



2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Building a New Reality During the Pandemic



CCSA's mission is to lead efforts to strengthen accessible and affordable quality early care and education by providing supports for families, communities and the workforce.





FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHAIR

Dear Friends,

Now 18 months into dealing with COVID-19, child care has changed immeasurably, and children, families, early childhood professionals and whole communities are feeling the impact. As we adjust and figure out how to move forward, early childhood professionals continue to feel the effects of the pandemic. They worked through the early statewide shutdowns for little pay and with no healthcare, and now they are caring for and educating children who may not quite understand why their world is still unsettled and uncertain. The early childhood education system is stretched thin, with staffing shortages across the U.S. as educators leave the profession for better paying jobs, but families still need quality child care programs to work or go to school.

At Child Care Services Association (CCSA), over the past year, we have worked diligently to help support child care programs, early childhood educators and families. As child care professionals struggled with the challenges created by COVID-19, we have continued to provide them with virtual technical assistance and professional development and supported them with scholarships and wage supplements through T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®, Child Care WAGE\$® and Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$®. We also found ways to keep providing healthy meals for children in North Carolina's Triangle region, even when schools and many child care programs remained closed. We have advocated for increased compensation for child care professionals, worked with states to determine the best way to support the workforce in their areas and guided families through finding the right child care program for their situation.

In this fiscal year, we looked to the future and created a new strategic plan to guide CCSA's work for the next three years. We also identified and reinforced our commitment to our core values—equity, transparency, integrity and flexibility. You can see our core values and strategic plan on our website at www.childcareservices.org.

Above all, we continue to help enhance and support the infrastructure for early care and learning systems programs in North Carolina and across the country. We have marveled at how resilient early childhood educators are, and we stand with them as we help ensure that all children receive the early care and education that is so important for their development.

Thank you so much for your commitment to CCSA and young children. With your support, we will continue to rebuild the child care systems that have been through so much over the past 18 months. Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peggy M. Ball".

Peggy Ball
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marsha Basloe".

Marsha Basloe
President





T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program North Carolina

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Program North Carolina (T.E.A.C.H.) offers early childhood professionals a debt-free education, providing significant financial support and a counselor to help them navigate through the barriers they might face in their personal life, career or at school. Often first-generation students, T.E.A.C.H. participants are nearly all women, and more than half are Black or women of color. T.E.A.C.H. supports participants as they work while furthering their education, with the ultimate goal of increasing their marketability in the field and raising the quality of care and education they provide for the children in their program.



LaTida Adams, Director
A Brilliant Beginning Daycare,
Durham, N.C.

THE IMPACT

It's no surprise that LaTida Adams has been the director of A Brilliant Beginning Daycare in Durham, N.C., for 22 years. Her journey in the early child care field started when she was in the sixth grade and wrote in her journal, "I'm going to own my own daycare." What she might not have anticipated was the path she would take to get there.

LaTida attended Durham Technical Community College for her undergraduate degree in early education. During her time there, she gave birth to her first child and began searching for a child care program to put him in while she continued her education. "I could not find a [child care program] I was happy with," LaTida said. She complained about this predicament to one of her professors who told her she should open her own program.

Having no business experience, she turned to CCSA for guidance. "I was placed with some great mentors from Child Care Services Association," LaTida said. Initially, she thought she might have to drop out of school to start her child care program, but then one of her mentors told her about CCSA's [T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Program](#).

THE NUMBERS

In FY2020-2021:

- **2,046** people participated in T.E.A.C.H. NC, which offers a debt-free education to early childhood professionals.
- Those early childhood professionals worked in **942** licensed child care facilities and **48** early childhood education organizations.
- **58,544** children were enrolled in a child care program with at least one T.E.A.C.H. participant.
- **49.6%** were first-generation college students.
- **98%** were women.
- **By degrees:**
 - **1,420** were pursuing an associate degree.
 - **343** were pursuing a bachelor's degree.
 - **306** were pursuing a BA Plus or graduate degree.
 - **39** were pursuing early childhood education credentials.

"I got on the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship once I opened my [child care program]," LaTida said. LaTida lived her dream of owning a child care program and enjoys working with children every day, something she believes was only possible "thanks to T.E.A.C.H."

Having achieved her life-long goal, she set her sights on getting a master's degree in early education, a scholarship opportunity T.E.A.C.H. added in 2016. LaTida enrolled in the program and has balanced being both a student and a director for the past few years. "A master's program is no joke," LaTida said. She does her schoolwork during the children's nap time every day as well as in the evening. LaTida said, "If I commit myself daily for two hours a day to one class, that's more than enough."

This December, LaTida will graduate from UNC-Wilmington with her master's degree completely debt-free. "I am grateful and thankful because not only T.E.A.C.H. but CCSA has been very instrumental to me and my program," LaTida said. She is eager to continue her education with T.E.A.C.H. if given the opportunity. She said, "I believe in the next two to five years, they'll come up with a doctoral program."

Throughout her journey, LaTida's constant motivation has been her love of teaching and caring for children, and her favorite part is "getting them as infants and seeing them grow." This motivation has kept her going amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. LaTida said, "COVID showed me a better appreciation for what I do. I did not close for one day...I was able to take the most important thing off parents' plates, which is their children."

