

# 4CS of Passaic County, Inc.



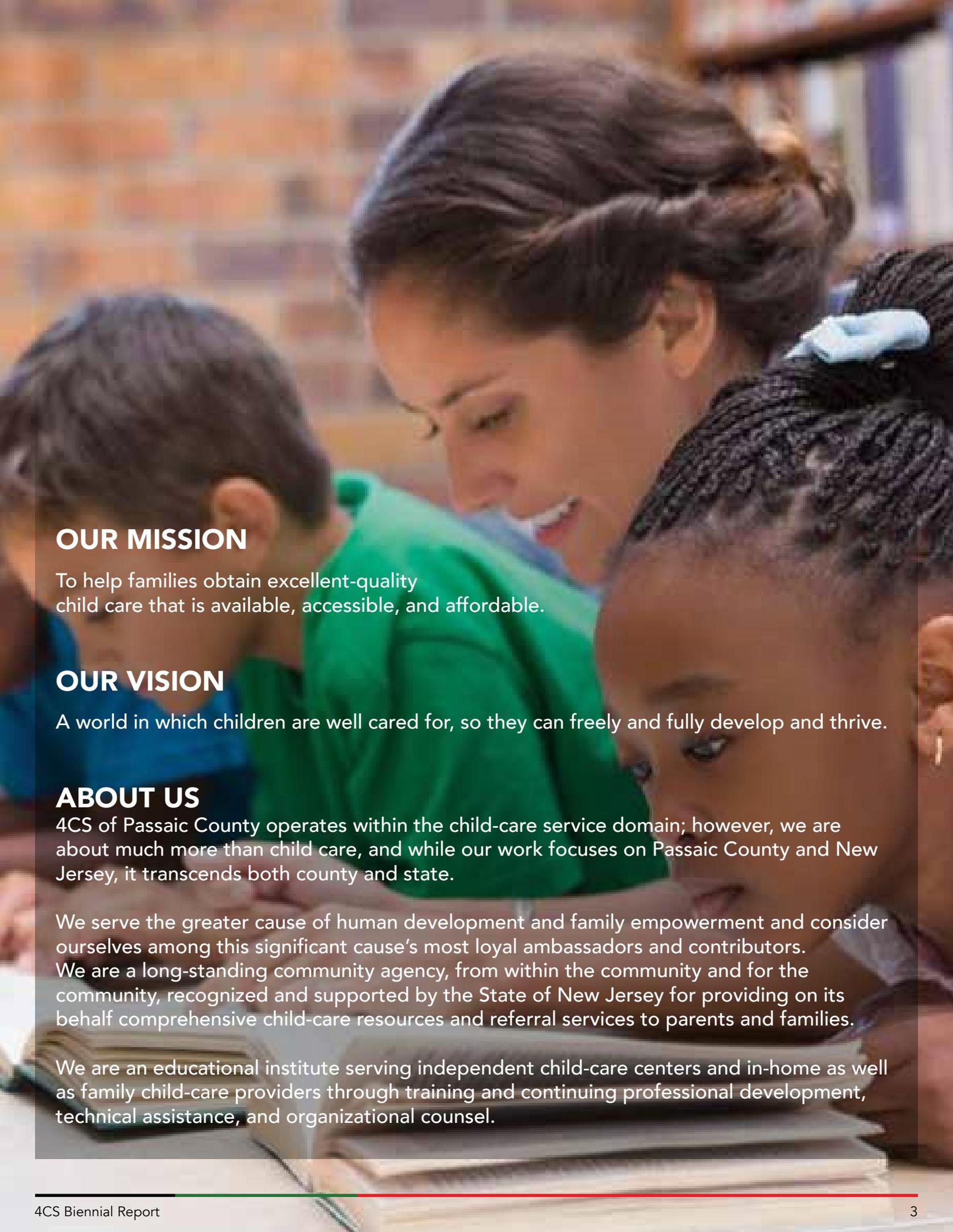
## 2016–2018 BIENNIAL REPORT

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## OUR MISSION

To help families obtain excellent-quality child care that is available, accessible, and affordable.

