

# 20 ANNUAL REPORT



Early Care &  
Learning Council

United to Promote Quality



Early Care &  
Learning Council



Early Care &  
Learning Council



nys\_eclc



Early Care &  
Learning Council



nys\_eclc

# Table of Contents

→	01	A Year in Review
→	02	About Us
→	03	Project Spotlight: Business Navigator
→	04	Child Care Advocacy
→	05	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging
→	06	Infant & Toddler
→	07	Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health
→	08	Professional Development
→	09	Child Care Business Support
→	10	Child Care Resource Network
→	11	Board of Directors
→	12	Financial Summary

# A Year in Review

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share a transformative period of growth, innovation, and impact for our Child Care Resource Center (CCRC) network. It has been an exceptionally successful year, one defined by our collective commitment to strengthening child care infrastructure, empowering educators, and supporting working families across our state.

This year, we significantly expanded our reach, as we launched the Business Navigator, a visionary project that kicked off across all ten Regional Economic Development regions. This initiative is forging critical partnerships between local businesses and CCRCs, helping to address the child care needs that are essential to workforce development and economic resilience.

We also celebrated notable achievements in our Infant & Toddler and Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation projects, reaching more providers and elevating the quality of care for our youngest children. In tandem, we introduced new and improved data systems—tools that will continue to enhance program effectiveness and accountability.

One of our most significant milestones this year was our success in CCRC advocacy. For the first time in over a decade, CCRCs realized a contract increase—a landmark achievement that reflects both the tireless efforts of our advocates and the growing recognition of the vital role CCRCs play in our communities. We are grateful for our partnership with NYS Office of Children and Family Services.

In our ongoing commitment to equity, we expanded our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) efforts, reaching more individuals and broadening the impact of our mission. These strides have not only enriched our network but also strengthened our connections with the communities we serve.

Together, these accomplishments have positioned the CCRC network for sustained success in the years ahead. We are deeply grateful to our staff, partners, providers, and supporters for your unwavering dedication and belief in the power of quality child care.

We look forward to building on this momentum as we continue to champion the needs of children, families, and the early childhood workforce.

With Gratitude,

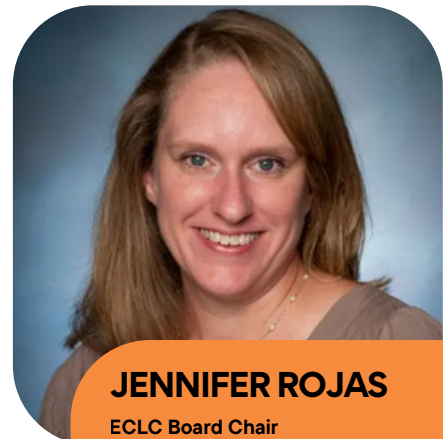
**Meredith Chimento**  
Executive Director

**Jennifer Rojas**  
Board Chair



**MEREDITH  
CHIMENTO**

Executive Director  
Early Care & Learning Council



**JENNIFER ROJAS**

ECLC Board Chair  
Executive Director,  
Child Care Council of Suffolk, Inc.



## About Us

### MISSION

Early Care & Learning Council is the coordinating agency for the New York State network of Child Care Resource Centers (CCRCs). We elevate the voices of the CCRCs and advocate for a quality, affordable, equitable early care and education system. ECLC offers training and professional development to CCRCs and delivers innovative curricula that support the building of sustainable child care systems throughout the state.

