

FY 2019-2020 Annual Report



MAKING CONNECTIONS



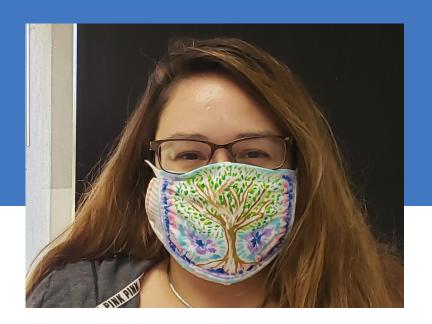


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Message from our Executive Director

RITA R. ARMSTRONG

Over the last 29 years our agency has promoted and facilitated the availability of affordable, quality child care through assistance, education, and advocacy in our service counties. As we move towards 2021, we will be celebrating 30 years of services to children and families across the state of Illinois.

As a mission-driven organization we measure our success beyond financial indicators; at Child Care Resource and Referral it is also critical to measure success in achieving the mission. Throughout the year, we continued our commitment to delivering the highest standards of quality for our children, families, and partnership programs.

It is important to know, through all the challenges of fiscal years 2019 and 2020, our agency culture has sustained and revealed to be our greatest strength. In the moment when we needed it most, we came together as one agency, connecting to each of our communities, aligning with shared values, and committing to our shared future. We demonstrated the truth in our purpose statement by truly making our services more personal for our clients and people, and by building trust into every result in each community and county for Will, Kankakee, Kendall, and Grundy.

From the very beginning of the crisis, Child Care Resource and Referral has remained open for most of our programs and internal operations by adopting new methods and protocols to get essential services to our clients and to the people who now found themselves needing our program's services even more during this difficult time.

We had to act immediately to revamp how to provide services while restricting access to all of our buildings. We continued to operate several essential programs on-site while most of our staff worked remotely from home. Despite this new challenge, we adapted quickly. The number one reason we got it done is plain and simple: the dedicated staff of CCR&R. I am extremely proud of our employees and how they continue to work hard on behalf of the individualized needs for all our contracted programs and those affected by COVID-19 barriers in each community. Each day brought on new challenges and everyone stepped up to make it work. We certainly do deliver more than promises!

We exceeded record breaking numbers assuring our clients' services requirements were not interrupted and goals were met. It is with great pride and excitement we proclaim a significant expansion of our mission.

In later 2020, we embarked on a new look with our logo, launched a new website, and improved every aspect of our internal and external communication plan. This was essential to communicating information and services through a digital platform and our virtual training goals. A colorful image of children and blocks now reflect our new look and meaning of who we are and where we are going. We are reaching new heights climbing together, building new partners; block by block; respecting diversity of all our clients and staff; and connecting to a community with a positive, bright, and colorful message

Our board is resilient, unbiased, and accountable-always mindful of their fiduciary role and their responsibility to ensure outstanding governance over the organization.

You are the reason we keep going. Our partners, friends, and donors are vital to everything we do and our future...

Thanks so much to my wonderful team at Child Care Resource & Referral, our Board, and you our partners. Your support and trust in our work and helping us to impact change to many children and families' lives daily through all our core services will continue to be the beacon of light moving us to our new year.

With enormous gratitude,

Rita R. Armstrong Executive Director of CCR&R











Message from our Board President

MARYLIN TURNER-MALLORY

Dear Friends

As President, on behalf of the Board of Directors at Child Care Resource and Referral, I would like to humbly thank each and every one of you for your dedicated support to CCR&R during the 2019 and 2020 fiscal years. As we approach the end of this fiscal year we reflect on all of the accomplishments achieved by each of you.

Each of our nation's cities, counties, and states were presented with challenging times during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, because of your heart and support we survived. As a team we were able to make the necessary adaptions to ensure our programs continued to provide the necessary services to children and their families facing unemployment, homelessness, hospitalizations, poor nutrition, school closures, mental and physical health disparities, and most of all, separation from their families due to isolation.

As we launch into new beginnings we extend again a multitude of appreciation to our staff, partners and community networks. We want to wish everyone a safe and healthy upcoming new fiscal year.