## OUR VISION

A world in which children are well cared for, so they can freely and fully develop and thrive.

## ABOUT US

4CS of Passaic County operates within the child-care service domain; however, we are about much more than child care, and while our work focuses on Passaic County and New Jersey, it transcends both county and state.

We serve the greater cause of human development and family empowerment and consider ourselves among this significant cause's most loyal ambassadors and contributors. We are a long-standing community agency, from within the community and for the community, recognized and supported by the State of New Jersey for providing on its behalf comprehensive child-care resources and referral services to parents and families.

We are an educational institute serving independent child-care centers and in-home as well as family child-care providers through training and continuing professional development, technical assistance, and organizational counsel.

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## THE BEST WORK, THE ONLY WORK

For me, it all goes back to this: children are our biggest assets. They're not able to take care of themselves when they are little, and so we must do it for them. One of the beautiful things about 4CS is that it helps parents give their children what they need.

I've worked with women and with small children all of my life. When I worked in corporate America, I spent time outside the office reading with and mentoring young children in an afterschool program in New York City. There's always been something like this in my life. When my daughter was growing up, I was very involved at her school. I've been a girl scout leader. My husband and I were foster parents for a while. My current position today, where one of our key areas of focus is early childhood, fits right into that. In the fabric of my life, children are important.



I think it's surprising to people to know that the brain starts developing, that the synapses start forming, before birth. Which means that *everything* you do with a young child is formative. Reading with them, having a conversation, even just making eye contact. All of that is so incredibly important. Often, when people think of early infant care, they think, "Oh, someone to hold the baby. Someone to change the diapers and make sure they're fed." But that is so not true! It is so important to have interaction with children. That's the foundation for everything. Love and attachment, social skills, prep for learning, learning itself. We must make sure that children are being given the rich environments they need to thrive.

4CS does a wonderful job of getting the word out, of educating communities on how children grow and develop and on what we need to do to support that growth and development. They do a wonderful job of providing parents with assistance, both for finding the child care that's right for them and their family and for placing the children in care. And they do a wonderful job of nurturing and educating the next generation of child-care providers. So they support the community, they support the family, and they support the child-care organizations. They do this with resources, with education, and with great love.

The work that 4CS does is all about giving families the support they need to be strong and to stay strong. It's the best work there is.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Inge Spungen".

Inge Spungen  
President and Member, Board of Directors

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# FROM OUR HEARTS TO YOURS

It's that time again, time to reflect on the successes of the past year and to look forward to what's yet to be done.

As a state, we're facing an opportune moment in time. The federal reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block grant in 2014 gave states around the country the opportunity to enhance what's being done for families. And organizations like 4CS are building on that. As we look around us in the world, we see that the countries that are thriving are those investing in early childhood education, which paves the way for a well-educated nation of people.

Here, in this country, some of us have been on board this train for decades. Others, we can see are just waking up, getting ready to board at the next station. That's all right. Welcome aboard! We're all on this journey together, and the more of us committed to this work, the better. The data that's been coming out on childhood and its importance, most particularly over the last ten to fifteen years, bears out what we've all known and seen in our lives: children with a solid, stable start, with high-quality care, with early education opportunities, those are the children who pull ahead in life, both at work and at home. Those are the children who grow up, in their turn, to form healthy, vibrant communities, communities that help to nurture all. And communities are so important. They are the bedrock of our cities, our states, the entire nation. We the people, like the document says. (And don't get me started, but this will be a nation that one day fulfills that bright promise. There are too many fine people working on it for it not to be so.)



So, take a look at what we've been doing at 4CS to help build that better future. Read the stories, hear about the ways we're making an impact in the community, one family at a time. And I want to give a special shout-out to the grandmothers and great grandmothers. In times of crisis, it is so often the grandparents who step in to help shore up the families, to help take care of the little ones. I know this in my own life. It was my great grandmother who raised me, the late Icylyn Fouché, and a fine woman she was in the work she did. When one generation falters, another generation steps in to help. Sometimes it's the older generation lifting up the younger. Sometimes, it's the other way around. We're all in this together. We've got to all help each other.

