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For Immediate Release

New Shared Services Alliance Announced for Early Childhood Education Centers in Illinois

Grand Victoria Foundation provides funding for the first-of-its-kind program

Joliet, Ill. – January 18, 2016 – [Child Care Resource & Referral \(CCR&R\)](#), a not-for-profit based in Joliet that promotes and facilitates affordable, quality child care through assistance, education and advocacy in Will, Grundy, Kendall and Kankakee counties, is bringing a new capacity-building strategy to a small “founding” group of childcare centers in order to improve efficiency and allow for more attention to be centered around the children in care. [Grand Victoria Foundation](#) has provided major start-up funding for this first alliance serving Illinois children.

“We are inspired by the innovative leadership Child Care Resource & Referral is providing. As state budgets contract, it’s more important than ever to test new ways to support and deliver high quality services to children and families”, said Nancy Fishman, Executive Director of Grand Victoria Foundation.

Childcare centers in Illinois are experiencing difficult challenges as they seek to improve quality without charging more than families are able and willing to pay. The Shared Services model, which will initially be launched in Will and Kendall counties, offers a change in roles and responsibilities for childcare center directors and a way to reallocate resources from administration to classrooms, in order to focus more deeply on child outcomes. Benefits result from economies of scale (which can reduce some costs) and economies of specialization, when educators can focus on what they do best and love most.

“Our mission has always included finding ways to provide top-notch resources to families and child care providers,” said Chris Bzdon, Executive Director of CCR&R. “A big part of this effort is the services we provide to childcare centers. Forming this alliance is the next natural step in continuously improving and helping centers be more effective and better provide for the children in their care.”

Representatives from CCR&R, childcare center directors, vendors and consultants gathered recently to lay out the plans and expectations for the first year of the alliance. Childcare centers in Will and Kendall counties will sign formal agreements to become alliance members in January 2016.

For more information, contact Chris Bzdon, Executive Director of CCR&R, at cbzdon@childcarehelp.com.

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About Child Care Resources and Referral: Founded in January, 1991, CCR&R serves Will, Grundy, Kendall and Kankakee counties as part of the Illinois Statewide CCR&R System of IDHS. Started with the United Way of Will County as its fiscal agent, CCR&R is a not-for-profit agency providing services to families, child care providers, and employers. For more information, visit www.childcarehelp.com