



*“There is no power for
change greater than a
community discovering
what it cares about.”*
– Margaret J. Wheatley

CONNECT *the* DOTS

Our Mission:

To build a stronger future for children, families and communities through high-quality child care resources, guidance and education.

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Patti Oblath

Letter from the Executive Director The Rewards of Staying Connected

The founders of Connections for Children (CFC) really chose a perfect name for the organization back in the '70s, a name that still fits after many decades. In the nearly 20 years I've been at CFC, I've witnessed many wonderful connections between children and families, with other organizations, and within the community.

In the current climate, where uncertainty is the only certainty, these connections keep us relevant and vital. They form the foundation upon which we have succeeded and grown. Over the past year we have:

- Expanded our Family Time Playgroup from Santa Monica to Torrance and provided new programs for children and their families
- Launched a group of center directors in Lomita
- Brought training and coaching services to Culver City, Long Beach, and all of the neighborhoods in between

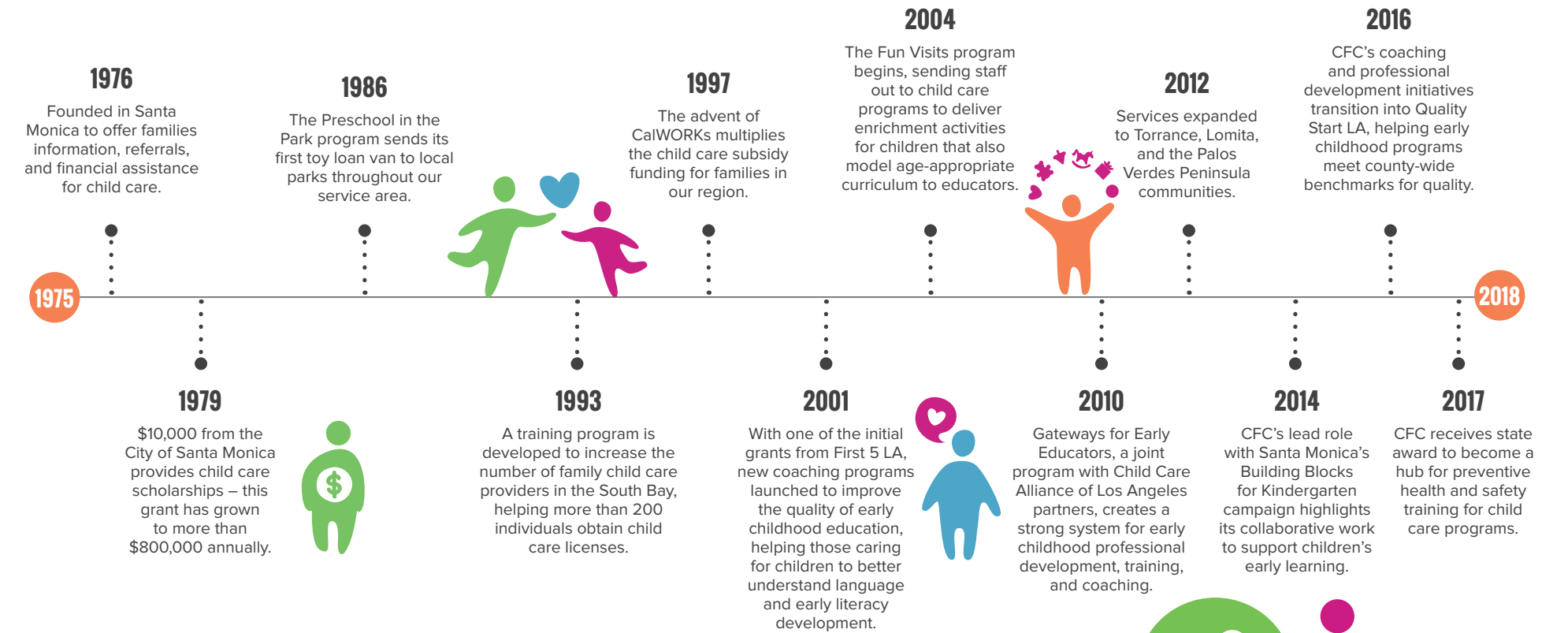
We're also helping to "connect the dots" in our community by intensifying our collaborations with other organizations and legislators to better serve children, families, and early educators. At a time when many of the families we serve face increasing challenges with housing, healthcare, and for some, the right to even remain in their community, it is crucial that we have the resources to help them find the services they need.