"Growing up, I always managed to be the neighborhood babysitter...I always knew teaching would be it, but I didn't know it'd be child care until sixth grade when I had that affirmation," LaTida said. "When I look back 22 years later, this dream has come to reality."



OUR PROGRAMS

Child Care **WAGES[®]** Program

Child Care **WAGES[®]** Program

Child Care **WAGES[®]** (WAGES[®]) provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers, directors and family child care providers working with children between the ages of birth to 5. The program is designed to provide young children more stable relationships with better-educated teachers by rewarding teacher education and continuity of care. In FY2020-2021, WAGES[®] was funded through a partnership between Smart Start partnerships and the N.C. Division of Child Development and Early Education.



Davina Woods, Founder
Genesis Child Development Center,
Alamance County, N.C.

THE IMPACT

When Davina Woods was asked how she became interested in early childhood education/care, she said, “I entered the profession as an undercover helicopter mom! I had just placed my son in child care and I couldn’t stand not being there and seeing what and how he was doing.”

Her child’s center hired her as a part-time school-age group leader before she eventually found her calling with young children and their teachers. She started with no education, but earned her associate through master’s degrees. After 13 years at Excel Christian Academy, in 2021 she started her own child care program in Alamance County, N.C., Genesis Child Development Center. But doing so during a pandemic was not always easy.

“Stepping out on my own at Genesis, it was starting over again,” she said. “Finding qualified staff is, without a shadow of a doubt, the biggest thorn in my side, the largest obstacle I still have not been able to overcome even a year later.”

She finished her master’s degree in 2021, paying for her final semester herself because of changes brought about by COVID-19.

“It was one of those things that I needed to do for my students and for the profession, to not only be a voice, to be an example of what can be done, but to be an advocate, an early childhood professional who chose this field, and I am not an anomaly,” she said.

“Finishing up a degree, in the midst of pandemic, it was a bit overwhelming, more than I expected, so to complete and finish, that makes me so proud.”

Her previous center, Excel Christian Academy, prioritizes its teachers by providing a livable wage as well as other key benefits, which she knows most teachers do not have. “And then they get WAGES[®] and T.E.A.C.H. on top of that,” she said.

“WAGES[®] and T.E.A.C.H. are just part of who we are, part of the center’s make-up,” Davina said. “It is essential, imperative, to have an educated staff, especially here in the 21st century where children are not changing but the modes and methods of educating children are constantly evolving. Teachers must know best practices and know how to utilize the latest research and incorporate that into classrooms for the best outcomes for children.”

According to Davina, “WAGES[®] is essential because it helps to boost teacher morale within the program. WAGES[®] both encourages and motivates staff to increase their education.

“It has been a privilege to work in every single aspect of child care,” Davina said. “In every classroom, with every age group, in every position. I have fulfilled every duty from cook to van driver and it gives me perspective and appreciation. I love this viewpoint. I get the luxury of working with children, families and teachers.”

“During COVID, **WAGES[®] helped me pay bills, and I was able to get some food to eat. It also helped when I needed to fix something on my car.”**

—Early childhood educator
and WAGES[®] participant

THE NUMBERS

- The average six-month supplement in FY2020-2021 was **\$1,169**.
- **3,751** early childhood educators received a supplement through WAGES[®] in FY2020-2021.
- Those professionals worked at **1,585** child care programs in **58** counties across N.C.
- **67,277** children attended child care programs with WAGES[®] participants.
- The turnover rate for WAGES[®] participant was **12%**, well below the **21%** turnover rate in full-time teachers and assistants in the state’s early childhood workforce overall.
- **88%** in counties with at least two years of experience on WAGES[®] had an associate degree in early childhood education, its equivalent or higher or submitted coursework during the year to show their progress.
- In a survey, **98%** said WAGES[®] helps ease financial stress and **97%** said WAGES[®] encourages them to stay with their current child care program.

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$[®] Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$[®] Program

The Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ Program provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid early educators working full-time with children birth through age 2 in North Carolina. Historically, there has been a significant difference in the quality of care that infants and toddlers receive when compared to that of 3-5 year olds. Since a child's brain develops more in their first five years than at any other time in life, it is critical that infants and toddlers are cared for by supportive, stable educators. AWARD\$ helps accomplish that by encouraging participants to get a degree and stay in early childhood education at their current program.



Arietha Brunson
Family Child Care Provider,
Guilford County, N.C.

THE IMPACT

"When we are children, we have dreams and goals of what we are going to become and I wanted to be a pediatrician," said Arietha Brunson, a family child care provider in Guilford County, N.C. As she grew up, Arietha found herself teaching the young children of her friends and family members and that sparked her desire to work in early childhood.

Her interest grew after she had her first son. "As I taught him, I wanted to learn more. He was exceling in pre-K and his teachers told me to keep doing what I was doing, and I realized that I wanted to offer that to other children as well," she said. She obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Human Development and Family Studies with significant early childhood coursework, but she didn't want to stop there.

Arietha is now pursuing her early childhood master's degree at UNC-Greensboro. "My child care program is in my home now, but I hope to open a center and have even more skills when I am leading others," she said. "I learned that the [T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood](#) scholarship was there to support a master's and that was a huge influence in my continuing. I was elated to learn that T.E.A.C.H. offers scholarships to family child care providers. It has always been my desire to get higher education and to grow in the field."

