

# Pulling Together



2018 – 2020  
Impact Report

# From the desk of our CEO

As a girl I used to sing “Harambee,” a Kenyan song meaning “Let’s Pull Together.” I can’t think of a better anthem for these past two years.

All families struggled during the pandemic. Many with school-aged children had to serve as stay-at-home teachers while working remotely. Our goal was to help families emotionally and financially, while making sure parents could get to work. What made our mission even more critical was that many 4Cs families were essential workers – nurses, grocery store workers, EMTs. We worked days, nights, and weekends to make sure they had childcare, even if that meant temporarily placing school-aged children in day care centers.

We also gave our childcare providers the tools they needed to stay in business. 4Cs did everything we could to ensure baseline funding for childcare. We offered online tutorials on health and safety practices and made sure everyone had bleach, sanitizer, gloves and plexiglass. We even helped children get laptops and tablets because they couldn’t attend school without them. It was expensive, but we all pulled together and made it happen.

To me, childcare is an ecosystem. How the system is structured and how it treats children and families are critical to its survival. Everyone needs to be strong and do their part. The pandemic reminded us that without support for working mothers and families, the whole economy suffers. All the parts of this ecosystem are interconnected and, when working together, can create a positive loop that benefits everyone.

We’re grateful to the two administrations – state and federal – that continue to make 4Cs’ work possible. Our signature program, the childcare subsidy program, was especially important during the pandemic. The Division of Family Development and the Child and Adult Food Care program were incredibly helpful to us as an agency and to the families and providers we served. Their funding and our collaboration with our partners made it possible to implement innovative programs that provided immeasurable benefit to our families during this difficult period. I want to lift up New Jersey — “Big it Up!” as we’d say in Jamaica. Thank you to Governor Murphy, Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, the New Jersey Senate and the Assembly. All worked collaboratively with us to reduce incidents of death and illness. Their efforts, as well as contributions from our kind donors, helped keep us whole, and we extend our deepest gratitude to them.

We still have a lot of work to do. Childcare costs about \$900 per month (about \$11,000 per year) for infants and toddlers. A family earning \$44,000 a year cannot afford this. 4Cs is committed to helping parents get the resources they need to raise their families in dignity, while helping them reach their educational and professional goals.

If we sustain the investment in children over time, what will our communities look like? What will our children look like? What is the cost if we **don’t** do it? When whole communities are not invested in our children, the costs are high. School-to-prison pipelines develop, children don’t graduate from high school, and don’t go on to higher education. They struggle to provide for their families. Our mission at 4Cs is to change this. Even as we recover from this global pandemic, we are committed to reversing these generational patterns and helping build self-healing communities.

In this difficult time, we’ve been here. We never left. We lost family members, livelihoods, businesses, but we dug in and found strength and resiliency we didn’t know we had. Now we must look forward. There’s a beautiful saying in one of the South African languages, “Ubuntu,” which means, “I am because we are.” We live this at 4Cs. This is why we exist.

Coleen Stevens Porcher, CEO, 4Cs of Passaic County

# MISSION

to assist families  
in obtaining high  
quality child care  
that is available,  
accessible, and  
affordable



## About Us

We are an early childhood care and education resource and referral agency often referred to, in short, as child care resource and referral agency (CCR&R).

On a practical level our mission means:

- Any employee or working person of companies, governments agencies, or nonprofits, or any entrepreneur, or those going to school can find out where there are licensed child care facilities and/or registered homes for their children to be cared for while they work or attend school. We also provide information for scholars and working people to vet these facilities and/or programs. This service is available for all persons at all income levels.
- Second, equally important, and the program for which we are most well-known, is the financial aid (child care subsidy) we provide for low- and moderate-income families to help cover the cost for child care, whether it's day care, before- and after-care or summer camp. This includes infants through children up to age 13, and up to age 19 for special needs.
- Financial aid to help cover the cost of child care is based on family size and income, so we tell people, "Go ahead and apply. Let us say no to you. Do not say no to yourself!" There is **no waiting list** and **no cost to apply**. Applications are reviewed within 10 days, and eligibility is determined within 45 days.
- This is a critical benefit for families that helps keep them out of poverty. After rent/mortgage, child care is the second most expensive item in most families' budgets.
- We also have vocational school where people can get foundational skills to become certified child development associate (CDA), a foundational certificate to begin or enhance one's career in early childhood care and education. They can also take CPR and first aid classes and much more.
- We are a sponsoring organization of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and help get an average of 250K meals to children every year.

We ask that our readers please serve as ambassadors, now that you know about these programs. Share this information. Not enough people know we exist to serve them.

