than 90% of the time!

"Watching children as they grow and learn through our program is a truly special gift," shared Marisa Gallagher, Director of Child Care. "I am very proud of our staff and their commitment to supporting not only the children enrolled in their classrooms, but their families as well. We're grateful for the trust placed in us by our families and their partnership, as we join their lives for the earliest years of their child's development."

For older children and youth, the Hope Street School-Age Program provides safe, academically enriching before and after-school care for 40 students in grades K-5. Our four-star BrightStars-rated school-age program offers developmentally appropriate activities that encourage social-emotional growth and foster learning. Programming aligns with in-school curriculum and supports ongoing communication between teachers and parents.

Our child care programming works to address the persistent achievement gap for children from low income families by helping all children develop the foundational social, emotional and academic skills they need to be successful both in school and in life.

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Parents as Teachers

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a nationally recognized, certified school readiness program for families with young children, prenatal to five years old. Parent Educators provide families with activities, educational materials, screenings and other tools to foster positive child development and promote literacy.

In October 2018, CCF earned a prestigious endorsement by Parents as Teachers National Center as a Blue Ribbon Affiliate, making our program one of the top performing home visiting affiliates within the international Parents as Teachers network.

To earn Blue Ribbon Affiliate status, our team underwent a rigorous self-study

and National Center review process to confirm we are meeting Parents as Teachers' standards of fidelity and quality. Blue Ribbon Affiliates are exemplary programs, delivering the highest quality services to children and families. Our team's greatest strengths identified by the national office include early childhood learning and parent engagement.

"Our team is always thinking about ways to make our program more engaging for both children and families," said Denise Shavers, Parents as Teachers Program Manager. "Our work with families and caregivers helps ensure they have the tools to support their children's learning and healthy development, and

we are very proud to be recognized by Parents as Teachers National Center for the quality and impact of our program."

Being named a Blue Ribbon Affiliate affirms that CCF is a high-quality member of the home visiting field, implementing the evidence-based Parents as Teachers model with fidelity. Families in the Northern Rhode Island community are positively impacted by the services delivered by our program, which include home visits, family activity nights, child screenings, equipping parents with knowledge and resources to better prepare their children for a stronger start in life and greater success in school.

2018 Events

➤ Vision of Hope

On October 30, CCF held our first Vision of Hope celebratory dinner at Kirkbrae Country Club. The event was chaired by John C. Gregory, President and CEO of the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, and honored Tony Maione, retired President and CEO of United Way of Rhode Island, with the CCF designated Visionary Award. In addition, a keynote address was delivered by US Senator Jack Reed. The event raised \$60,000 to support our programs. This event was made possible by the generosity of Amica Insurance, National Grid, BankRI, Customers Bank, Landmark Medical Center, Navigant Credit Union, and many other faithful supporters of our work in the community.



➤ Make Tracks for Kids 5K

CCF held the 8th Annual Make Tracks for Kids 5K Run/Walk and 1K Fun Run on Saturday, June 2 at Bryant University in Smithfield, RI.

Alana Cerrone, Multimedia Journals at ABC6 News, joined us as our celebrity emcee for the USATF certified course that winds through the beautiful campus of Bryant University. We awarded prizes for the top three male and female finishers, and ribbons for the top male and female in each age division, as well as prizes for the individual and team that raised the most money. We are pleased to share that this year's event raised \$30,000 to support our programs! This event was made possible by the generosity of Amica Insurance, Bryant University, Cox Communications, CVS Health, and many other faithful supporters of CCF's work in the community.



Mission Statement

Established in 1995 with funding from the Rhode Island Foundation, Connecting for Children and Families (CCF) is a community-based, non-profit organization located in Woonsocket, one of Rhode Island's core urban cities. Our mission - to transform the lives of Woonsocket children through high quality educational opportunities and family support - is accomplished through strong community partnerships and advocacy.



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