I want to thank the brilliantly talented, creative, and empathic team at Connections for Children who build networks of connections for so many families each year. It is gratifying to see their ideas grow into the programs we offer and the policies for which we advocate. Their passion for what's best for children is the basis for everything we do.

I'd also like to thank all of you who share our passion and contribute to our work. We couldn't do it without all the wonderful ways you help us stay connected to our community.

Connections Over Time

Over 40 years have passed since Connections for Children began helping families from a tiny backroom office. Today, more than 35 employees serve more than 3,000 children each year. Here are some of CFC's key moments.



Core Services

Connecting Children + Parents + Educators

With more than four decades of experience, Connections for Children is the leading expert on early education and child care in the Westside and South Bay communities of Los Angeles County. We help thousands of parents each year find the solutions they need to help their families.



Child Care Referrals

Every parent in our service area – no matter their income level – is welcome at CFC, where they will be guided toward safe, experienced and quality licensed day care that meets their families' individual needs and values.



Financial Assistance

We help eligible low-income parents to obtain affordable quality child care for infants and toddlers as well as preschool and school-age children up to 12 years old. This frees parents to stay in the work force and seek better earning opportunities through continued education.



Professional Development

Child care providers of all experience levels can take advantage of our educational training, resources and expertise in order to provide the best care possible. We also coach them on how to build their professional successes by improving their businesses.