That's what we're about at 4CS. It is our mission, it is our mandate, it is our joyful work to help families in their time of need to care for the next generation, that young future that lies in our hands. If you need help with the cost of child care, we can help. If you'd like to make child care your work, we can help you get certified. If you're watching children at home, become a registered family child-care provider with our program and get paid for that work and get trained to become among the highest quality providers. Or, if you're a family child-care provider already, our program can help you expand and become a licensed child-care center. Our Child Development Associate (CDA) program is certified nationwide, so you can get your certification here at home and take it anywhere in the country, if you so choose (of course, we want you to stay in New Jersey).

Early childhood is such a precious time. What happens in those early years can affect us all our lives, can help to set us on a good life path or a not so good one. And it can be difficult to recover from the not-so-good path. We've all seen it in our families and the families around us. So let's resolve to work together to see to it that every child — every child whose life we touch, every child we can reach — has a good start in life. With solid, nurturing relationships, high-quality care, and stability in those early years. The kind of care that makes a good education later on all the more attainable. And why is that? Our children cannot attend to the work of school, they cannot absorb and learn, unless they are settled and stable in their own lives, in their own minds. Because that's what those early years are all about: shaping minds. We see the body growing, from infancy (in fact, in utero) to four and five years on up through childhood. But it's what we don't see — the mind growing and expanding and learning its world — that matters every bit as much, if not more. A mind that can absorb all that teachers have to teach and then run with it, a mind that is open and eager and creative, that can shape and reshape what it learns . . . that's a mind that will carry a person far.

Let's work together to help see to it that all the children in all our communities have the chance to develop rich and full lives, through healthy, well-developed minds.

*We thrive with — no, because of — your support. Please consider making a gift to help us continue our work. No amount is too modest.*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Coleen Stevens Porcher".

Coleen Stevens Porcher  
CEO



## THE HIGH COST OF CHILD CARE — AND THE EVEN HIGHER COST OF NOT SUPPORTING CHILD CARE

*In Passaic County, we're working to provide families with high-quality child care by offering them financial assistance to help pay for that care.*

Childhood is a time of wonder. And also a time of growing and learning and developing the character and habits of a lifetime.

Except that for some, it is less about wonder and more about uncertainty, anxiety, even fear — and deprivation. Some children's lives are defined instead by these bleak attributes, and yet they will still grow and learn and develop the character and habits that will inform a myriad of decisions, large and small, each day of their lives. How they grow, what they learn, who they become will have been forever shaped by these crucial years. It is a legacy that can be difficult, if not impossible, to later overturn. It is a legacy that affects not only individuals, but their families and whole communities. With a large enough population of impoverished, disadvantaged children, the health and stability of the state itself can be compromised.