Education is important to Arietha because she understands the role she plays for children. "We are shaping their future," she said. "We are inspiring and impacting their lives. I've given them the space to discover their skills and interests, and that knowledge has grown as a result of my education. I'm very proud that I'm getting my master's. Getting in is hard. You just never know. It was a great feat to get that acceptance letter! I hope to even go further and get my Ph.D."

Going to school during COVID-19 has meant more online classes, which Arietha appreciates because it promotes safety. She also has heightened awareness of health and safety as a family child care provider. "COVID has changed the world. We have to be so mindful and careful since the program is in our home. We have to ask parents about their health and practices every day. We are striving to follow the rules. It's a different time that we are in," she said.

Her biggest challenge, though, existed even before COVID-19 and has worsened during the pandemic. "We are overworked and underpaid, and that has always been true," Arietha said. "Parents want the best for their children, we all do, but they just can't always pay the costs of that care. I still give care like I would to my own children, even when parents can't pay."

That's where AWARD\$ comes in. Arietha said, "AWARD\$ helps mitigate financial stress that I face as an early educator. Compensation is a big issue. It is insufficient to meet the cost of living. It has helped me be more financially successful. When families can't pay more, it helps balance that out. Seeing growth in the children keeps me going and it's about the passion for children, but you still need fair compensation to be able to do this work."

THE NUMBERS

- The average six-month supplement in FY2020-2021 was **\$1,278**.
- **1,355** early childhood educators participated in AWARD\$ in FY2020-2021.
- Those educators worked in **796** facilities in **91** counties in N.C.
- More than **19,000** children attended a child care program with at least one AWARD\$ participant.
- The turnover rate for AWARD\$ recipients was **12%** in FY2020-2021, showing how adequate compensation, recognition and support help reduce turnover in North Carolina's child care programs.



OUR PROGRAMS



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] National Center

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center at CCSA (National Center) helps improve the education, compensation, career progression and retention of the early childhood workforce. Central to this work is the replication of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship and Child Care WAGE\$ programs across the country through statewide non-profit organizations. In FY2020-2021, 23 states and D.C. operated T.E.A.C.H. programs, and six states operated WAGE\$. The National Center helps these organizations ensure the early childhood workforce earns more, continues their education and stays in the field.



Diane Manning, Counselor, N.H.

THE IMPACT

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center launched the New Counselor Training Series in January 2020 to support counseling and support staff within T.E.A.C.H. programs across the country. The series consists of four modules designed to provide consistent information about the T.E.A.C.H. program from the national perspective and to develop their skills critical in supporting the early childhood workforce in meeting their educational goals. Little did we know at the launch of this training series that these cohorts would not only support skills development, but would also bring peers together while the annual symposium was unable to meet face-to-face due to the pandemic.

At the center of the T.E.A.C.H. model, also known as the 5Cs, is the counselor and the support they provide to the scholarship recipients. To complete the training series we ask that each participant reflect on what they have learned and share why the role of the counselor is so important to the success of each T.E.A.C.H. recipient. Diane Manning, a counselor from New Hampshire, captures the role of the counselor so well in her final essay of the training series:

"The role of the T.E.A.C.H. counselor is vital to the success of each T.E.A.C.H. recipient. The counselor has many different responsibilities that support and promote the scholarship program, and specifically the recipients. The T.E.A.C.H. counselor provides administrative support to each recipient through organizing contracts and forms necessary for the scholarship..."

"The T.E.A.C.H. counselor provides emotional support to each recipient by checking in frequently and offering suggestions and guidance when they encounter a roadblock while taking classes. Whether it is time management, technical difficulties or communicating with their instructors or employers, the counselor can help a recipient find a solution or resolve an issue. This helps the recipient feel successful as a college student, and can give them confidence to continue.

"The T.E.A.C.H. counselor provides support navigating the higher education system. Often recipients are first time college students, or it has been a long time since they have taken a college class. Recipients may be unsure of the process and need help finding the correct person with whom to speak. The counselor can help connect the recipient with the college and determine their next steps. The counselor can also help bolster the recipients' confidence by celebrating their achievements..."

"All of these responsibilities contribute to the success of the recipient. Ultimately, it is the recipients' job to do the work and earn the degree, but the counselor's job is to do everything they can to ensure their success by supporting them in all ways necessary."

THE NUMBERS

- In FY2020-2021, **8,122** people participated in WAGE\$ programs across the U.S.
- The turnover rate for WAGE\$ participants was **12.56%**.
- **60%** of WAGE\$ participants nationally were people of color and/or Latinx.
- **165,297** children attended child care programs across the country that had one or more WAGE\$ participants.
- In FY2020-2021, there were **15,382** T.E.A.C.H. participants in **23 states and D.C.**
- **537,943** children attended child care programs across the country that had one or more T.E.A.C.H. participant.
- **54%** of T.E.A.C.H. participants started with a HS diploma or GED as their highest level of completed education.
- **50%** of T.E.A.C.H. participants were people of color and/or Latinx.
- More than **50%** of T.E.A.C.H. participants were first-generation students.
- Nationally, in FY2020-2021, **440** T.E.A.C.H. participants earned an associate degree, **327** earned a bachelor's degree and **124** earned a master's degree.