Child Care Resource and Referral Board of Directors



Marylin Turner-Mallory Board President

Brent TownsendBoard Treasurer

Lori Wilcox Executive Board Member

Melissa Burton WilliamsExecutive Board Member





Child Care Resource & Referral Leadership Team

Rita R. Armstrong

Executive Director

Kevin Lehman

Director of Finance

Shanta Stewart

Sr. Fiscal Analyst

Lola Laleye

Director of Human Resources

Sara Organ-Simon

Sr. Human Resources Specialist

Ezohn Smith

Director of Quality Assurance/Data

Marquita Cox

Director of Early Learning Programs

Rebecca Kroiss

Assistant Director of Early Learning Programs

Valerie Varju

CCR&R Director SDA 5

Georgia Lane

Assistant Director SDA 5/CCAP

Brigette Henderson

Assistant Director SDA 5/Training







What We Do



Child Care Resource & Referral promotes and facilitates the availability of affordable, quality child care through assistance, education and advocacy in Will, Grundy, Kankakee, and Kendall Counties.







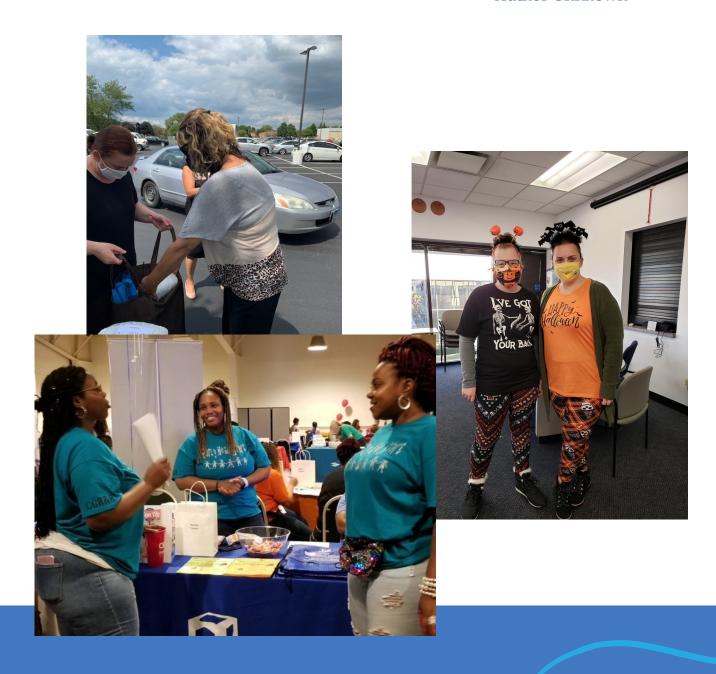






"A **connection** is the energy that exists between two people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship"

Author Unknown



Strengthening Connections

CCR&R Commitment to Diversity

CCR&R values and respects the diversity of its employees, volunteers, and customers. Therefore, we make every effort to respect the worth and uniqueness of each individual and create an environment in which we learn from each other by recognizing our different backgrounds, perspectives, and contributions.

We are committed to enhancing the value of our work through respect of one another's cultures and the development of relationships through mutual and caring learning. CCR&R believes that all individuals, families, and communities:

- Have strengths and challenges.
- Have a culture that guides their behavior.
- Uniquely contributes through their culture.
- Our similarities as humans is as important as our cultural differences.
- Learning begins at birth, is life long, and reciprocal.
- Reciprocity in learning leads to greater understanding.
- Welcoming and valuing cultures will improve our ability to do our work and enhance the value of our work.

We will continue to uphold and grow an organizational culture that lives this mission.

Strengthening Connections

CCR&R COVID-19 Response

We at CCR&R are committed to the health and well-being of all of our families, providers, and CCR&R staff. Over the past year our country has experienced unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no question that COVID-19 has drastically impacted family life for children and adults in low-income and highrisk communities. Since March, our agency has been at the front-line, providing support to emergency child care centers and essential workers. Although COVID-19 has changed the way in which CCR&R and its programs operate, we have continued to support our communities and strengthen our connections throughout.







The CCR&R Administration team worked tirelessly to ensure that business operations continued, keeping in mind the health and safety of the staff. The Executive Director established new protocols to allow for employees to work remotely. Additionally, the Quality Assurance Director and Human Resources Team worked together to establish additional health and safety guidelines for staff, providing PPE as needed.

Our team of Early Head Start and Preschool for All professionals worked to provide additional supports to families and programs after the Governor's mandate to close programs in the spring. They continued to connect families with resources, including PPE supplies. The program also hired outside consultants to provide training and guidance for continual program operations. Many of our partner programs remained open during the shelter-in-place mandate as Emergency Child Care Centers for essential workers.