# VISION

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





# Pride and Perseverance

## A message from Charles Walter, president of the board

This has been an immensely challenging year for our country and our world due to COVID-19. Over 3.5M souls have perished globally and over 600,000 in the U.S. during this pandemic. Countless people and their families have suffered the grief, social isolation, financial pressure, and personal anxiety that such a cataclysmic event imparts.

In the midst of all this tumult, 4Cs had an additional challenge: as a childcare resource and referral nonprofit working very closely with child care providers, this agency was, and is, a front-line resource. During the darkest days of the COVID-19 pandemic (April to May 2020), 4Cs staff assisted first responders and front line workers' families with their child care needs within 10 hours of submitting a request. Children were provided quality early care and education at selected approved emergency child care locations. The management and staff had to face a myriad of personal and professional challenges and still deliver the quality services that our clients and community needed. But this organization has never lost focus on delivering for our families when they need it most.

***“...this organization has never lost focus on delivering for our families when they need it most.”***

The management team faced and overcame unprecedented hurdles:

- Navigating the shifting landscape of state and federal guidance as crucial information changed constantly as new information arrived
- Giving help and support to staff who were dealing with the personal impact of the pandemic on their families, friends, and community
- Creating new on-site safety protocols to keep staff and clients safe
- Developing remote and on-site work procedures to allow 4Cs to continue to deliver quality services to keep our community working
- Managing the organizational and financial stress of keeping the lights on while our funding foundations were severely eroded

It wasn't easy, but the team delivered. With pride and perseverance, they made it happen. As the president of the board of directors, I am immensely proud of our CEO, Coleen Stevens Porcher; CFO, Antonio Di Nizo; and COO, Shakia White for their leadership and indomitable spirit, and also the senior management team and all of the staff for their sacrifice and determination. Well done to all.

By all indications, we are coming out of the darkness of the pandemic. We do so as an organization that has been tested and has come out stronger for it. I look forward to seeing what this wonderful organization can achieve in the future.



## Shirnet

In our home business, we work three shifts over 24 hours per day, seven days a week. We care for children whose parents are police officers or work in hospitals, parents from all walks of life. With my sister as my right hand and my aunts assisting, we're truly a family business. Working in childcare since 2004, we treat each child like they're our own.

In the beginning of the pandemic, everything was so uncertain I lost most of my clients (at one point we were down to two children). But 4Cs made it possible for me to maintain my livelihood. They made sure we had PPE — such as gloves, masks, sanitizers, and bleach — absolutely free of charge! We also got emergency kits with fireproof blankets, flashlights and other stuff. Those things would normally be so costly they would be inaccessible for us. 4Cs understood that, in a pandemic, so much depends on family healthcare. We're the ones holding it down.

***“I can't tell you what I would've done without 4Cs this year.”***

4Cs made it possible for me to continue my professional development toward earning my CDA (child development accreditation.) They offered virtual instruction so we didn't have to put ourselves in danger. It was so convenient. The techniques and strategies they covered in those Zoom sessions allowed us to continue learning and training. They have given us every opportunity to succeed in our business.

I can't tell you what I would've done without 4Cs this year. There were times I literally cried, not knowing how we were going to make it financially. It was the grace of God and 4Cs that kept us going. They're pioneers. They're advocates. They gave us the information we needed to apply for a PPP loan, which enabled us to stay afloat financially in those rough times. That's what they did, and that's why we're still here.

## Arelis

I've been on a journey of finding services for my son since he was three, when he was diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder), ODD (Oppositional Defiance Disorder) and anxiety. He had been kicked out of every preschool he had ever been in. I needed to find services that were designed for children like him.

That's when I met Coleen from 4Cs, who said, “we offer different classes, and we provide services and resources. If you're interested, take some classes.” That's what I wanted — to learn. I started taking a **Credential for Teacher Assistance (CDA)** class, and it's been awesome. I've learned a lot about how to help children with special needs. I found out there are so many different services provided by the community, and have made a number of connections in the group, too. They're very helpful and encouraging.

I'm also getting personal development training because I'd like to become an expert in early childhood intervention. I have registered with NJCAA, the New Jersey Childcare Association. Maybe one day I'll become a behavioral counselor.