Providing a Wealth of Information on N.C.'s Child Care and the Workforce

For decades, CCSA has been instrumental in providing public policy research to state and local leaders, child care providers, funders and other community members throughout North Carolina. Though based in the Triangle, CCSA gathers and presents early care and education data for counties across the state. CCSA is committed to assisting state and local partners with a breadth of easy-to-access and easy-to-understand system-level information to help guide programmatic and funding decisions. CCSA's online data repository is one source of information gathered from a number of different sources.

CCSA's data repository includes five fact sheets for each of North Carolina's 100 counties as well as the state. The fact sheets provide comprehensive data from a number of different sources, including data from the Division of Child Development and Early Education, Head Start, Child Care Resource and Referral, the Department of Public Instruction and census data. The information is divided into fact sheets on different topics: child care in North Carolina, young children and their families, early care and education use, early care and education programs and infant and toddler care.

These early care and education fact sheets are updated monthly, as data is available, allowing users to receive the most current information on various topics. Similarly, data is available at your fingertips for a look back at historic trends. Though data online is only available from 2014 forward, CCSA has produced fact sheets similar to the child care in North Carolina fact sheet since the 1990s and has this information available by request.

[Check out CCSA's online data repository today.](#)

Child Care Resource and Referral Services

CCR&R Council

North Carolina Child Care Resource & Referral Council

CCR&R COUNCIL

Statewide, CCSA is one of three lead agencies in the N.C. Child Care Resource and Referral Council, along with Southwestern Child Development Commission in western North Carolina and Child Care Resources Inc. in Charlotte, N.C. Together, the Council manages consumer education and referral, professional development, technical assistance, data collection and analysis and public awareness activities across N.C. through a contract with the state's Division of Child Development and Early Education.



CHILD CARE REFERRAL CENTRAL

In North Carolina's Triangle region, CCSA's Child Care Referral Central (CCRC) is a collaboration between CCSA (providing referral services in Durham, Orange and Wake counties) and the Alamance, Caswell, Person and Franklin-Granville-Vance Partnerships for Children, dedicated to helping families find affordable, high-quality child care. CCRC has bilingual child care referral specialists available to help take the guesswork out of choosing care from the vast number of centers in Alamance, Caswell, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Orange, Person, Vance and Wake counties. Referral specialists provide information about the types of child care available, educate families on the features of high quality child care and offer a list of appropriate referrals to child care programs that meet families' needs.

THE IMPACT

First-time mother Martina* reached out to us in early June looking for guidance about choosing an appropriate program for her 2-year-old son. Her son, diagnosed with Down Syndrome, needs specific proper care for healthy development and socialization. Martina said, "Although [my son is] non-verbal, he can sign. He can communicate really well when he wants."

Martina moved to Wake County in March. Since her son's condition places him at high risk for COVID-19, the 2-year-old has been at home with just her the past few months. Martina said, "[One] of our bigger concerns in getting him into [child] care is just for him to socialize with other peers...He gets therapy a couple times a week, so we already have those services. It was more for him to interact with other kids. We've noticed he models behavior very well. If he sees another child doing something, he ends up doing it a few minutes later, which, so far, has been good. We really just wanted him to be motivated, and at least now a good chunk of adults are vaccinated, so it just seemed like a safer time for him to go."

continued on page 8



OUR PROGRAMS

Child Care Referral Central continued from page 7

New to the area, Martina's family knew next to nothing about the various programs available to them. She did know, however, that she did not want to send her son to a "special needs" program. "Our vision for him is to be a well-rounded member of the community, which includes everyone," she shared.

Having just moved, and with another baby on the way just a week before their son's third birthday, Martina's family had their hands full, including finding child care for their son. When discussing the situation with her son's Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) coordinator, Martina was referred to Child Care Referral Central to help her with the process. Martina said her son's CDSA coordinator told her, "'there's this service where you just call them and talk to them, and they help you find child care and give you a list.' I was like, 'seriously? This is what I need.'"

When asked what the most valuable part of the process was, Martina said CCRC was a huge time saver. She explained, "For me, it was just time that I didn't have to do the research...I mean, obviously, I looked at the centers when [my CCRC specialist] sent me the list, but it was just a load off of me to do all that [research]. The main thing for me was time. Also, it was nice to know that they were already ranked and that [the specialist] explained to me how that worked."

THE NUMBERS

- CCRC provided **1,720** referrals in FY2020-2021, helping families find high quality child care for more than **2,000** children. An additional **424** families received consultation services.
- **674** referrals were provided for families whose income was less than \$30,000/year.
- **676** families receiving referrals were Black, **244** were Latinx and **356** were White.

Martina said after sending an email to CCRC, her assigned referral specialist called her almost immediately. She said, "We talked for less than half an hour...and then she sent me the results that afternoon...I'm telling you, easy breezy."

When asked if she would consider using CCRC when searching for child care for her second child, Martina responded, "Yeah. I've already referred you guys twice."

Martina advised other families who are in unique situations like her own that might be struggling to find appropriate, high-quality care "to definitely reach out to [CCRC] as an option, and then if those options don't work for them, they can continue doing their own research. It's a good start, at least. It also, for me, brought awareness to different centers that I didn't know of...that on a Google search doesn't necessarily pop up."