### OUR STAFF

**Meredith Chimento**, *Executive Director*

**Abbe Hahn**, *Associate Executive Director of Programs & Services*

**Jeannie Thomma**, *Associate Executive Director of Strategy & Vision*

**Saphyere Redding**, *Project Manager*

**Mariah King**, *Member Services Coordinator*

**Tracy Vergason**, *Senior Director of Programs & Services*

**Brooke Ricci**, *Director of Professional Development*

**Kayla Teabout**, *Professional Development Coordinator*

**Niyah Booker**, *Workforce Supports Associate*

**Andria Ryberg**, *Director of Child Care Supply*

**Budhan Ramcharan**, *Child Care Supply Coordinator*

**Jaleesa Horton**, *Child Care Supply Associate*

**Jessica Klos Shapiro**, *Senior Director of Policy & Community Education*

**Mckenzie Pope**, *Community Education Specialist*

**Jessie Havens**, *Director of Communications*

**Shameia House**, *Administrative Assistant*

**Jennifer Bashant**, *Senior Director of Research and Mental Health Services*

**Ryan Chappell**, *Research Coordinator*

**Sam Brotmann**, *Data Analyst*

**Kylie Wiblishauser**, *Data Analyst*

**Jillian Scanlon**, *Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Director*

**Rachel Roberts**, *Infant & Toddler Coordinator*

**Allison Graham**, *Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Associate*

**Tammy Parsons**, *Director of Finance & Administration*

**Arionda Kearse**, *Bookkeeper*

**Beth Diana**, *Contract Manager*

# The Business Navigator

Developed by Early Care & Learning Council (ECLC), together with a team of 12 Child Care Resource Centers (CCRCs), five consultants, and the support of regional REDCs, the Business Navigator provides employers in New York State with a range of actionable child care solutions. The Business Navigator supports Governor Kathy Hochul's initiative to make New York State's child care system fairer, more affordable, and easier to access.

## INCLUDED IN THE BUSINESS NAVIGATOR



Information for employers on no-cost or low-cost strategies, investments, and child care-related tax credits.



Guidance for HR departments on strategies to connect current employees to child care resources and best practices when onboarding new employees in need of child care.



Customized mapping tool developed for New York State by Cornell University Lab, which clearly identifies child care locations, local to both the parents' neighborhood and business locations.



A complete list of Child Care Resource Centers and staff contact information. CCRCs provide expert guidance to parents in need of child care, and employers seeking to implement child care solutions for their employees.



Examples of investment strategies for employers to make in their workforce that can yield significant returns, including: employee recruitment and retention, increased productivity, enhanced workplace culture.

**In 2022, 91,800 New York parents worked part-time due to child care problems. Within that group, 86% were women.**

## KEY PLAYERS

**5**

### Expert Consultants

Fred Arcuri, Economic Development Consultant  
Beth Starks, Tax Credit Consultant  
Grace Reef, Early Childhood Policy Consultant  
Paul Fahey, Marketing Consultant  
Russell Weaver, Mapping Systems Consultant

**341**

### NYS Businesses Surveyed

Created a snapshot in time of current business practices related to child care, including: benefits offered, employer awareness and interest in child care-related tax credits and funding streams, and current workforce challenges.

**20**

### Child Care Champions

Businesses across NYS that are highlighted in the Business Navigator Child Care Toolkit for the forward thinking policies and initiatives they have implemented to support child care.

**287**

### Chambers of Commerce

Identified across NYS to receive promotional materials about the Business Navigator Child Care Toolkit to share with their members.

**18,000+**

### Child Care Providers

Searchable on the Interactive Mapping System

**3,000+**

### Printed Toolkit Copies

Ready for distribution at CCRC regional live launches and by request.

**49% of mothers faced at least one challenge in their work due to child care issues.**



# Child Care Advocacy

ECLC and the CCRCs are leaders in promoting equitable access to high-quality early care and education that benefit New York State's children and families. We support policies that provide a framework for enhancing young children's learning and development, supporting workforce participation for individuals who are raising children, and strengthening the economic development and success in all of New York State's communities.

## ADVOCACY WINS

**\* Differential Payment for High Quality Providers:** Expanded eligibility for increased provider payment rates to incentivize quality improvements

**\* Differential Payment for Targeted Populations:** Additional differentials for Child Care. Effective April 2025. Assistance Program includes:

- Providers operating during non-traditional hours
- Providers serving families experiencing homelessness

**20%**

Increases to CCRC Five Year Contracts, Legally Exempt Contracts, and Registration Contracts.