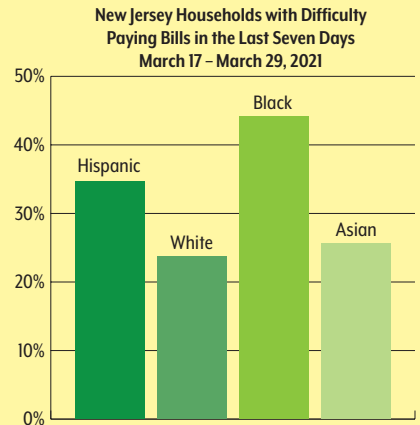
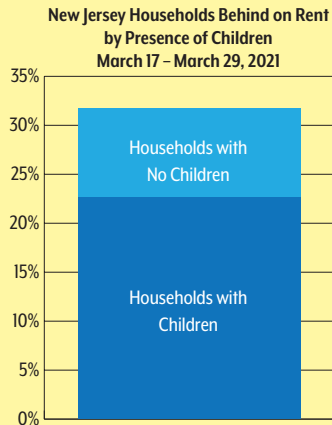
My son is five years old now and doing great. He attends an integrated kindergarten. Though he's no longer in a special needs program, he still deals with some anxiety. But his classroom teachers know how to help him. I feel so relieved. My son is the love of my life. I was experiencing so much rejection before. I kept thinking, “what am I doing wrong as a parent?”

Through 4Cs and my own research, I learned how to advocate for my child. Coleen took extra time to talk to me, treating me like a person, not like a client at an agency. She was really helpful with information about the law, such as the legal requirements for getting an IEP (Individualized Instruction Plan.) That's important. And it helped me so much to know I wasn't alone. Moms need that.



## We're still here

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, New Jersey mothers were working. The most recent data shows that 171,611 New Jersey parents are home caring for children not in school or childcare, and that there are 2.5 million fewer women in the workforce throughout the U.S., compared to a year ago. Over 50% of New Jersey families with children have lost income since March, 2020.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Weekly Household Pulse Survey, Week 27, March 17–29, 2021

But 4Cs is still here. Throughout the pandemic we have continued to facilitate high quality child care, which supports parents joining or returning to the workforce, promotes the healthy development of children, and lessens employee absences related to child care issues, a problem that costs U.S. businesses about \$3 billion annually.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Sources: 2020 data from New Jersey Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) agencies. The following counties submitted data for 2020/COVID-19 tabulations: Bergen; Burlington; Camden; Essex; Hudson; Hunterdon; Mercer; Middlesex; Monmouth; Morris; Ocean; Passaic; Somerset; Sussex; Union, and Warren.

IN 2020

### Supporting families

**24,913** child care referrals for NJ families

**518** children of essential personnel who received financial support for child care

**5,365** average number of children, monthly, who received a child care subsidy

### Supporting child care providers

**2,781** child care provider contacts (includes questions answered, guidance and suggestions offered, and technical assistance)

**1,845** Zoom participants (webinars, overviews and trainings)

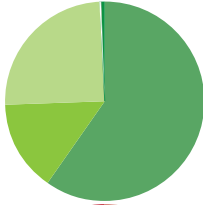
**257** family child care provider stabilization grants, health and safety grants, and reopening grants

**63** Zoom sessions (webinars, overviews and trainings)

**224** Spring family child care provider Care Kits (PPE, sanitizer and cleaning supplies)

## Statements of Financial Position (2019 – 2020)

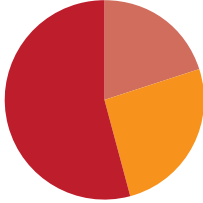
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### Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,850,258
Accounts receivable	457,847
Investments	771,891
Prepaid expenses	543
Security deposit	14,323

**Total assets \$ 3,094,862**

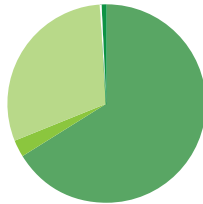


### Liabilities and net assets

Current liabilities	\$ 624,771
Non-current liabilities	798,074
Total net assets	1,672,017

**Total liabilities and net assets \$ 3,094,862**

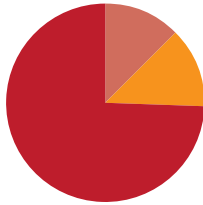
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### Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,628,053
Accounts receivable	66,470
Investments	744,901
Prepaid expenses	563
Security deposit	14,323

**Total assets \$ 2,454,310**



### Liabilities and net assets

Current liabilities	\$ 310,534
Non-current liabilities	320,341
Total net assets	1,823,435

**Total liabilities and net assets \$ 2,454,310**







If you would like to support 4Cs and its endeavors to secure high quality child care for the families of Passaic County, please visit our website at

**[www.4cspassaic.org](http://www.4cspassaic.org)**

and click the **DONATE** button