**Name changed to protect the subject's privacy.*

Early Childhood Homelessness Initiative

Approximately one in 18 (1.3 million) infants, toddlers and preschoolers experiences homelessness each year. Early childhood homelessness can have devastating, life-long impacts on infants, toddlers and preschoolers because their brains are developing rapidly. However, young children are resilient and have the capacity to thrive despite experiencing homelessness. Access to early childhood programs and services can help young children build resilience and mitigate some of the negative effects of early childhood homelessness on their developing brains.

Federal programs and policies, including Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) subsidies, Early Head Start, Early Intervention, Head Start and the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act, support homeless infants', toddlers' and preschoolers' healthy development and resiliency. These programs help young children experiencing homelessness by providing them access to a high-quality care environment, an opportunity for early education and services to support their healthy development.

In FY2020-2021, CCSA began the Early Childhood Homelessness Initiative with the goal of increasing

CCSA Child Care Scholarship Program

The CCSA Child Care Scholarship Program and the Ramsey Tremalgia Fund help families earning low to moderate incomes find and fund quality child care. CCSA also administers scholarship funds for the Durham County Partnership for Children. Through these programs, CCSA provides financial assistance to families in which the parents are working, looking for work and/or in school or training and need care for children ages birth to 12 years old. The primary goal of these scholarships is to provide children with access to high-quality child care.

THE IMPACT

"I was a teen mom and gave birth to my son during my senior year of high school. This scholarship was truly an immense blessing [as] it allowed me to finish my senior year as well as begin my college career. I didn't have enough money to pay for a baby sitter let alone [child care] and had begun to accept the fact that college wouldn't be a possibility, however CCSA changed all that. My son was able to attend a 5-star [child care program] where he learned so much more than I would have been able to teach him at home and I was able to further my education. I tell all my friends and family about CCSA in hopes that it will help them as much as it helped me."

—CCSA Child Care Scholarship Program participant

"The scholarship that I got changed my life forever, from jobless and homeless to independent single mom. Now I have a job and a little rental apartment. Thank you so much. I'll always be grateful."

—CCSA Child Care Scholarship Program participant

"If I did not have access to this scholarship program, my toddler would not have access to such a wonderful facility. I would not have graduated from college nor been able to increase my income. This program has helped me and my children become more educated and successful in our community. This program has helped me to become a better parent and asset to my children and my city."

—CCSA Child Care Scholarship Program participant

THE NUMBERS

- **758** children received scholarships in FY2020-2021.
- **43%** of families whose children received scholarships earned less than **\$25,000/year**.
- **55%** of children receiving scholarships were Black, **21%** were Latinx and **11%** were White.
- For **37%** of families receiving scholarships, parents were working, looking for work, attending school or in high school.

access to early childhood education for young children in homeless shelters and transitional housing programs. In partnership with NC State University and Partners for Impact, this initiative is a pilot working with family shelters across North Carolina as they implement the [Early Childhood Self-Assessment Tool for Shelters](#).

This project is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services CFDA# 93.434, ESSA Preschool Development Grants Birth-Five, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, North Carolina State University and CCSA.





OUR PROGRAMS

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The quality of early care and education children receive has been shown to dramatically impact their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development, and ultimately success in school and life. CCSA provides technical assistance (TA) to child care centers and family child care homes as they work to improve program practices and standards in an effort to increase or maintain higher star-ratings. CCSA also hosts the ASK (Advancing Skills and Knowledge) Conference, a day of professional development for early childhood educators. The 2021 ASK Conference was held virtually.

THE NUMBERS

- 577 teachers and directors received on-site technical assistance in FY2020-2021.
- 2,682 children were cared for by teachers or directors that received technical assistance.
- 3,360 people attended professional development workshops and the ASK Conference in FY2020-2021.
- 468 teachers and directors that received technical assistance reported improvement in their learning environments.
- 6 child care programs received technical assistance for the accreditation process.

THE IMPACT

"I really appreciate the knowledge and techniques I learned from being in the RITC project (a Durham technical assistance project). I got to learn the why of what I do and that it is important. I loved that I got to practice what I learned. I'm happy that I have these strategies to use with my babies. Thank you for the classroom supplies, too. They will help with their learning and development."

—LaQuanda Winston, Kids' Korner II, Durham, N.C.

"The [2021 ASK Conference] presenters and hosts were so affirming of teachers and staff and what they're currently going through. At each presentation, someone said how much they appreciate people in this field. It was wonderful and heartfelt and so needed to be heard by teachers at this time!"

—2021 ASK Conference attendee

Infant Toddler Intensive Technical Assistance Model Pilot

The Infant Toddler Intensive Technical Assistance (ITITA) Model Pilot is a three-year project funded by the N.C. Department of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) from September 2018 through September 2021. The primary goals of the model pilot project were to train and support technical assistance (TA) specialists to become "Master TAs." In addition, the project was tasked with determining whether intensive, long-term support based on strong relationships could sustain change and growth in early childhood providers. During this pilot, TAs focused on improving teacher-child interactions and leadership skills in directors to provide better outcomes for children and families. This project was piloted at Randolph County Partnership for Children, The Children's Council of Watauga County and Child Care Resource Center in Region 10. [Learn more about ITITA here.](#)

THE IMPACT

The Importance of Coaching TAs with the ITITA Model Pilot Project:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWW9enDm13g>

Infant-Toddler Technical Assistant Specialists Lorrie Loper and Kayla Absher speak about the importance of a TA having a coach,

how the intensive weekly TA of the ITITA Model Pilot project made a difference, how professional development has helped them as TAs and what's been most effective for the teachers and directors they serve for this project.