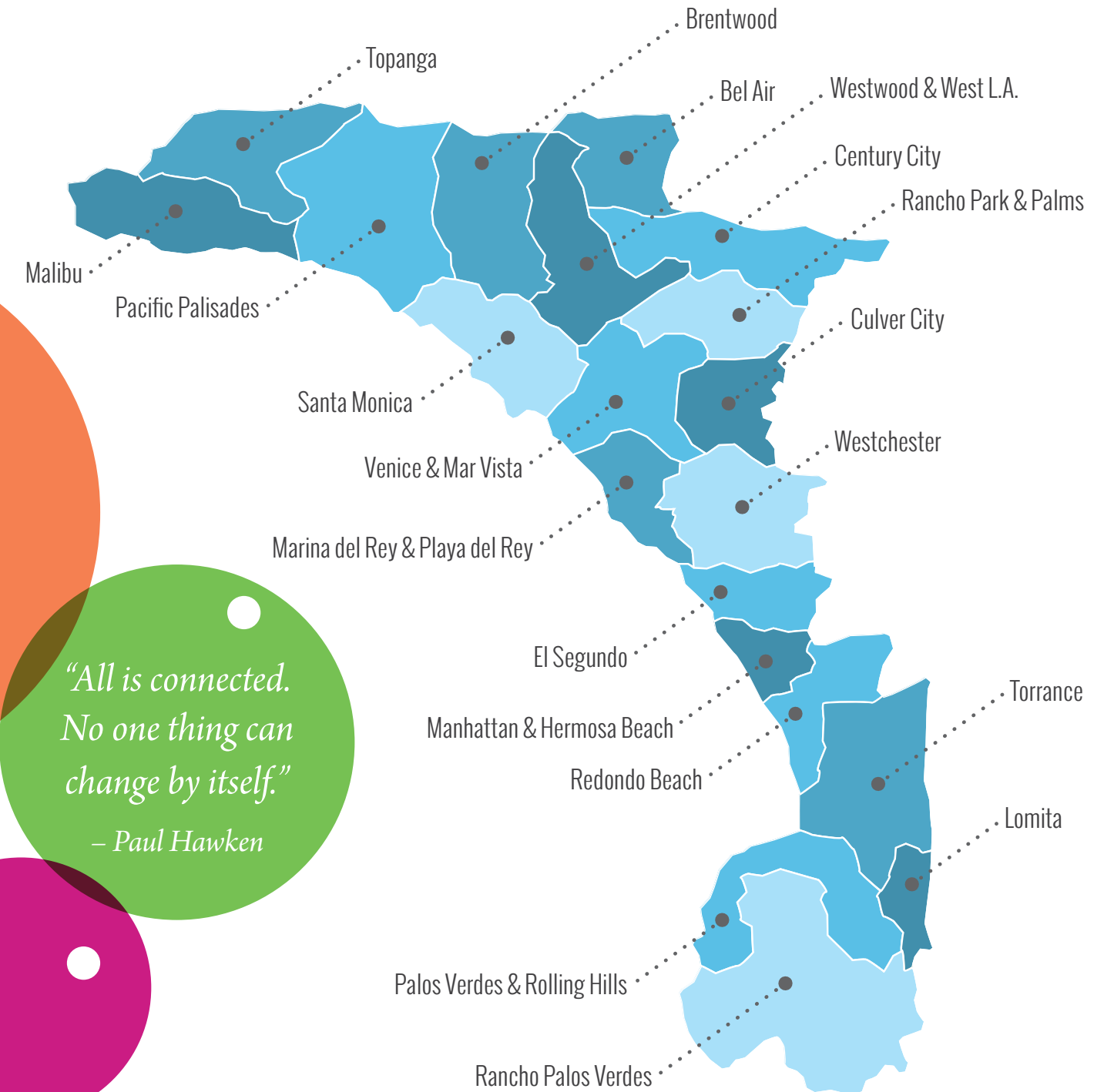


Enrichment Programming

CFC creates innovative enrichment programs based on a wealth of cognitive and developmental research to optimize outcomes for every family. Play groups, early literacy, healthy nutrition, physical activity and social and emotional well-being are addressed by these special and unique programs.

Our Service Area

WE EMBRACE
12%
OF LOS ANGELES'
POPULATION



*"All is connected.
No one thing can
change by itself."
– Paul Hawken*



Our Full Array of Connected Services

Connections for Children's services and innovations require a complex set of skills that range from working with Federal, State and City agencies to providing educational leadership and techniques that help children flourish and providers gain greater expertise.

Family Services

Resource and Referrals

Helps parents find child care that best meets their family needs. Assists child care providers to improve the quality of care and maintains and/or expands the supply of child care information.

Family Time & Where the Story Begins - CFC's Reading Readiness Programs

Offers small group story time to children together with their adults to promote reading, talking and singing as the tools to build children's vocabulary and readiness to learn to read.

Financial Assistance

Alternate Payment Program (CAPP)

Assists parents who are working, are students, or are referred by Child Protective Services, with children from birth to age 12.

Santa Monica Family Support

Supports vulnerable S.M. families with child care subsidies and links to other services. Improves quality of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in S.M. to best support young children.

CalWORKs Stage 1 (SICC)

Helps families begin work or work activities with subsidies for immediate, short-term child care before transitioning them to stable, long-term child care so they can remain off financial aid.

CalWORKs Stage 2 (C2AP)

Eliminates barriers preventing CalWORKs participants from entering the workforce & maintaining employment in the 24 months following receipt of cash aid by covering a portion of the cost of child care.

CalWORKs Stage 3 (C3AP)

Eliminates barriers to allow CalWORKs participants to access and pay for child care so they maintain employment after 24 months of Stage 2 participation.

Provider Services

Child Care Initiative Program (CCIP)

Builds child care supplies with an emphasis on infants and toddlers. Provides entry level training & teaching assistance to help new Family Child Care (FCC) providers become licensed.

Gateways for Early Educators

Professional development training to improve child care quality using curriculum aligned with the 12-topic California ECE Competencies.

Santa Monica Quality Support

Training, coaching and teaching assistance for Santa Monica child care programs to increase quality.

Quality Start LA: LA County's Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS)

Coaching to State funded preschool and infant/toddler classrooms to help ECE educators reach and maintain County-wide quality standards.

ECE IQ - Improving Quality

Coaching to ECE programs as first step towards joining QRIS.

Health & Safety Programs

CPR Training

Offers training 8-10 times per year with 3 CFC instructors and provides an earned income stream.

Health & Safety Training Scholarships

Provides reimbursement to child care programs for the cost of bi-annual CPR and First Aid recertifications.