Our Child Care Assistance Program temporarily suspended walk-in services at our Joliet office. However, clients and providers still received assistance from our dedicated team through phone calls and emails. All paperwork continued to be processed in a timely manner, ensuring continued child care assistance for many families.

To assure the safety of our staff and clients, our Providers Services team converted all on-site consultations and in-person trainings to virtual platforms. Our specialists have continued to provide regular technical assistance and professional development throughout the pandemic, even establishing new connections with providers.

Connecting Children to Opportunities Pr Preschool For All

The focus of the Preschool for All (PFA) and Preschool for All Expansion (PFAE) programs is to prepare young children for Kindergarten readiness and future school success. Serving children at risk of academic failure, our program specialists develop connections with families, empowering them to be active participants in their child's educational experience. Positive and reciprocal relationships are established through participation in monthly parent meetings, workshops, and parent-teacher conferences. Our high quality educational programs offer the skills and confidence needed to continue to grow and learn.



CCR&R has partnered with 7 **different programs** within our service area including, Garden of Prayer, One Hope United, Play Palz, Step By Step Child Care, and the YMCA. Our programs serve over 117 children and their families.



Ensured 121 children received up to date physical exams and 69 children received dental exams within our PFA and PFAE programs staffed by Type 4 certified instructional leaders.



Provided early learning resources and care packages to families during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Provided instructional classroom teaching virtually and onsite.





Family Impact Story



"Preschool for All helped me and my daughter Aria so much! I recently relocated back to Kankakee after being gone for ten years. Aria was in the Preschool for All program at NIU and I was so happy with the program. I wanted to make sure she was able to stay once we moved back to Kankakee. I worked with Latasha from Child Care Resource and Referral and she helped me get all my financial and school paperwork transferred. The ladies at Play Palz are so good with my daughter. She has learned how to spell her name, count to 100 and she now loves to read and sing nursery rhymes. We also have been able to participate in the Preschool for All programming, including a family night at the library, a Thanksgiving feast and a field trip to the children's museum. Even now, while I work from home, Aria's teacher Miss Becca provides us with tons of educational resources online and does weekly read alouds on Zoom. Aria loves seeing her teacher and some of her classmates during the Zoom calls and listening to stories! We are so thankful we have had the opportunity to participate in this awesome

Mom of Aria at the Play Palz PFA Program

program"

Connecting Children to Opportunities

Early Head Start

Our Early Head Start (EHS) programs serve to expand the availability of high quality infant and toddler care and education. Children from birth to age 3 from low-income environments are connected with continuous and comprehensive childhood development and support services. Family engagement opportunities provide an interactive process of relationship building with shared decision-making opportunities to best support the strengths and abilities of each child.



We offer 7 **programs** in Kankakee County serving over **96 children** and their families, including partnerships with Play Palz, MBS Child Care Center, and Lasting Impressions Learning Centers.



Partnered with **over 25 agencies** to ensure Early Childhood Services were uninterrupted during the FY20 school year.



At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic CCR&R distributed child sized cloth masks to each child within our programs.



Increased virtual capabilities to every center with technology and upgraded communication resources.



Provided ongoing mental health coaching to **13 classrooms**, impacting over **26 Early Childhood Professionals** daily.







"Even though I already had some challenges and was reluctant to sending him to child care, the Early Head Start program has been the best thing I could have ever done for my son."

Parent of C.B.





Connecting Teachers and Families

Social Emotional Learning Facilitation

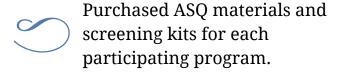
The Social Emotional Learning Facilitation (SELF) program was developed to enhance the connection between early learning educators and families in an effort to assure future school success for children. Through the use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the ASQ-Social Emotional Questionnaire (ASQ-SE) educators can assess the social and emotional development of children and work with families to develop individual plans. Participating early childhood professionals receive ongoing training in sensory integration, family engagement, and communication. Additional participation in communities of practice equip them with the skills necessary to foster school readiness for the children in their care.



Partnered with **11 programs** through Will, Grundy, Kendall, and Kankakee Counties.



Provided trainings and communities of practice to over 180 early childhood professionals.