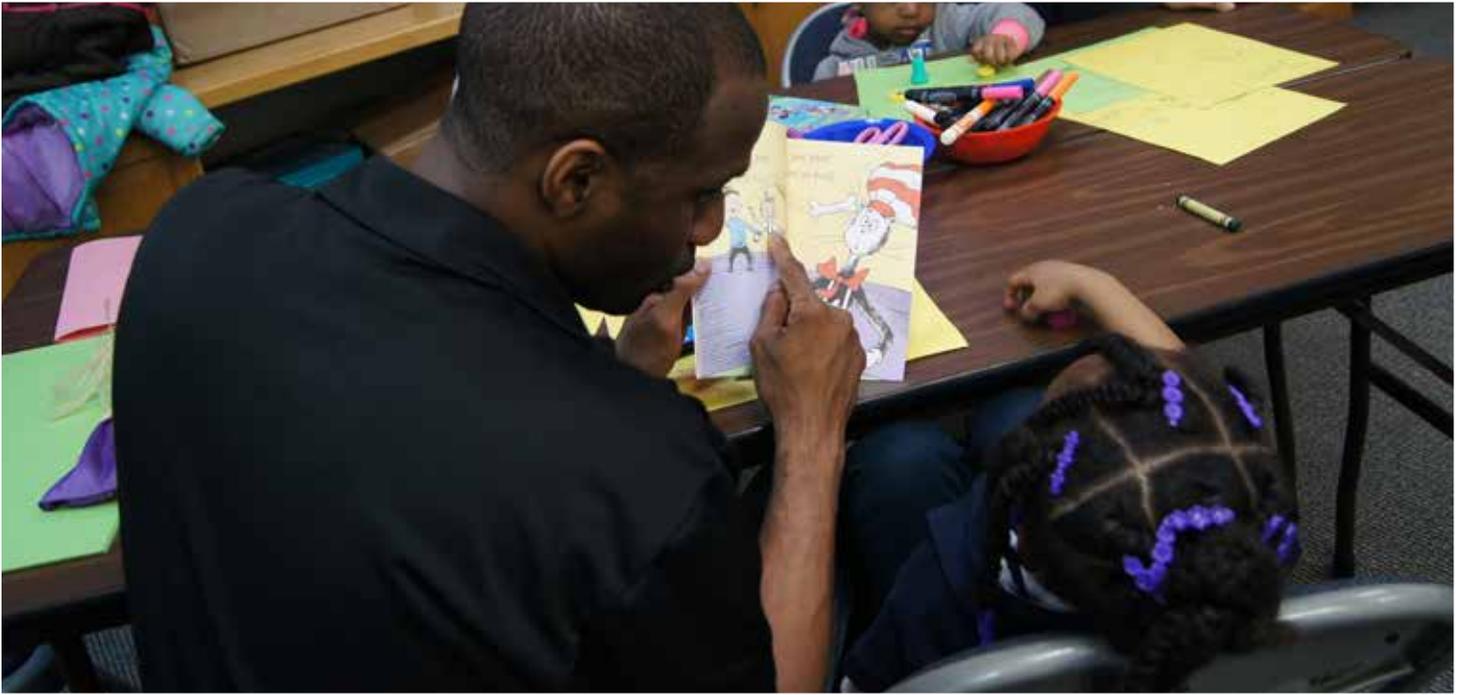
The plight of the nation's children should concern us all. It is only right, but it is also eminently practical. Funds invested in childhood return rich dividends throughout life.<sup>1</sup>

*"4CS has been very, very important for my family. If not for the help that we have received, I would not have felt that my child was in a safe and healthy environment, and so I would not have been able to continue with college. I know many people who have been struggling with childcare. I've told them about 4CS, and they have also found the program to be life changing."*

*Jessica*

Nowhere is this more evident, perhaps, than in high-quality child care — child care that not only keeps children safe while their parents work, but that nurtures children and helps them develop in ways that prepare them for both school and life.<sup>2</sup> Study after study reconfirms the importance of high-quality early care, care that offers security and stability, care that offers educational preparation and support.<sup>3</sup> And recent advances in epigenetics and brain science show us how early experiences in life, from the womb through childhood, shape us: both by carving out, from the set of genetic possibilities, which genes will be expressed and which not and by supplying rich input into how the brain develops and grows.<sup>4</sup> In short, how we live helps to make us who we are. Thus, the investments made in childhood to make that childhood safe, steady, secure, and educationally rich offer benefits to children, benefits to parents, and benefits to society. It's a win-win-win proposition.

Yet the cost of child care — the bedrock of early childhood support and care — in this country continues to skyrocket.



The United States is one of the five least affordable nations for child care. Across the country, for the average household, the cost of child care for one year exceeds the annual cost of housing or college tuition. Nationwide, child care for one child can take up to 11% of a married couple's income and up to 37% of a single parent's income. In Massachusetts, the cost of infant child care for a month runs about the same as the cost of baby food for an entire year. And Massachusetts is not the most expensive state for infant care. That would be California.<sup>5</sup>

**"I am so happy and appreciative of 4CS. They were able to help me, and so promptly. I feel very blessed to have 4CS in our lives."**

**Jeanette**

But families don't have to live in the worst of the worst to have difficulties affording child care. Closer to home, the statistics speak volumes. In New Jersey, for a two-parent family with two children, the cost of home-based care is 15.3 percent of their annual income; of center-based care, 19.6 percent. Families with two parents at the helm have an advantage, and this is a population that can likely manage without help. But shift some vital aspects of the equation, and a different picture emerges. A single parent looking for care for an infant can expect to spend 31.5 percent of his or her annual income for home-based care; 41.8 percent, for center-based care.