California Preventive Health & Safety Practices Trainer Program

Provides training for FCC providers and early childhood educators throughout L.A. area to meet requirements for licensure and ongoing emergency readiness.

Other Programs

Santa Monica Kindergarten Readiness

Gives an annual assessment of kindergarten groups to measure school readiness and shares data trends on how well the community supports its young children.



By the Numbers

Connections for Children makes a tremendous impact on children, families and the communities we serve. Since our inception, our efforts have helped 175,000 families and pumped \$197 million dollars into the local economy.

HELPING FAMILIES

Requests for Child Care Info, Referrals, Resources

CURRENT YEAR

3,874

SINCE INCEPTION

175,000

Families Securing Financial Assistance

CURRENT YEAR

847

SINCE INCEPTION

26,000

EARLY EDUCATION

Children Benefitting from Financial Aid

CURRENT YEAR

1,263

SINCE INCEPTION

38,000

Children and Parents Benefitting from Family Time

CURRENT YEAR

648

SINCE INCEPTION

7,700

CAREGIVER DEVELOPMENT

Hours of Training, Coaching Provided by CFC to Caregivers

CURRENT YEAR

2,437

SINCE INCEPTION

41,500

Training Sessions Offered

CURRENT YEAR

124

SINCE INCEPTION

3,050

PUMPING UP THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Dollars Contributed Back Through Payments for Child Care

CURRENT YEAR

\$5,795,908

SINCE INCEPTION

\$197,000,000



The Power of Connecting Advocacy + Policy

Connections for Children receives requests for a variety of services beyond child care. That's why we've spent years cultivating partnerships that help us assist families in a comprehensive way. Our efforts this past year also established improvements in State and City policy, leading to better outcomes for children and the community.

Advocating for Children

Together with our partner, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, Connections for Children has the unique capability to reach parents in every corner of Los Angeles County. This gives us an advantage in program funding as well as our ability to change the policies that affect children the most. Our quality improvement initiatives, including training, coaching, and other professional development opportunities for early childhood educators are all flourishing as a result.

Collaborating for Vulnerable Families

We made sure the needs of some of the community's most vulnerable families were met last year. As both a leader and an active member of the Santa Monica Early Childhood Task Force, we leveraged our relationships to promote a unified call for further financial assistance. The results were a substantial increase to our funding and many more families with children heading to kindergarten will benefit.

Influencing the Policies that Matter

In 2017, we raised our voices until legislators heard. Child care subsidy funding was recently expanded to reflect minimum wage increases so families won't fall off the child care "cliff" if their hourly wages go up. Plus, new 12-month eligibility regulations shift the focus to the needs of young children for stable care, even if their parents face unsteady jobs or unpredictable school schedules. From health fairs in Torrance to job fairs in Santa Monica or Culver City Chamber of Commerce luncheons, Connections for Children stays involved and visible, ensuring families receive high-quality early child care and education.

“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.”

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

Taking on Hard Challenges

Finding safe and nurturing child care is challenging for most families. For vulnerable families, including those facing trauma, atypical developmental needs, homelessness, or children in foster care, it is especially daunting because of the additional support and resources required. Connections for Children works together with our partners to develop innovative approaches to ensure every child is connected to the high-quality care they deserve.

Childhood Trauma

Consistent child care makes a huge difference for families facing trauma or mental health concerns. Children's responses to these stressors can be disruptive, testing the patience of teachers in the classroom and often resulting in families being turned away. Connections for Children works closely with partners like Family Services of Santa Monica and educators to identify issues and provide solutions including coaching child care providers so they can improve their curriculums, learning environments, and daily interactions with children.

Development Issues

Since child care providers are often the very first to notice when a child's speech and other forms of communication aren't developing on a typical track, we offer assistance for both educators and parents. Together with the help of regional centers and other agencies, Connections for Children also guides families through multiple social service systems to find the best possible resources for their children.

Homelessness

Our relationships throughout the community, including our connections with Upward Bound House and St. Joseph's Center, give us the ability to support families experiencing homelessness. The increased public funding provided by Measure H lets us increase assistance to these families, since child care often becomes the only secure part of the day for a child whose family is homeless.