Amendment of **\$883,467** yearly to ECLC contract years 2-5 to add/retain eight key positions to spearhead and support CCRC network growth and innovation.

**\$1.7 million**

From CCDF Child Care Block Grant to add data positions at each lead agency and increase Infant & Toddler and Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMHC) Contracts.

Additional Legislative Add of **\$1 million** for IECMHC.

**\$5 million**

From CCDF Child Care Block Grant to fund Staffed Family Child Care Networks across New York State.

## LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

### Speaking Engagements

ECLC Senior Director of Policy and Community Education, Jessica Klos Shapiro, spoke at a press conference held by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand at the Albany Police Department's Conference and Training Facility. During the press conference, Senator Gillibrand introduced her new bipartisan bill, the **"Providing Child Care for Police Officers Act."** The bipartisan bill would provide \$24 million in federal funding for each of the next five fiscal years for child care services.

**65**

Direct connections to state lawmakers made by ECLC staff.

**347**

Advocates within our network made connections to state lawmakers.

**1,058**

Letters sent to the Governor, State Senator, and local representatives in our 2024 digital letter campaigns.

### Community Education Toolkit

A Community Education toolkit was designed to help CCRC staff to prepare for visits with their elected officials. The 'How to Meet with your Local Lawmakers' and 'Tips for Talking with Lawmakers' sheets were designed to walk CCRC members through everything they need to know about how to inform lawmakers about the network and allow them to establish relationships or strengthen preexisting ones.

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

## SUPPORT FOR OUR NETWORK



### Multicultural Workgroup

163 attendees

Space for the CCRC staff to receive equity and inclusion focused curriculum/presentations, to voice culturally related concerns or curiosities, and share any needs for DEIB supports.



### LGBTQIA+ Affinity Group

129 attendees

Dual layering of confidential and allyship sessions that promote and magnify belonging amongst CCRC network staff while also offering educational and team building supports for those that wish to advance solidarity with the LGBTQIA+ community throughout the CCRC network.



### CCRC DEIB Leadership Initiative

25 person cohort

The goal of this annual program is to create leadership teams that understand the importance and advantages of embedding equity and inclusion-based core values into the ways that their agencies build policies, solve problems, hire, and work together as an agency.

## Leadership Initiative Learning Outcomes

### Addressing Language Needs

Jean Fetzko, Director of Professional Development at Child Care Solutions, and her team partnered with other agencies to collaborate on deaf and hearing-impaired clientele needs, providing trainings in Spanish, and supporting ESL and other language clients and families.

### Educating Agency Leadership on DEIB

Mary DiFulvio, Director of Human Resources at Family Enrichment Network, developed agency policies and training to educate staff and increase awareness of DEIB, including the creation of an internal DEIB Committee from all of their agency departments.

## OFFERING TO A WIDER AUDIENCE



### Learning Café: Monthly Webinar Series

A series of educational forums focused on equity that inform and provide actionable steps for our audience members to apply in their respective roles.

511



Total Learning Café attendees in 2024

**“I have loved each one that I've attended. There is such a wealth of information and variety of experiences from the presentations.” - May Learning Café Participant**



### It Takes a Village: Suspension and Expulsion Prevention Series

Developmental follow-up sessions to move action-plans toward the prevention of expulsion and suspension efforts in early childhood education, especially for black and brown boys who have the highest statistics of encountering these issues.

63



Network members participated

**“There is hope to change systems for our youngest and most vulnerable learners. It was nice to see that we had a nice turn out of educators invested in this important work.” - It Takes a Village Series Participant**



# Infant & Toddler

Infant & Toddler (IT) Specialists work to support caregivers by providing technical assistance, training, and on-site support. IT Specialists focus on building and maintaining strong foundations consistent with infant and toddler development by using the 10 components of quality care, curriculum, environment, and more.