That two-parent family? Move them to the poverty line, and now they'll be spending a whopping 74.1 percent for home-based care; 94.6 percent, for center-based care.<sup>6</sup>

1 This has been shown in many studies. For a comprehensive survey, see *The Economics of Early Childhood Investments*, Executive Office of the President, 2014. For a study focused particularly on education, see the 2015 *Early Childhood Education: Quality and Access Pay Off*, by James Hickman, the Henry Schultz Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago, a Nobel laureate in economics, and an expert in the economics of human development.

2 The characteristics of high-quality child care as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. See, for example, their 2014 report *High-Quality Child Care Helps Families Work and Children Learn*.

3 See, for example, *Investing in Our Children: What We Know and Don't Know About the Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Interventions*, Karoly et al., RAND, 1998 and *From Preschool to Prosperity: The Economic Payoff to Early Childhood Education*, Bartik, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2014. See also *Why Is Quality Child Care Important?*, The Children's Cabinet, 2012; *Why Quality Matters in Early Child Care: American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Explained*, healthychildren.org, 2017; *Quality Child Care Is Important for Healthy Development, Too Small to Fail*, 2018.

4 See, for example, *Three Core Concepts in Early Development*, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, accessed March 9, 2019, and this set of papers from The National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, housed at the Center on the Developing Child: *Early Experiences Can Alter Gene Expression and Affect Long-Term Development*, 2010; *Persistent Fear and Anxiety Can Affect Young Children's Learning and Development*, 2010; *The Science of Neglect: The Persistent Absence of Responsive Care Disrupts the Developing Brain*, 2012; *Excessive Stress Disrupts the Architecture of the Developing Brain*, 2014; *Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience*, 2015; *Understanding Motivation: Building the Brain Architecture That Supports Learning, Health, and Community Participation*, 2018. For comprehensive and foundational reading, see *The Epigenetics Revolution: How Modern Biology Is Rewriting Our Understanding of Genetics, Disease, and Inheritance*, Carey, Columbia University Press, 2013; *Neuroscience of Cognitive Development: The Role of Experience and the Developing Brain*, Nelson et al., Wiley, 2006; *Poverty and Brain Development During Childhood: An Approach from Cognitive Psychology and Neuroscience*, Lipina and Colombo, American Psychological Association, 2009.

5 *The US and the High Cost of Child Care: A Review of Prices and Proposed Solutions for a Broken System*, Child Care Aware of America, 2018.

6 *New Jersey Cost of Child Care*, Child Care Aware of America, 2018.



Under this kind of financial pressure, families do not fare well. Children do not receive quality care or the family itself buckles under the stress.

But supportive organizations like 4CS of Passaic County can help solve this problem. We place more than 10,000 low-income and vulnerable children in care each year. That's 10,000 children who might not otherwise receive any care at all, let alone licensed care. 10,000 children who now have a stronger, healthier start in life. 10,000 children better situated to develop into stable and productive adults contributing to the economy and well-being of their communities.

The families we reach each year are deeply grateful for the help. And they often become involved with 4CS in turn, helping us to reach other vulnerable families, helping to educate the parents in their community, helping to strengthen the foundations of 4CS itself.

That work — for families, for the community — is vital. And yet, it's not enough. There are an estimated 28,400 children living in poverty in Passaic County, which means that we are currently reaching only about a third of those in need. Our goal in the coming year is to expand that reach, to gather up more of those desolate children and set them on a firm path toward a better, more productive, more fulfilling future.