The ITITA Model Pilot Project Engages Not Only Teachers and Directors but Children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uriSuC1RfEA>

Infant-Toddler Technical Assistant Specialists Scarlet Welborn and Joy Johnson speak about their experience having an ITITA partner and how it's influenced their work, how they were able to stay connected to their teachers and directors during the pandemic and the impact they've seen ITITA Model Pilot project have on their teachers, directors and the children they serve.

THE NUMBERS

- 50 teachers participated in the ITITA Model Pilot Project.
- ITITA specialists provided 1,383 coaching sessions in FY2020-2021, improving early childhood education for 340 children.



CCSA Strategic Plan

In February 2020, CCSA began work on a new three-year strategic plan. However, work was quickly put on hold as the COVID-19 pandemic took priority. By July 2020, as staff adapted to work in a pandemic, CCSA's board of directors and key staff determined that undertaking strategic planning was, in fact, timely. Staff had already begun adapting to new ways of doing business, which made it an ideal time to think strategically about the future.

With the engagement of the firm Armstrong McGuire, the board and the strategic planning committee, with input from all staff and many stakeholders, undertook the strategic planning process in the summer and early fall of 2020. As a result, CCSA now has a new vision, mission and core values. Four goals were established and each goal has strategies, action steps and key metrics that are being used to guide the plan's implementation. The plan was adopted in February 2021.

NC Infant-Toddler Quality Enhancement Project

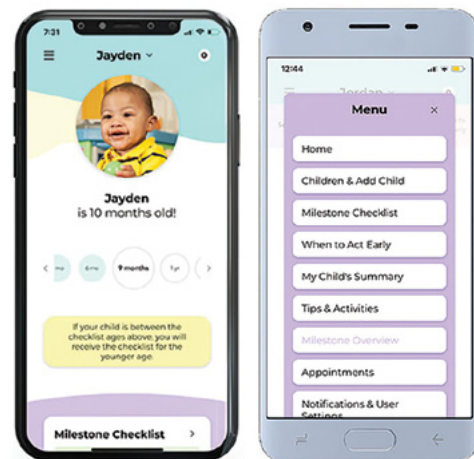
NC Infant-Toddler Quality Enhancement Project

The NC Infant-Toddler Quality Enhancement Project (NCITQEP) helps improve the quality of early care and education our state's youngest and most vulnerable children receive by providing hands-on individualized and tailored technical assistance to child care providers and administrators. That assistance is provided by CCSA's highly trained infant-toddler specialists who train educators on building positive relationships with children, families and co-workers, creating environments to support the social-emotional development of infants and young children, implement best practices for infant and toddler group care and supporting developmental monitoring and screening.

THE IMPACT

A child's brain develops more in its first few years than it ever will again. Therefore, catching any developmental needs in children as early as possible is important. Working to identify those needs in infants and toddlers has always been crucial, but it is even more important now, when we are more isolated. To address this important work, the Babies First North Carolina Project and the NCITQEP partnered with Act Early NC (a task force of child development specialists and practitioners) on a project that aims to increase family and early educator awareness of the urgent need for developmental monitoring and screening for young children.

Have you ever heard someone say, "There's an app for that?" Guess what? There is an app for developmental monitoring and screening. In an effort to expand developmental screening through the use of the *Ages and Stages Questionnaires (Third Edition®)* and the *Social-Emotional: Second Edition®*, CCSA's NCITQEP and Babies First North Carolina teams are broadening educator and family awareness of the free and easily accessible *Learn the Signs Act Early* developmental monitoring materials available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC's **Milestone Tracker developmental monitoring app** is a free smartphone download available in both English and Spanish. Family members can use this in any few moments of their spare time.



Using the app, families can share information with teachers by adding them as contacts within the app, thus increasing communication and collaboration. This is a critical time for

families and teachers to be even more engaged in children's healthy development since child care has been shaken and many providers and programs are in survival mode. The sooner we get families engaged, the better outcomes we will see for children. These changes can make a huge difference in learning opportunity gaps throughout their lives.

THE NUMBERS

- 140 classrooms received intensive technical assistance, serving 762 children.
- 3,255 teachers received training and/or technical assistance through NCITQEP.



OUR PROGRAMS

Babies^{1st} NC Babies First NC

Research has found a significant difference in the quality of care that infants and toddlers received compared to that of 3-5 year olds. Since a child's brain develops rapidly in their first five years, infants and toddlers need supportive, stable environments to learn and grow.

In 2020, CCSA began Babies First NC, a quality enhancement project developed by CCSA and modeled after a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant. Funded by the Preschool Development Grant (CFDA# 93.434 for PDG), Babies First NC supports increased infant, toddler and 2-year-old classroom quality care by providing funding, ongoing intensive technical assistance and monitoring progress toward increased quality and best practice. Some of the high-quality enrichments the project focuses on are continued requirements for a 5-star license with a required higher level of teacher education, individualized child assessment and developmental monitoring, classroom observation, regularly scheduled teacher preparation and planning time, enhanced parent engagement and communication activities and intentional individual planning to support children's development.