55

Infant & Toddler  
Specialists across NYS

3,960+

Hours of Infant & Toddler  
Specialist technical  
assistance to providers

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Training provided by ECLC in 2024:

- DECA I/T Overview
- Spring 2024 IT Conference
- ITERS Overview
- FCCERS Overview
- FLIP IT
- Zero to Three's The Growing Brain Basics Series
- Erikson Institute Decoding Language and Data

## IT DATA COLLECTION PROJECT

After a year of development with our partner, AJW Inc., the IT Specialist expansion for the MITCH database was completed at the end of 2024. ECLC and the CCRCs will officially roll out the new data collection system in January 2025.

The ITS database expansion was designed to capture the impact of work done by staff every day. It allows the IT Network to track progress towards regional goals, such as improving early literacy or health and safety practices in each county, in MITCH.

Date	Staff	Topic of ITA	ITA Provided By
04/11/2025	Shank, Courtney	Coaching/Mentoring	Nonhold, Courtney
04/10/2025	Elswood, Autumn Truesdale, Chloé	Challenging Behaviors Coaching/Mentoring Developmentally Appropriate Practice	Nonhold, Courtney
03/19/2025	Cordick, Elizabeth Palmer, Aislinn	Challenging Behaviors Environment Layout/Structure	Nonhold, Courtney
03/12/2025	Mark, Vicki Truesdale, Chloé	Challenging Behaviors Environment Layout/Structure	Nonhold, Courtney
03/10/2025	Houss, Brenna Lowell, Caitlin	Challenging Behaviors Environment Layout/Structure	Nonhold, Courtney
03/04/2025	Gans, Megan Shank, Courtney	Challenging Behaviors Coaching/Mentoring	Nonhold, Courtney

Participating Staff
Cordick, Elizabeth
Elswood, Autumn
Gans, Megan
Houss, Brenna
Huckelstone, Karleigh
Mark, Vicki
Shank, Courtney

\* Expansion reports were built to be useful both for day-to-day supervision and for big-picture storytelling in addition to meeting reporting requirements for state contract purposes. This alignment was designed to save time for staff on both sides of the contract and allow for greater attention to trends in provider communities. The database contains reports to track staff and program growth and fulfill quarterly and annual reporting requirements for government contracting.

\* The expansion was built with the capability to respond to data collection needs as they evolve. ECLC focused on building out a supportive infrastructure to assist the CCRC Network with this transition. The newly designed onboarding model combines small-group support with an online library of resources for new IT Specialists, as well as monthly data quality and improvement calls to ensure a smooth transition.

# Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC)

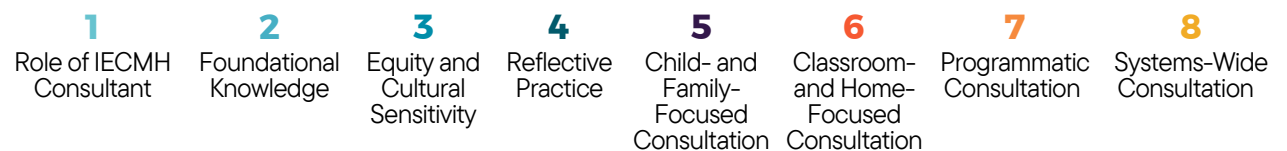
## IT-CHILD ASSESSMENT TOOL

In 2024, ECLC concluded its work with the pilot of the IT-CHILD tool funded by Robin Hood. This pilot program was essential in demonstrating the efficacy of the IT-CHILD assessment tool and has been integral in securing support for rolling out the tool statewide. IECMH Consultants went through reliability training on the IT-CHILD with the Yale University CHILD Lab and have begun using the tool as the primary assessment option during consultation.

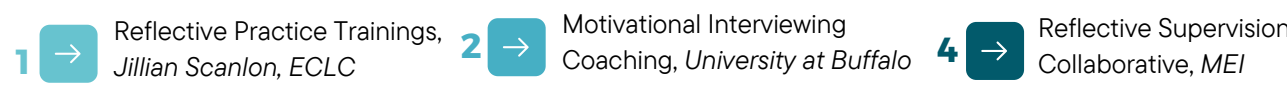


## EIGHT CORE COMPETENCIES

IECMH Consultants engaged in several professional development opportunities, which showcased different models and practices to use during consultation. Each professional development opportunity correlates to a Core Competency identified by the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health.