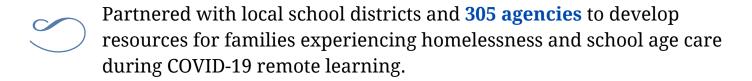


Connecting Families and Programs Family Referral



At Child Care Resource & Referral, we believe that every child deserves access to high quality early learning experiences. Our seasoned Referral Specialist works with families to meet their individual child care needs. Families that reach out to CCR&R are provided informational materials on indicators of high quality and consumer information to empower them during the decision making process. As part of our services we are also able to connect families with additional supports and resources that support the whole family.

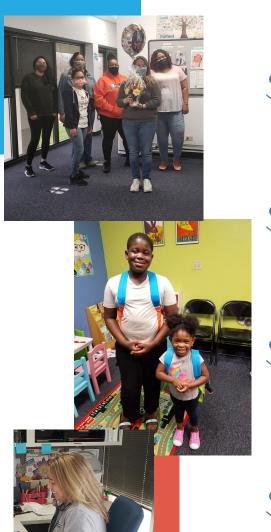




Partnered with IDHS and INCCRRA to coordinate the statewide Emergency Child Care Hotline during the COVID-19 pandemic to assist 175 essential workers in finding care.

Connecting Families with Resources Child Care Assistance Program

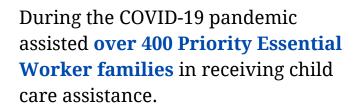
In partnership with the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), CCR&R administers the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Our Eligibility Specialists work with families to connect them with potential financial assistance. This opportunity allows families to access affordable, high quality early childhood programs for their children, ensuring more choices are available to meet their needs. As part of the CCAP, CCR&R also assists providers with navigating the billing and payment process.





Provided assistance to **over 4400 families** with approximately **6900 children** on a monthly basis, along with their **900 providers**.





Worked with IDHS and INCCRRA to process \$257,000 in one-time stipend disbursements ensuring continued care to 1,670 young children. enrolled within Emergency Child Care Centers offering care during the shelter-inplace mandate.

Child Care Resource & Referral



"When I became a divorced mother of four children, I was filled with anxiety and fear. I wasn't sure how I would be the main breadwinner or even be allowed to work if childcare was going to be so expensive for the four of them. The Child Care Assistance Program gave me hope and a fighting chance to keep moving forward and to create a future for my children. The staff in the Joliet office is amazing! I feel so supported, like someone understands my struggle. In a world full of tough, mean faces, I always find helpful encouraging staff members that keep me going. My family and I are truly grateful for the CCAP program".

Crystal T., CCAP Client

Connecting Families with Resources

Community Connections



Partnered with the United Way of Will County Community Baby Shower to distribute diapers and baby care items to more than **400 families** throughout the year. During the COVID-19 pandemic we organized several no-contact diaper pick ups for families.



Children who visit our CCAP lobby at the Joliet office receive a free book courtesy of the National Hook-Up for Black Women Joliet Chapter. During FY20 we were able to distribute **200 books** and to date, have encouraged early reading to 1000s of families.



In August, partnered with INCCRRA and the COVID Relief Fund to provide \$17,500 in prepaid debit cards to 75 low-income families negatively affected by the pandemic to assist with rent, food, and utilities.



CCR&R and its employees worked together to provide much need resources to more than 100 families, including food, PPE, and school







Connecting Providers with Resources

Assisted 32 early childhood programs with over \$80,000 in IDHS grant funding to purchase equipment and materials, achieve accreditations, and provide specific trainings to their staff in order to promote quality improvement and achieve the ExceleRate Illinois Circles of Quality.

Worked with License Exempt programs to provide \$5,000 in health and safety supplies.

Received \$34,000 from IDHS to purchase developmentally appropriate furniture and educational materials for infant, toddler, and twos classrooms at 23 different early childhood programs.



Worked with INCCRRA to identify **57 Emergency Child Care centers** to provide them with much needed cleaning supplies and PPE to continue to provide care for young children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

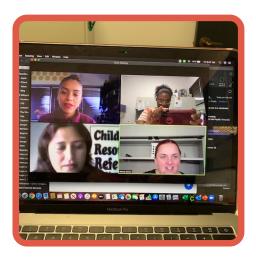


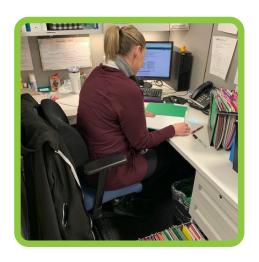


Connecting Providers with Resources

Professional Development







CCR&R supports continued work force development by connecting early childhood educators and providers with professional development opportunities. As a training hub for the field of early childhood education, CCR&R's team of training specialists provide a wide array of training topics, including required content needed to achieve Illinois Gateways Credentials. Each year the CCR&R team surveys providers to learn what is most important to them and tailors training to meet their needs. Those looking to become family child care providers are also offered support with how to start their own program, along with connections to valuable resources to get them started.