In the implementation phase of Babies First NC, participants attended the New Infant and Toddler Teacher Orientation, a self-paced online course designed to support teachers who are new to infant and toddler classrooms. It was developed by CCSA's NC Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project. Topics covered include child care resources in North Carolina, brain development, routine care, classroom environment and behavior guidance.

THE NUMBERS

- **10** programs in Durham, Harnett, Johnston, Martin, New Hanover, Pender, Pitt, Vance, and Wake counties received technical assistance through Babies First NC in FY2020-2021.
- An average of **253** children were served by the project in April-June 2021.
- **54** teachers and **17** administrators participated in FY2020-2021.

THE IMPACT

"[It was a] reminder that I am very important as a teacher and that the children in my care depend on me especially in the first three years of their lives."

—New Infant and Toddler Teacher Orientation participant

"The [New Infant and Toddler Teacher Orientation was] helpful to remind us that children are ever learning from those around them. We are able to be positive supports in their development and growth, or we can miss teaching opportunities by focusing on the negative."

—New Infant and Toddler Teacher Orientation participant





Shape NC: Healthy Starts for Young Children

Shape NC, an initiative of Smart Start and BCBSNC Foundation, funded by the Corporation for National and Community Services, was a multi-year initiative to increase the number of children starting kindergarten at a healthy weight and ready to learn. CCSA has completed the third and final year of the Shape NC program, providing 15 child care centers in Durham County, N.C., with on-site coaching, professional development and materials focused on helping young children develop healthy habits. Two programs in Orange County, N.C., served as educational model sites.

CCSA implemented Shape NC's combination of three evidence-based models (Go NAPSACC, Be Active Kids and Preventing Obesity by Design) to improve center practices and children's attitudes to whole grains and adding more fresh vegetables and to increase the amount of time for movement and physical activity each day. An external evaluation firm collected child-based data over the course of the project.

THE IMPACT

"The Shape NC program was truly a gift for our center...What this program has enabled our center to do is [make] this incredibly creative and exciting place for the children to explore... We have a really cool acoustic wall where they can create and make sounds and just be free to create, and it's been an amazing experience. We are truly grateful."

—Nancy Lehman, Director, Asbury Preschool

[\(See more about Asbury Preschool's progress with Shape NC\)](#)

THE NUMBERS

- **93%** of child care centers participating in Shape NC through CCSA demonstrated significant improvements in the areas of physical activity, child nutrition and outdoor play and learning.
- **100%** (15 of 15) child care centers increased time spent outdoors and engaging in physical movement from 60 to 90 minutes daily.
- **821** children benefited from Shape NC.
- **212** early educators benefited from trainings related to nutrition, movement and use of outdoor learning environments.
- **73** classrooms benefited from Shape NC.

"The cucumbers, the tomatoes, the kids just love it. The children enjoy eating fresh squash. They have never had that before. I could go on and on. My neighbors have even come over...they can't wait for the cabbage to grow. My other neighbors have gotten broccoli and cabbage. I can't stop talking about it because it's so amazing. I want to thank Shape for opening our eyes to a better way for our children to make sure they are aware of playing and eating right. It is going to benefit them from the time they are young until they are old."

—Darlene Brannon, Owner, Kids Korner Academy II

[\(See more about Kids Korner Academy II's progress with Shape NC\)](#)





OUR PROGRAMS



Durham PreK

Durham PreK is Durham County's local investment in high-quality early childhood education for all 4-year-old children in Durham County, N.C. Key components of Durham PreK include improved pay and professional development for teachers, intensive technical assistance with early educators designed to raise quality and work with local educational institutions to increase and improve the supply of early education teachers.

CCSA serves as the management agency for Durham County Government and collaborates with Durham's Partnership for Children, Chapel Hill Training and Outreach Project, Durham Public Schools, Book Harvest, Durham Children's Initiative and Welcome Baby to enhance quality and expand accessibility of all public pre-K seats in Durham County.

“It's been super positive. It's been great having our son have the opportunity to go to school five days a week, following a schedule similar to kindergarten. Also the **opportunities to socialize with other kids and virtual circle times have been really nice when the school has closed for COVID. We've seen a lot of improvements this year.”**

—Durham PreK Parent

THE IMPACT

“It has been very uplifting. It has provided my twins an outlet throughout the pandemic. A great learning process. They have come so far with writing their names and numbers. I feel at ease dropping them off. Not having to pay during the pandemic has been so great. Even with my hours cut, my kids are still ready and prepared for kindergarten more than I could've done on my own. Excellent all around.”

—Durham PreK Parent

“We weren't sure if this was the right program for us. I am happy with our decision to participate. I think he is better prepared for kindergarten than he would've been otherwise. It has been a financial benefit for us too as we got to stop paying for daycare a year early. My husband is a nurse and he was able to cut back his hours which was a great benefit early in the pandemic due to fear of exposure to COVID. We could afford to reduce his hours and exposure, and he was able to take classes instead, all of which has really helped and put us ahead.”