### Training Examples



## ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs) INSTITUTE

The ACEs Institute is a statewide curriculum dedicated to understanding adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and helping those in the early education field build strategies in their settings.



# Professional Development

ECLC's training provides continuous improvement practices among child care providers, resulting in quality early education spaces for children, families, and workers alike.

## CHILD CARE MANAGEMENT TRAINING: DIRECTOR'S INSTITUTE

<b>188</b>	<b>170+</b>	<b>Training Topics:</b>
Child care providers attended the training series	Hours of training provided across the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director's Overview</li> <li>• Supervisory Skills</li> <li>• Ensuring DAP</li> <li>• Fiscal Management</li> <li>• Orientation</li> </ul>

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

→ Strengthening Supervisory Skills	<b>30</b> Attendees	<b>4</b> Virtual training hours	 <b>WEBINAR</b>
→ Strengthening Communication and Family Engagement	<b>30</b> Attendees	<b>3</b> In-person training hours	 Oneonta, New York
→ Orientation: Staff Integration	<b>30</b> Attendees	<b>3</b> Virtual training hours	 <b>WEBINAR</b>
→ Technology: A Business Outreach Tool	<b>10</b> Attendees	<b>1.5</b> In-person training hours	 Oswego, New York
→ Technology: A Business Outreach Tool	<b>20</b> Attendees	<b>1.5</b> In-person training hours	 Lake George, New York

## TRAUMA INFORMED TRAINING

Trauma-Informed Care understands and considers the pervasive nature of trauma and promotes environments of healing and recovery rather than practices and services that may inadvertently re-traumatize.

Building Adult Resilience	<b>25</b> Providers from the Southern Adirondack region	<b>1.5</b> In-person training hours
Creating A Trauma Informed Child Care Program	<b>75</b> Child care and management staff from across NYS	<b>1.5</b> In-person training hours

<b>IN TOTAL:</b>	<b>400+</b>		<b>185+</b>		<b>All 7</b>	
	Training attendees		Training hours completed		OCFS regions reached in-person or virtually	

# Child Care Business Support

## CHILD CARE GRANTS

In 2024, ECLC conducted a quantitative evaluation of both the OCFS Child Care Deserts Grant and of the Workforce Retention Grant. Highlights from the reports:

**75**

CCRC staff across the state offered grant technical assistance to providers.

### Deserts

**70%** of grant recipients received help from their local CCRC through the Deserts grant application and award process.

**75%** of Deserts grant recipients reported they knew parents or families who had returned to work because of their program.

**87%** of grant recipients who previously believed their programs would close, responded that they believed their programs would now remain open due to the grant funding.

### Workforce Retention

**13,500** child care programs across NYS benefited from the Workforce Retention Grant.

**\$350M** distributed to child care program staff.

**64%** of childcare providers who received the funding thought the grant was effective at addressing staffing challenges.

## Looking Ahead: The Role of Business Support Specialists

Business Support Specialists have been incorporated into each CCRC contract to support their agency in building a supply of quality child care in their communities by offering technical assistance to child care providers on business topics. These specialists offer resources on best practices for managing revenue and expenses, coach providers on sustainable business plans, coordinate the delivery of business training, and work with local businesses in the community to identify local and regional support available to child cares.

## STAFFED FAMILY CHILD CARE NETWORKS

**8**

CCRCs in upstate NY operated a Staffed Family Child Care Network in 2024.

**4**

CCRCs in NYC also have at least one Family Child Care Network, funded by the NYCDOE.

