



## **Connecting for Children and Families Annual Report 2020**

**Transforming the lives of Woonsocket children through high quality educational opportunities and family support.**

# Dear Families and Supporters,

2020 was quite a year. When COVID-19 became serious in March, no one could have anticipated how our lives would change in the months ahead. Our concern for Woonsocket families soared, and we scrambled to come up with strategies to safely stay connected to our community despite our enforced physical separation.

I am thankful for my amazing Board of Directors, who provided steadfast guidance and inspiration during this challenging time. I am also grateful for my senior team and staff, all of whom stepped up with incredible innovation, creativity, and determination to ensure that families would continue to receive our services, especially when they needed them more than ever before.

At the same time, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for everyone who helped us celebrate our 25th anniversary as a community-based organization in 2020. As we prepared for this event (to be held virtually), it gave us the opportunity to step out of the moment and think back to our humble beginnings, when we operated out of the first floor of a two-family tenement in Woonsocket's Fairmount neighborhood.

Today, our headquarters are in the historic Hope Street School, which also houses CCF's 5-Star rated Early Learning Center. We are honored to carry on the original purpose of the Hope Street School—as a center of learning—and we truly appreciate your support over the years. Thank you for joining us to celebrate this significant milestone in CCF's history.

Today, we cast a wide net of support that reaches 4,000 children and families every year, and our programs are designed to transform lives. Our board and staff share an unwavering passion to make a difference. They are true leaders with an unstoppable drive to overcome obstacles, working together each and every day so that all children—no matter their financial situation, ethnicity, gender, or race—can reach their full potential.

Thank you again to all of our donors: foundations, philanthropists, funders, corporate partners, and community members. Because of you, CCF can and will continue to be a beacon of hope and empowerment for children and families in our community!