Foster Care

This year, we are proud to launch an exciting new program to assist resource families caring for children removed from their homes. Developed in partnership with the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles and the L.A. Department of Children and Family Services, the emergency child care bridge program provides a "navigator" to the CFC staff to help resource families find quality child care and short-term subsidy funding. The navigator will also assist resource families to secure long-term subsidized child care through Early HeadStart or other subsidy programs we administer. In addition, the program will offer training and coaching for child care programs, highlighting research-based trauma-informed practices for the best care of vulnerable children.



Fiscal Year 2017 Financial Report*



Statement of Activities

Support and Revenues

Federal Awards	\$ 3,330,936
State Allocations	3,289,399
Other Grants & Contracts ¹	1,466,280
Parent Fees	275,656
Other Revenue	24,185
Contributions	61,750
In-kind Donated Goods	40,621
Investment Income	13,752
Unrealized Gain on Investments	38,583
Total	8,541,162

Expenses

Child Care Assistance	6,917,349
Child Care Referral Services	329,137
Other Child Care Services	643,961
General Administrative Costs	567,469
Fundraising Expenses	28,387
Total	8,486,303
Change in Net Assets	54,859
Net Assets Beginning of Year	978,113
Net Assets End of Year	\$ 1,032,972

Statement of Financial Position

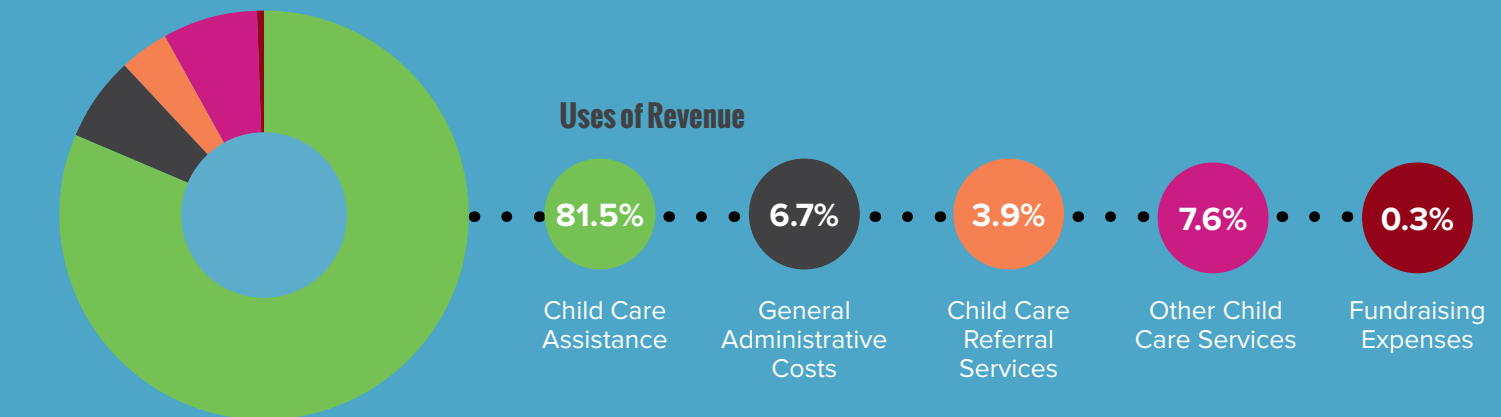
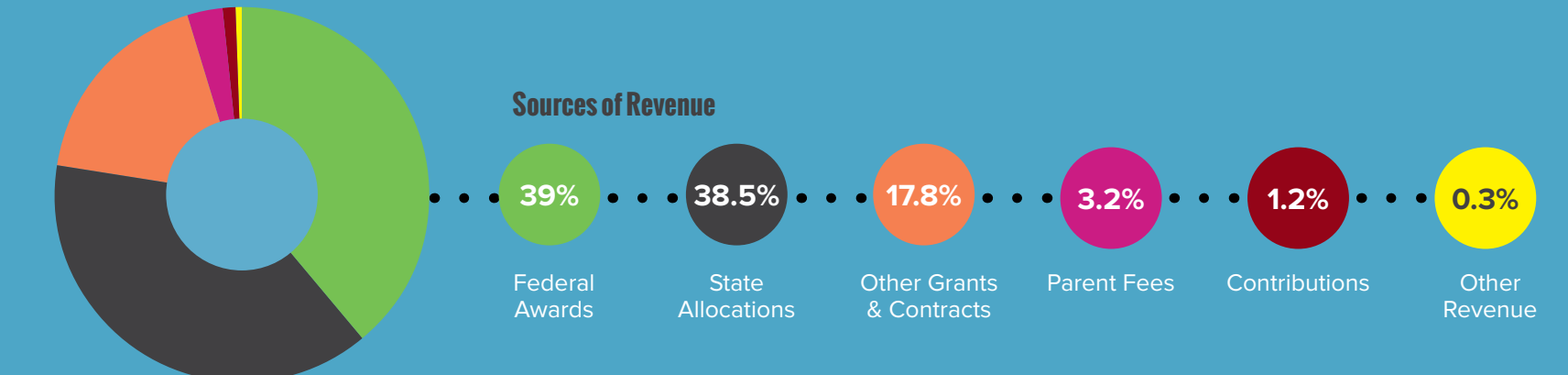
Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 850,608
Investments	410,716
Grants Receivable	458,943
Other Receivables	21,879
Prepaid Expenses	89,041
Fixed Assets	101,789
Deposits	12,577
Total Assets	1,945,553