—Durham PreK Parent

THE NUMBERS

- In FY2020-2021, there were **19** Durham PreK sites with **33** classrooms for Durham County's 4-year-olds.
- **253** children attended Durham PreK classrooms in FY2020-2021.
- **26 of 33** lead teachers in Durham PreK classrooms were Black, **one** was White and **one** was Asian-American.
- **24 of 33** lead teachers hold a bachelor's degree.





spoonFULL, CCSA's Meal Services Program

SpoonFULL, formerly CCSA's Meal Services Program, provides high-quality and affordable nutritious meals and snacks daily to children enrolled in participating child care centers in North Carolina's Durham, Orange and Wake counties, keeping children healthy, helping teachers focus on teaching and saving providers money. In FY2020-2021, CCSA's Meal Services Program became **spoonFULL, Fresh, Unique, Liked, and Local**. The new name reflects our commitment to serving quality, locally grown food when possible and providing children with meals that nourish their bodies and minds.

THE IMPACT

Like everything this program year, CCSA's meal services program underwent several changes. In July 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic upended everything, many child care centers in the state were either closed or operating at limited capacity. Enrollment in spoonFULL reflected that reality, with only approximately 500 children receiving meals in 14 child care centers.

In addition to serving these children, **CCSA participated in Durham FEAST**, a pop-up meal program Durham County organized when school lunches were suspended. In July 2020, the last month of FEAST, CCSA provided 3,050 meals to this community effort to feed children suffering from hunger.

As summer transitioned to fall, child care centers that remained closed through the first many months of COVID-19 began opening their doors. By early October 2020, CCSA's kitchens in Durham, Orange and Wake counties served 765 children daily in 14 centers, approximately 60% of pre-pandemic meal service levels. Enrollment increased each month as centers increased capacity and five new centers joined spoonFULL. By June 30, 2021, CCSA was providing meals for 1,150 children in 19 early childhood education centers five days a week. Over the fiscal year, CCSA served a total of 444,156 meals, including meals served through Durham FEAST.



THE NUMBERS

- **444,156** meals served in FY2020-2021.
- **19** centers were participating in spoonFULL at the end of FY2020-2021.
- **1,150** children each day received meals and snacks from spoonFULL in FY2020-2021.

Child and Adult Food Care Program

CCSA sponsors the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) for family child care homes in Durham, Granville, Orange, Vance and Wake counties. This program, which targets children in families that qualify for free or reduced lunch, sets nutrition standards for children ages birth-12 years old and subsidizes the cost of food for child care programs. In FY2020-2021, through CACFP, CCSA served 630,526 meals to an average of **1,094** children daily through **69** child care programs.



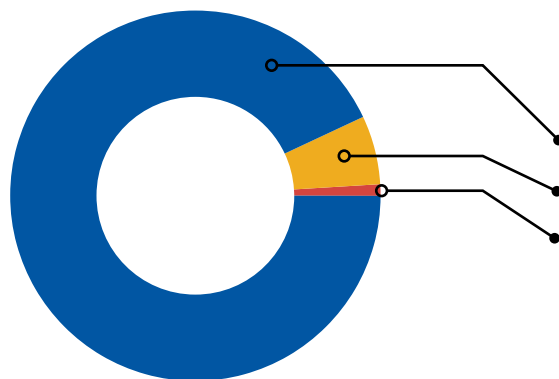
CHILD CARE SERVICES ASSOCIATION 2020-2021 STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

Child Care Services Association stewards its resources with the same high-quality standards as its programs.

	FY2021	FY2020
GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE		
Grants and Awards	\$ 9,093,502	\$ 8,136,486
Scholarships—T.E.A.C.H.	2,916,575	2,935,711
Scholarships—child care	5,676,778	6,054,917
Subcontracts	6,426,429	6,775,667
Total Grants and Assistance	\$ 24,113,284	\$ 23,902,781

OPERATING EXPENSES		
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	7,887,406	8,018,379
Program and Office Supplies	556,006	515,156
Contracted Services	693,300	607,974
Occupancy	126,067	129,581
Travel and Meetings	103,487	323,027
Depreciation and Amortization	248,669	237,336
Postage and Telephone	149,035	143,812
Printing and Publications	35,091	58,879
Repairs and Maintenance	40,082	57,066
Dues and Subscriptions	152,330	161,448
Interest Expense	55,930	78,145
Insurance	37,289	27,040
Other Expenses	33,362	35,706
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 10,118,054	\$ 10,393,549

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 34,231,338	\$ 34,296,330
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Allocation of FY20-21 Functional Expenses

Program Expenses	\$ 32,001,727
General and Administrative	\$ 2,169,617
Fundraising	\$ 59,994
TOTAL	\$ 34,231,338

Thank you to our many public and private 2020-2021 Funding Partners!

Without their support, our work would not be possible.

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North Carolina Division of
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Town of Carrboro
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Children
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Partnership for Children Inc.
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County Inc.
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County Inc.
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Children (MIAEYC)
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Vermont Association for
the Education of
Young Children
Wisconsin Early Childhood
Association (WECA)

This list represents charitable gifts and grants made to Child Care Services Association between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021. While we have made every effort to be accurate and thorough, it is possible to accidentally omit or misspell a name. Please contact the Development Manager at 919-967-3272 x. 1927 with any additions or corrections.



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2020-2021 Annual Report CHILD CARE SERVICES ASSOCIATION

CCSA's mission is to lead efforts to strengthen accessible and affordable quality early care and education by providing supports for families, communities and the workforce.

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Chapel Hill, NC 27514

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For more information about CCSA or to donate, visit www.ChildCareServices.org



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