Sincerely,

Terese Curtin, MSW  
Executive Director



# 2020 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

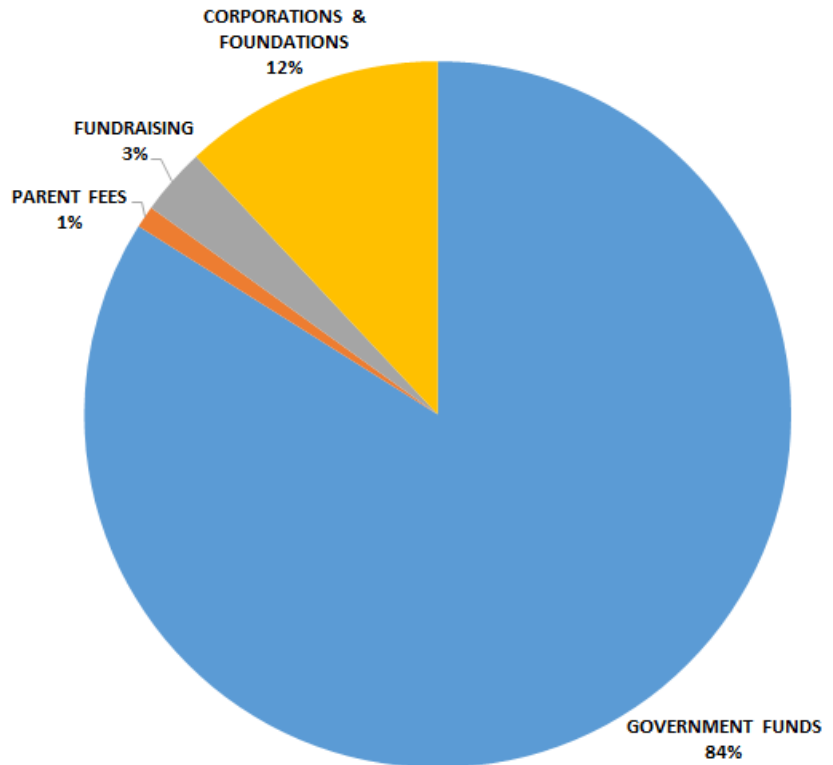
For Budget Year January 1 - December 31

Total Revenue: \$3,685,093

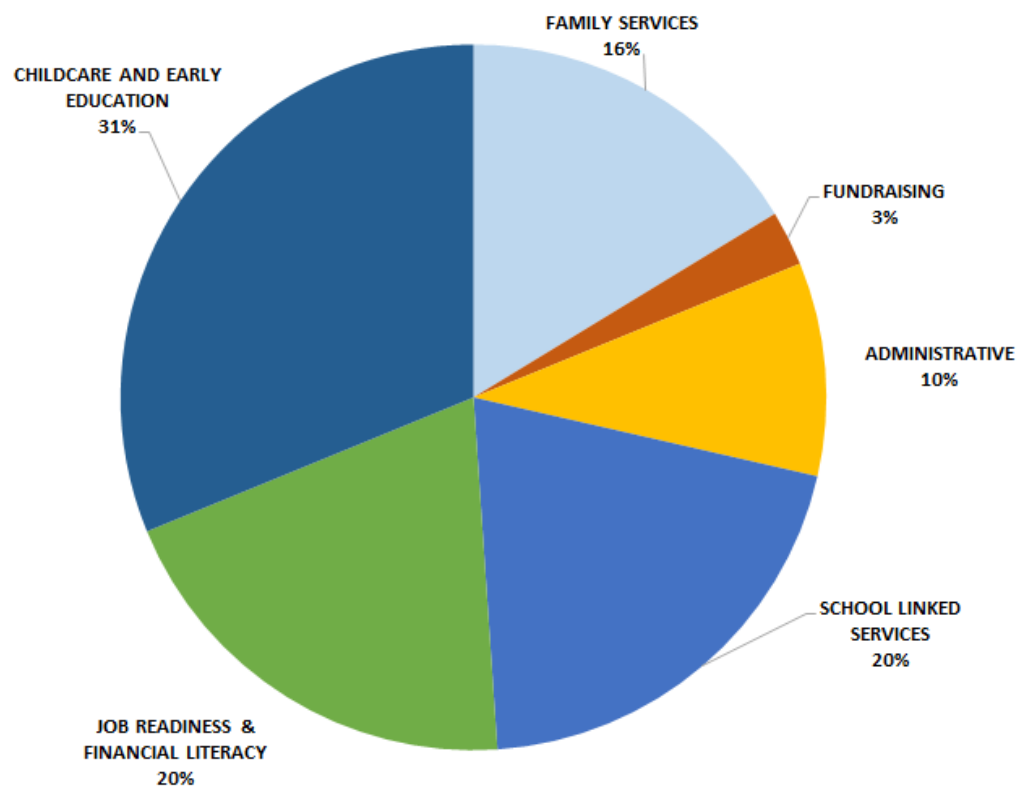
Total Expenses: \$3,420,299



## SOURCES OF FUNDING



## EXPENDITURES



# COVID-19 Response

When it became clear that COVID-19 was not a fleeting moment, CCF knew we had to quickly change the way we thought about service delivery. We couldn't just shut our doors. We couldn't let this community down, not when it needed us most.

Our basic needs support requests jumped fivefold. We had to act quickly. We initiated grab 'n go service at our weekly Food Pantry. We launched a new food delivery program for seniors, the disabled, single-parent households, and frontline workers. Thanks to our generous friends and funders, including The Rhode Island Foundation, United Way of Rhode Island, BankRI, June Rockwell Levy Foundation, and Rocco Baldelli Hunt, we were able to purchase more food and other essentials for distribution.

CCF was the only site in Rhode Island to continue its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA), which provides free tax return preparation for eligible families. Though sadly we could not sit face to face with clients, we were able to keep our services as client-friendly as possible, while following all safety protocols. As a result, we were able to generate roughly \$2 million in much-needed tax returns.

Even as unemployment skyrocketed nationwide, CCF continued empowering adults to enter the workforce. Our Northern RI Career Academy was just beginning a new cohort of job seekers when the pandemic struck. The swiftness with which our staff switched to distance learning—securing funding to purchase laptops and internet capability for participants—was amazing: we did not lose a single participant, and in fact, the cohort was able to graduate on time.