*"I am very grateful because 4CS has been able to help me through this complicated situation in which I am caring for my children on my own. 4CS has been very helpful, from the caseworkers to the director of the Subsidy and Family Services department. Everyone has been helpful, informative, and patient. I am intensely thankful. May God bless all members of 4CS for their amazing service."*

*Victor A.*



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## VICTOR'S STORY: PROFILE OF A SINGLE FATHER

A year ago, Victor's partner and the mother of their two children walked out of their lives. Overnight, Victor became a single parent to eight-year-old Christopher and three-year-old Diane. The family's income unexpectedly halved, Victor and the children moved into shared housing and Victor turned to his sisters, his cousins, and an aunt for help with child care. They juggled the care of the children among them, different households on different days. Victor paid them what he could. But the situation was fragile. With the changes in their lives, with the uncertainty, the children grew fearful. Christopher's grades plummeted. The family was in crisis.

Then a cousin of Victor's told him about 4CS. She told Victor that he could apply for assistance to cover the cost of child care. He was hesitant, at first, about approaching 4CS because he'd always associated such assistance with mothers. Being a father, he thought he wouldn't qualify. In desperate need of a solution, however, he decided to give it a try.

When he came in to check it out, he was pleasantly surprised. He discovered that, yes, he qualified, and no, the process was not difficult.

With 4CS, Victor has been able to place each child in the appropriate program: Diane, in full-time daycare; Christopher, in an afterschool program that also helps with homework. Having the homework done each day was a particular boon. Victor's time is freed up each evening and on the weekends to spend with both children equally. Evenings, they often cook dinner together. Weekends, they go to the park. The family have been able to achieve stability. The children are in one place, the same place, for care each day. They no longer feel that life is quite so uncertain. They are once again the happy, cheerful children that they had been before their mother left. Christopher is once again doing well in school.

Their home life is stable in another way as well: Victor has found the family an apartment, so the three of them are now living on their own. With the cost of child care covered, Victor can breathe easier. He can manage the family's expenses. The bills are no longer accumulating. They even have a little left over to spend on fun things.

Victor encourages anyone finding themselves in his situation to apply at 4CS. And he has now become an ambassador for 4CS in the community. With his help and the help of others like him, more families in need will hear about the work we do.



## A SHORTAGE OF CHILD-CARE WORKERS ALSO THREATENS FAMILIES

*In Passaic County, we're working to provide entire communities with high-quality child-care choices by licensing new, highly qualified child-care workers through a nationally approved program.*

As important as we now understand child care to be — for proper physical, emotional, and intellectual development in infants and young children; for continued guidance, to foster healthy growth and gains, and to manage potentially risky behavior for older children up into their teens — as a country, we're at a crossroads. The US is facing a critical shortage of child-care workers. In some places, the shortage is so severe that parents are faced with "child-care deserts": areas where there's little or no licensed child care to be had, period. In a 2018 study of all 50 states, the Center for American Progress found that 51 percent of American families live in such deserts.<sup>1</sup>

The scarcity of high-quality, dependable child care has very real consequences for families and communities. Without such child care, one parent in the family is likely to be unable to return to work, or both parents must curtail their work hours. Additionally, the children suffer, which means our future suffers as well.

That's where organizations like 4CS step in. In addition to providing financial assistance for quality child care to families in need, we provide a credentialing program to train and certify new child-care workers and providers. Based on national standards, our Child Development Associate (CDA) program is complete, comprehensive, and as practical as it is educational.

**"Without the help of 4CS, it would have been impossible for me to work and maintain all my expenses — the rent and everything else. I would like to thank them."**

*Maria C.*

Students in our program not only learn the theory involved in caring for and nurturing children at every stage of development, they are also given the hands-on experience of working directly with children. The students in our program blossom. Theory and practice reinforce each other. The class sizes are small, giving individual students plenty of time with the instructors. Additional tutoring is also available. To help prepare CDA students for the job search ahead, the center offers workshops on resume writing, job searching, and interviewing. To make sure that graduates of the program are connecting with opportunities in the marketplace, the center also provides assistance with job placement. We not only prepare highly qualified child-care workers, but we help them find their place in the community as well.