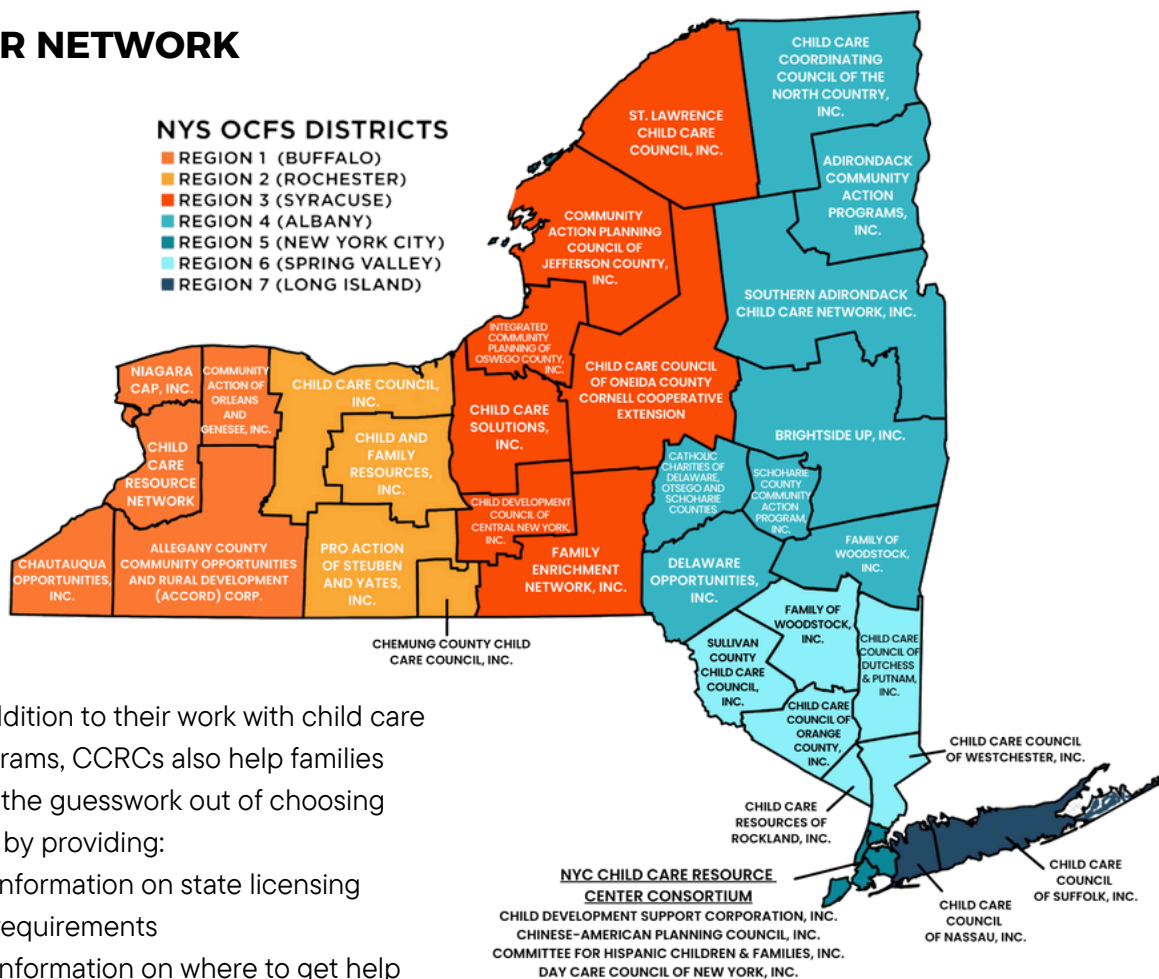
Regionally based pilot networks focus on supporting and growing the capacity of family and group family child care providers by expanding business and operational support for these home-based providers.

# Child Care Resource Center (CCRC) Network

## WHO OUR NETWORK IS

Child Care Resource Centers (CCRCs) serve as the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies for New York State. CCRCs build the supply of quality child care within their state and local communities. Services offered include providing coaching, technical assistance, and business training to child care programs to ensure that their businesses are sustainable. They also equip early childhood educators with professional support, education, resources, and grants to ensure that they are prepared to offer specialized care and education to children.