Enrolled 43 early childhood professionals into online CDA courses during the shelter-in-place mandate to promote the advancement of the ECE workforce.



Provided reimbursement to over 27 child care providers to participate in professional development conferences and workshops.



Assisted over **360 providers** in obtaining CPR and First Aid certification through Core Services.

Provider Impact Story

"My name is Barbara Hill, Licensed Child Care Provider, better known as Grandma or Mama Hill. I have resided in Will County for more than 35 years. Twenty of those years I have dedicated to caring for many children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old.

About 9 months after opening I received some devastating news. The facility where I got my trainings was temporarily closed. Trainings started to get costly, until I mentioned this to my food program sponsor. She told me about CCR&R and gave me their phone number. Soon after that I called and was able to schedule a CPR and First Aid training later that month (just before it would expire). Shortly after that someone was calling to get me enrolled in Gateways and some more trainings.

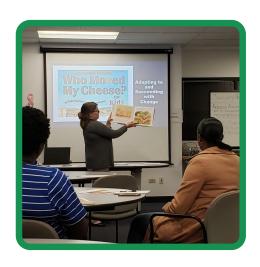
I am grateful for CCR&R, not only for all the information, trainings, and referrals, but the many parent's that say "I wouldn't be able to work if I didn't qualify for the Child Care Assistance Program". Priceless!

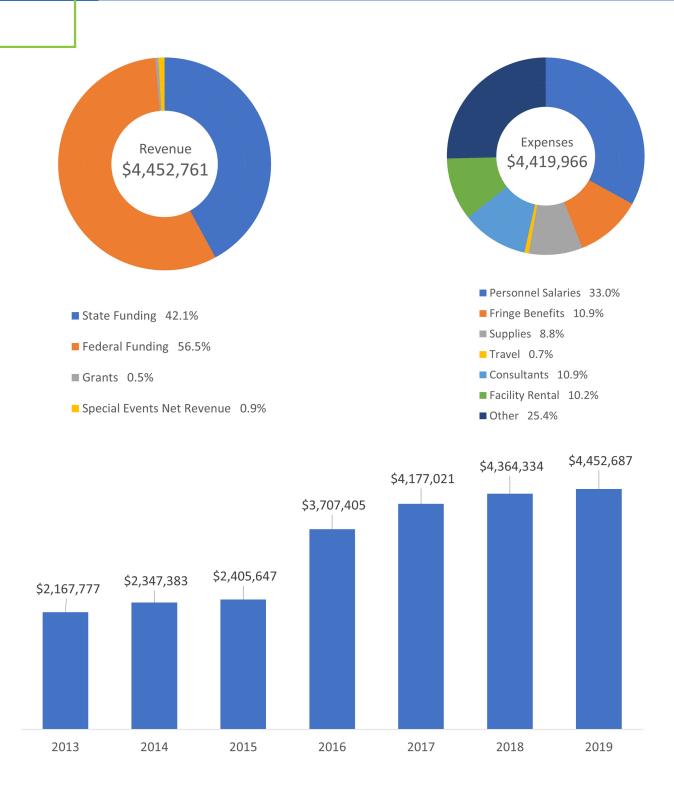
Since I made that call many years ago, I get my First Aid and CPR trainings every two years and many of the other trainings that are offered. I am so glad I made that call. Now I tell providers to call CCR&R."