<sup>1</sup> *America's Child Care Deserts in 2018*, The Center for American Progress, 2018.



The CDA program is an important component of the work that 4CS does. The more experienced and certified child-care providers we can place (whether for home-based or center-based care), the better. This is the way we see to it that in Passaic County, there is no shortage of options for high-quality child care, there are no child-care deserts. Every family has options. Every child has a bright future.

*“As a working mother, I had no other choice but to put my 10-month-old son into the care of someone outside the home. I found a daycare provider that I felt I could trust, but tuition is expensive. I am so grateful for 4CS of Passaic County. Before I knew that there was a program such as 4CS, I was struggling to pay my son’s tuition every month. 4CS has honestly been a lifesaver for me and my son. I can send him to a good school, where I know he will be safe and where he will be learning new things — and I can afford it!*

*Without getting political about the astronomical cost of reliable child care in the United States, I just have to say thank you to 4CS. This is an amazing program, and I have nothing but good things to say about my experience with the staff. I hope that in the future, all child-care providers will accept 4CS.”*

*A working mom and recipient of 4CS*



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## LUZ'S STORY: PROFILE OF A HOME CHILD-CARE PROVIDER

Before she came to this country, Luz had no idea of working in child care. She had always worked in an office setting, most typically as an administrative assistant. But when she arrived here, the difficulty in finding child care, and the great need of it, was immediately apparent to her. Her own sister was taking care of a little boy from early in the morning to late in the day, for parents who had not yet found a daycare to place their child in. It didn't take long for Luz to become acquainted with our busy, two-parent-income families, and the predicament this places families in with respect to child care. Luz began to think about a second career, this time in child care. But she wanted to do it right. She wanted to do it professionally. A friend of hers told her about 4CS and invited her to come down to the organization to take a look around.

In 4CS' CDA program, Luz found exactly what she was looking for.

Luz now watches up to five young children at a time in her home. She is as involved with the children she cares for as if they were her own grandchildren, taking the time with them that as a busy young mother, in fact, she was not able to with her own children. What she particularly likes about caring for the children in her home, she says, is that it is like home life. She's able to give them all the time and energy and love that a family member would, all the time and energy and love that every child needs to grow up healthy, both emotionally and intellectually.

Because Luz was trained so thoroughly in the CDA program, she knows that she's giving each child what she or he needs at that stage in life. She even provides a little resource center in her home for parents, filling it with books about children and child development. She is herself now so attuned to the developmental milestones that she was able to let the parents of one toddler know that their child wasn't meeting the developmental norms for his age for speech. Because she now knows something of how the system works, Luz was also able to help that family get the support they needed to address the problem. Currently, she works with early intervention services for two of the children she cares for, helping to better prepare them for school. The children Luz cares for eventually move on to schools or daycare centers. They do so well that teachers often call her to congratulate her on the solid foundation she has provided to the children in her care.

In the beautiful work that she undertakes daily, helping to give the children in her care rich and full lives, Luz is an ambassador for 4CS. We couldn't ask for better representation.



Indicator of Health & Well-Being	NJ	County
Median Income of Families with Children (2016)	\$95,718	\$56,777
% of Children Under Age 18 in Poverty (2016)	14.3%	25.1%
% of Children Under Age 5 in Poverty (2016)	16.1%	27.6%
% of Children Under Age 5 Living with Single Mom in Poverty (2016)	32.2%	43.9%
Children Ages 0-3 Receiving Early Intervention Services	12,491	1,103
Children Ages 3-5 Enrolled in Special Education	16,942	1,033
Students Enrolled in State Funded Preschool	51,952	5,397

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey; NJ Early Intervention System, County Performance and Determination Report, NJ Department of Health, 2016-2017; New Jersey Department of Education, 2017.