## OUR NETWORK



In addition to their work with child care programs, CCRCs also help families take the guesswork out of choosing care by providing:

- Information on state licensing requirements
- Information on where to get help paying for child care
- Resources and information on services for children with disabilities
- **Referrals for parents/families to local child care providers**



**15,770**

families requested referrals in 2024

**41,832**

children were included in those requests

Since 2023, child care plan consults (child care consultation that results in a plan other than a referral, such as in-home care) have increased by nearly

**22%.**

# 2024 Board of Directors

## BOARD CHAIR

**Jennifer Rojas**, *Executive Director*  
Child Care Council of Suffolk, Inc.

## 1st VICE CHAIR

**Marjorie Lawlor**, *Director*  
Pro Action Child Care Council

## 2nd VICE CHAIR

**Ramon A. Peguero, Esq.**, *President/CEO*  
The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families

## TREASURER

**Kimberly Suminski**, *Chief Executive Officer*  
Child Care Resource Network

## SECRETARY

**Richelle Singer**, *CCRC Director*  
Child Care Council of Cornell Cooperative Ext.

**Gregory Brender**, *Director of Public Policy*  
Day Care Council of New York

**Julie Champion**, *Executive Director*  
Child and Family Resources, Inc.

**Sumon Chin**, *Director of Early Childhood Learning & Wellness Services*  
Chinese American Planning Council

**Dr. Reva Gershen-Lowy**, *Senior Vice President*  
Cardinal McCloskey Community Services

**Susan Marker**, *Director*  
Child Care Council of Chautauqua

**Jennifer Perney**, *CCRC Director*  
Family Enrichment Network

**Marcia Rowe-Riddick**, *Executive Director*  
Child Development Support Corporation

**Jeff Pier**, *Chief Executive Officer*  
Child Care Council

**Brandy Koproski**, *Executive Director*  
Integrated Community Planning of Oswego County, Inc.

**Kate Ryan**, *Director*  
Adirondack Birth to Three Alliance

**Kerry Wolfeil**, *Team Leader of Child Care Services*  
Family of Woodstock



# Financial Summary

## Receipts

Contracts & Grants	\$4,591,389
Grants/Foundations	\$438,189
Donations	\$5,575
Membership	\$120,490
Rentals	\$23,447
Staff Consulting	\$4,750
Special Events	\$63,979
Interest Income	\$32,919
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$5,280,738</b>

## Expenditures

Personnel	\$2,565,675
Consultants	\$1,799,631
Contracted Services	\$47,541
Special Events	\$57,107
Fixed Operating Expenses	\$135,829
Non-Fixed Operating Expenses	\$315,311
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,921,094</b>
_____	
Net Assets: Beginning of Year	<b>\$2,104,145</b>
Net Assets: End of Year	<b>\$2,463,789</b>

## 2024 Event Sponsors

Thank you to our 2024 sponsors and exhibitors.



Council on Children  
and Families



Southern Adirondack  
Child Care Network



Department  
of Health



The Education Trust-New York

## 2024 Donors

Thank you to our 2024 donors. These donations include general donations, in-kind donations, event donations, and in-kind time contributions.

Brightside Up, Inc.

Child Care Council of Orange County  
Community Action of Orleans and Genesee  
ECLC's 2024 Board of Directors

Family Enrichment Network

Menzies Family

Pro Action Child Care Council

Stella And Charles Guttman Foundation

Rachel Ambroziak

Enza Britos

Alan Jones

Brandy Koproski

Sue Kowaleski

Colleen Maziejka

Anne Napper

Richelle Singer

Kimberly Suminski

Lauren Tobias

KarenWalsh

# CONTACT US



Early Care &  
Learning Council

United to Promote Quality

**Phone/**

518-690-4217

**Email/**

[info@earlycareandlearning.org](mailto:info@earlycareandlearning.org)

**Website/**

[earlycareandlearning.org](http://earlycareandlearning.org)

**Address/**

230 Washington Ave. Ext.  
Albany, NY 12203