Liabilities & Net Assets

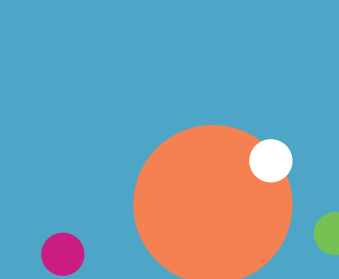
Accounts Payable	662,754
Accrued Expenses	125,439
Grants Payable	38,641
Deferred Revenue	85,747
Total Liabilities	912,581
Temporarily Restricted Assets	28,772
Unrestricted Assets	1,004,200
Total Net Assets	1,032,972
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 1,945,553

Pie Chart Data 2017



¹ Includes local government and private grants and contracts

*The CFC fiscal year is July 1 through June 30.



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Resource & Referral Manager

"We are members one of another; so that you cannot injure or help your neighbor without injuring or helping yourself."

– George Bernard Shaw

In Appreciation of Our Contributors

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Tammy Stockfis
Ellen Strauss
Donna Sussman
The Growing Place
Michael & Earline Valerakis
Russell Warner



Donate Now & Help Us Connect the Dots

Help a Child. Help a Family. Help Your Community.

It is clearer than ever that children who attend early childhood programs are more successful in school and life, have less need for special education, and grow up to become more responsible citizens. The benefits don't stop there. Parents with quality child care have time to upgrade their skills, get better jobs and over time, end their dependence on welfare. Every dollar you give makes a difference. You can even dedicate your contribution to specific efforts such as our reading readiness program, Where the Story Begins, or to our general fund which allows to use the money where it's needed most. **Please contact a donation specialist for details. 310-452-3325 or ConnectionsForChildren.org**



Volunteer Today!

Giving that Gives Back

There's nothing comparable to the feel-good feeling you get helping children learn while having fun. Based on your availability, we offer both short-term and long-term volunteer opportunities. Whether you enjoy reading to kids, working with parents, helping out during the holiday season, or working in the office, we'll do our best to match your time with your interests. **Contact us to learn more.**

Thank You, Volunteers!

Connections For Children is grateful for the involvement of its many volunteers, including Holiday Angels, middle school students from Santa Monica, Where The Story Begins readers, and all the many individuals who helped us throughout the year.

Full Circle

Every dollar invested in early childhood comes back many times over in lasting economic success, better health, and greater productivity.

Rand Study on Early Childhood Policy in Los Angeles

"If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else."

– Booker T. Washington

CONNECTIONS *for* CHILDREN

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www.connectionsforchildren.org



Credits

With sincere appreciation to the children and families of Family Time and Les Enfants Preschool of Santa Monica for permission to take their photos. Special thanks to Mathieu Young Photography for the wonderful images in this Annual Report and to Jeff Giniewicz Design and writer Deborah Waugh Williams.