While our Parents as Teachers home visiting program, afterschool enrichment, and summer camps transitioned to virtual platforms, we happily welcomed our toddlers and preschoolers back to a newly safeguarded Hope Street Early Learning Center in June, just 2½ months after the Governor had closed all childcare providers.

From June through December 2020, CCF continued to innovate, to serve, and to stay as connected as we possibly could to our children and families. We thank the generous funders who made our agility possible.

We couldn't have done it without you! *THANK YOU!*





## SERVICES SPOTLIGHT: WOONSOCKET HIGH SCHOOL WANT A JOB? PROGRAM

CCF puts great emphasis on programs that help prepare youth for their futures. Our *Want A Job?* academic and social enrichment afterschool program provides career exploration and work readiness training for Woonsocket High School students.

In partnership with the RI Governor's Workforce Board, CCF offers the eight-week *Want A Job?* program in the fall, winter, and spring.

The career exploration element of *Want A Job?* brings in guest speakers from a variety of fields to talk about their careers and the pathways they have followed to achieve success.

Work readiness training hones a variety of essential skills, including: financial literacy; resume, cover, and thank-you letter writing; and interviewing do's and don'ts.

*Want A Job?* also connects students with other CCF programs they can utilize well into adulthood, like SuccessWear, which provides free professional apparel for jobseekers.

*Want A Job?* students receive a \$100 stipend for attending regularly, completing a resume and cover letter, and making a final presentation.

*Want A Job?* has become hugely popular with students, teachers, and CCF staff. **Students** build useful and relevant skills as they think about their futures and prepare to enter the workforce with confidence. **Teachers** appreciate the consistent improvement in participating student attendance and behavior. And **CCF staff?** We so enjoy working with the *Want A Job?* high school students who apply for summer jobs with us and help CCF campers build critical literacy and math skills!



## Happiness for the Holidays

The Holidays can be such a happy time. They can also be stressful, as we try to get perfect presents purchased and wrapped, special meals prepared, and family activities organized. Winter 2020 was an especially challenging time, with the pandemic keeping families and friends from gathering. COVID-related financial hardship just added to the stress.

We are grateful to CCF community members who helped us deliver holiday cheer to our children and families. Thanks to the generosity of BankRI, Landmark Medical Center, Navigant Credit Union, and the First Baptist Church of East Greenwich, we were able to provide toys, clothing, and other presents for children to open and enjoy.

Community generosity enabled us to expand our annual Giving Tree to include 100 families!

As families celebrated their holidays with gift opening, they sent us photos filled with joy and messages of love. One grateful family told us:

“This was the first Christmas that our daughter was old enough to appreciate opening gifts. We work full-time and Christmas snuck up on us this year. Thanks to the wonderful staff at Connecting for Children and Families, she had plenty of gifts to enjoy opening! Everything was beautiful and age appropriate. It was exactly what she needed to flourish.”

We are so thankful to all those who helped CCF make such an impact on the lives of so many.

# Board of Directors



## Officers:

Lisa Carcifero, Chairperson  
Ericka Moore, Vice-Chairperson  
Kathleen Orovitz, Treasurer  
Meka Hamilton Gendron, Secretary

## Parent Representatives:

Meka Hamilton Gendron  
Sharon Harmon  
Ida Jagne  
Lynn Kapiskas  
Adriana Spellman

## Representatives of Community Agencies:

Lisa Carcifero, *Blackstone Valley Prevention Coalition*  
Nancy Giambusso, *RI Regional Adult Learning*  
Ericka Moore, *Neighborhood Health Plan of RI*

## Community Leaders:

Christopher Beauchamp  
Laura Belisle, *Cox Communications*  
Nancy Dufresne, *BankRI*  
Marge Jacob, *RE/MAX Town and Country Cumberland Office*  
Candace Jodice, *CVS Health*  
Michael Jolin  
Cynthia Kelly, *Santander*  
Carolyn Kyle, *Landmark Medical Center*  
Kathleen Orovitz, *Navigant Credit Union*  
Stacey Phommatheth, *Federal Hill House Association*





Connecting  
for Children & Families

*Transforming  
Lives  
for more than  
25 Years*



**Connecting for Children & Families**

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Connecting for Children and Families (CCF) is a community-based, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.