County Requests: Families Seeking Child Care	
Total Requests for All Types of Child Care	3,472
Center-Based Child Care	3,396
Family Child Care Homes	2,801
Infant-Toddler Care	1,825
Preschool-age Care	747
Special Needs Care	1,036
Full-Time Care	2,342
Part-Time Care	1,727
Before/After Care	1,497
Non-Traditional Hour Care	204
County Services To Child Care Programs	
Training Sessions Held	364
# Attending Trainings (Unique)	1,502
# On-Site TA Support Visits	201

## NEED Children Depending on Child Care

Young Children Potentially Needing Child Care	NJ	County
Children Under Age 6 with Working Parents	414,341	24,482
Children Under Age 6 Living with a Single Working Mother	112,117	10,176

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table B23008, Children Under Age 6 with Working Parents, 2017 American Community Survey 1 Year Estimates

## AVAILABILITY Child Care Slots

Types of Programs in the County	Number of Facilities	Total Capacity
Licensed Child Care Centers	233	24,209
Accredited Child Care Centers	25	3,919
Registered Family Child Care Homes	283	1,366
Centers Participating in Grow NJ Kids	81	9,411
Homes Participating in Grow NJ Kids	44	216
Publicly-funded School-based Preschool	8	2,364

Source: Local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency database, 2018.

## AFFORDABILITY Cost of Child Care

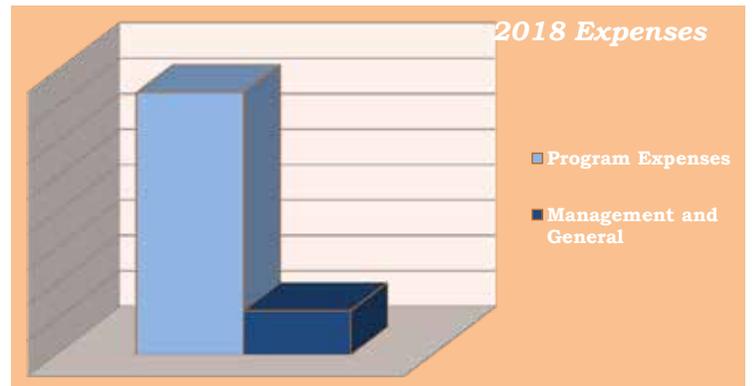
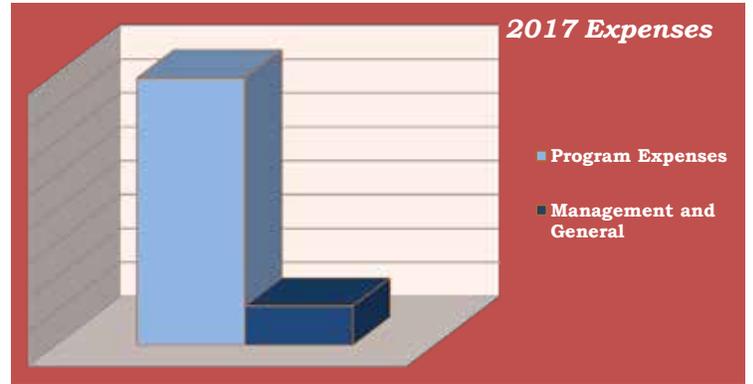
Average Annual Cost			
		Licensed Child Care Centers	Registered Family Child Care Homes
Infants ≤ 12 months	County	\$14,556	\$9,404
	NJ	\$12,370	\$9,311
Toddlers	County	\$11,283	\$8,980
	NJ	\$11,473	\$8,892
Preschoolers	County	\$9,965	\$7,134
	NJ	\$10,339	\$8,477
Before/After School (9 months)	County	\$7,474	\$2,654
	NJ	\$5,538	\$4,835

Source: Local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency database, 2018.

4CS of Passaic County, Inc.  
Two Market Street, Suite 300  
Paterson, NJ 07501

Phone: (973) 684-1904  
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<https://www.facebook.com/4cspassaic/>

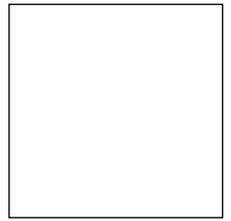
# INCOME STATEMENT



# 4CS

of Passaic County, Inc.

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# 4CS

of Passaic County, Inc.

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