Barbara Hill, Licensed Family Child Care Provider



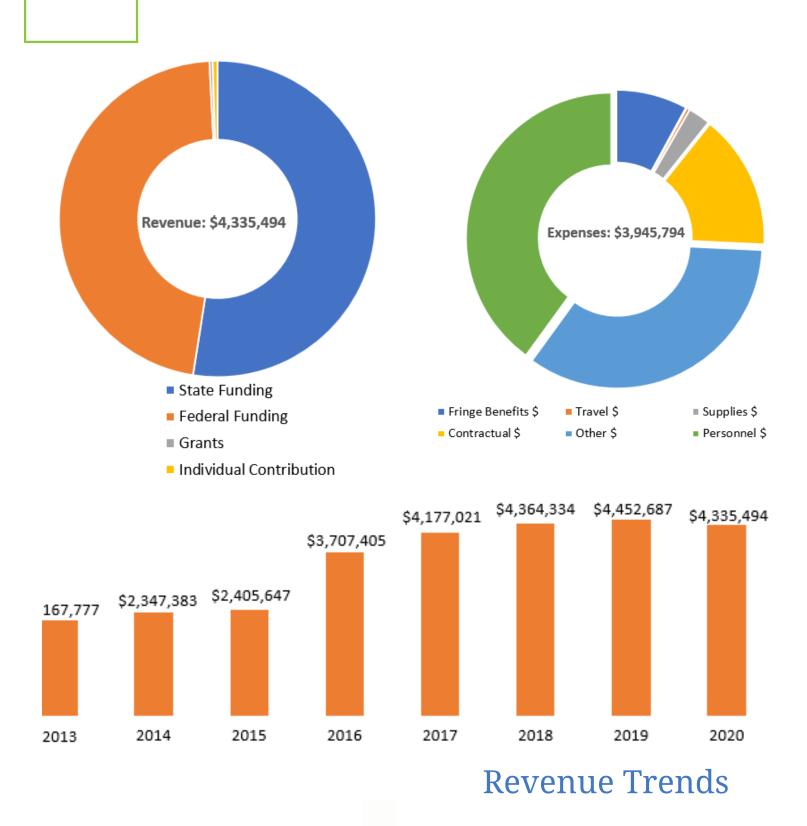






■ Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership	\$	1,937,465
Fringe Benefits		67,986
Travel	\$	14,660
Supplies	\$	22,685
Contractual	\$	1,015,136
Other	\$	502,784
Personnel	\$	314,214
■ Illinois Department of Education Programs		383,498
Fringe Benefits	\$	-
Travel	\$	671
Supplies	\$	3,155
Contractual	\$	104,504
Other	\$	59,157
Personnel	\$	216,011
■ Illinois Dept of Human Services Programs		1,890,407
Fringe Benefits	\$	263,179
Travel	\$	14,546
Supplies	\$	25,067
Contractual	\$	122,228
Other	\$	505,693
Personnel	\$	959,694
■ United Way SELF Programs		9,178
Fringe Benefits	\$	-
Travel	\$ \$	-
Supplies		4,969
Contractual	\$	4,074
Other	\$	135
Personnel	\$ \$	_
Grand Total	\$	4,220,548

Schedule of Expenses



■ Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership	\$1,468,114.00
Contractual	\$193,719.00
Fringe Benefits	\$76,676.00
Other	\$867,910.00
Personnel	\$315,658.00
Supplies	\$9,741.00
Travel	\$4,410.00
■ Illinois Dept. of Education Programs	\$433,633.00
Contractual	\$117,958.00
Fringe Benefits	\$41,580.00
Other	\$2,880.00
Personnel	\$257,255.00
Supplies	\$13,488.00
Travel	\$472.00
■ Illinois Dept. of Human Services Programs	\$1,918,568.00
Contractual	\$258,623.00
Fringe Benefits	\$185,681.00
Other	\$439,099.00
Personnel	\$956,657.00
Supplies	\$70,639.00
Travel	\$7,869.00
■ Other	\$121,591.00
Contractual	\$83,719.00
Fringe Benefits	\$23,907.00
Other	-\$143,032.00
Personnel	\$135,689.00
Supplies	\$16,862.00
Travel	\$4,446.00
☐ United Way SELF Programs	\$3,888.00
Contractual	\$3,888.00
Fringe Benefits	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
Personnel	\$0.00
Supplies	\$0.00
Travel	\$0.00
Grand Total	\$3,945,794.00
Deferred Revenue	\$389,700.00

Schedule of Expenses & Deferred Revenue

Connecting with the Community

Census 2020

Census information helps determine which areas qualify for critical resources that children and families depend on for the next 10 years. During each Census over 675 billion dollars are at stake which directly affects programs such as the Child Care Assistance Program and Early Head Start. In 2010 an estimated 5 percent of children under the age of 5 were missed. At about 1 million babies and young children, that is the largest under count of any age group. CCR&R partnered with Reaching Across Illinois Library Systems to promote participation in the Census with a focus on a complete and accurate count of children ages birth to 5 years old.

Through funding from RAILS, distributed **1000** "Shelter-in-Place" Census activity bags with guides for families on how to complete their 2020 survey.

Reached or and familiar platforms a early child increase Comments of the comme

Reached over 29,000 individuals and families through social media platforms and partnerships with early childhood programs to increase Census completion.

Provided tablets to our partner programs to encourage on-site family survey completion.

Connecting with the Community

Community Partners

Organizations

Amita Health/St. Mary's

Bays Investment Corporation

Bottom2Top

Bradley Dental

Catholic Charities

CBIZ

Child and Family Connections

Child Care Connections

Discount School Supply

Fast Printing of Joliet

Grundy Partnership for Children

Hispanic Partnership

Illinois AEYC

Illinois Department of Human Services

Illinois State Board of Education

INCCRRA

IRIS

Joliet Junior College

Joliet Public Library

Kankakee Community College

Kankakee County Health Department

Kankakee School District 11

Lasting Impressions Visions Inc.

Lewis University

MBS Child Care

Northern Illinois Food Bank

Office of Early Head Start

One Hope United

Play Palz 101

Pregnancy Resource Center

RAILS

Riverside Medical Center

SPARK

Step by Step Learning Centers

Success by Six

Synapse Early Learning

Tier1 Solutions

United Way of Grundy County

United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties

Will County AEYC

Will County AOK Network

YWCA of Kankakee

Individuals

Angela Searcy

Brandon Hamilton

Brent Townsend

Cathy Stephens

Chena Baity

Darnisha Thompson

Dawn Soukup

Greg Kantz

Julia Jamison

Kathleen Harding

Kim Varju

Lori Wilcox

Marilyn Turner Mallory

Melissa Burton Wiliams

Nicole Adams

Rita R. Armstrong

Robert Medina

D 11 m1

Darnisha Thompson

Rudy Thompson

Sara Beach

Sara Otte

Sara Organ-Simon



THANK YOU.

With your support and investment, CCR&R has impacted tens of thousands of children, families and early childhood <u>professionals</u> with benefits to the entire community.

Together We Are Making Connections



Connecting with the Community How You Can Help

Support children through direct programs and by supporting those who care for and educate them--parents, families and child care providers.

With your support, CCR&R connects families and young children to valuable services and financial assistance.

 Provide one high quality age appropriate children's book and tip sheet on 	
Executive Function	
Daily cost to provide licensed child care for Toddlers	\$35
Materials kit for families to use with their child to build upon their	\$40
development	
• Cost of one year of a Research Based Early Childhood Curriculum for one child	\$1,000

With your support, CCR&R connects the child care workforce to professional development opportunities that lead to increased quality education and care.

•	Daily cost for conference registration or 6 hours of professional development.	\$100
•	Provide an early childhood program with the Ages and Stages Developmental	\$270
	Screening tool	
•	Provide 100 hours of group mental health consultations	\$850
•	Cost to provide a full-time Quality Specialist for one year	\$45,000





Connect with CCR&R

Administrative Office

801 N. Larkin Avenue Suite 100 Joliet, IL 60435

815.741.1163

Child Care Assistance Program

801 N. Larkin Avenue Suite 202 Joliet, IL 60435

815.741.4622 800.641.4622

assistance@childcarehelp.com

Early Head Start Office

187 S. Schuyler Suite 100 Kankakee, IL 60901

815.741.7600

Child Care Referrals and **Community Resources**

815.741.1179 800.552.5526

Contact Us

Walk-In Hours

Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Phone Hours

Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Visit us at www.childcarehelp.com



Connecting with the Community Looking Ahead in 2021







Healing Illinois--CCR&R Healing Through Community Connections

The CCR&R Healing Through Community
Connections project will promote positive dialogue
and encourage collaboration through a series of
virtual cohorts for families of young children of all
ethnicities. The goal is to address the current racial
divide and its effects on families. Through a virtual
platform from January to March 2021 we will
connect families through meaningful dialogue
facilitated by mental health experts and community
consultants with a focus on social-emotional
learning.

PFA Expansion--New Partnerships in Kankakee & Kendall Counties

During FY21, CCR&R partnered with Garden of Prayer in Aroma Park and the YMCA in Plano to offer additional Preschool for All programs to low-income and high-risk children. We look forward to updating our partners with even more success stories next year.

Continued PPE Supply Distribution

CCR&R received a generous donation of PPE supplies on behalf of INCCRRA and IDHS in December 2020. Our goal will be to support license exempt and in-home providers with valuable resources to help keep the children and families in their care healthy and safe.

Together we are strong and better.



