



2020 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



Our Mission

To provide high quality, comprehensive early care and education for ALL children.

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Photos by Melani Tutt

Dear Friends,

Your support of Early Connections Learning Centers in 2020 was more important than ever. You made it possible for us to adapt quickly to the significant impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on our children and families. Because of your remarkable generosity, first responders, necessary workers and others in our community continue to have access to early education that remains affordable, high quality and supports children during a time in their lives of critical brain development. The pandemic has highlighted that which we have always known: access to child care is a basic necessity for the success of our economy. Without care for their children, families are unable to work. Your support makes it possible for families with children to continue working and allows children to experience high quality early education to set the stage for success in school and life.

I'd like to take this opportunity to share some of the things your support made possible in 2020. When schools closed in March, we asked for your help in providing the necessary tools and materials to support the transition to online education for our school age students. Thanks to you, we were able to quickly adapt to provide online education in partnership with our school districts. Without our classrooms remaining open, families would have been forced to decide between continuing to work, staying home to care for their children or putting their children in an unsafe situation. Your support made it possible for children to remain in a safe and stable environment in our classrooms while so much was changing around them.

Thanks to your support we did more than just remain open for business, we maintained our high quality education, care and family support. An invaluable part of our program, our behavioral health team, was also able to continue providing support to our families. This was critical intervention work as so many families were caught in crisis and the stress at home trickled down to the children in our classrooms. Thanks to you, children continued to have access to our in-house team of specialists who worked directly in their classrooms and connected with families at home.

Your recognition of the importance of our mission to care for our community's most vulnerable children was evident in the generous support we received throughout 2020. Please join me in sharing the story of Early Connections with others. Your continued support of our community's children impacts not only their lives, but those of our entire community.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Beth Williams".

Mary Beth Williams
2020 Board Chair
Supporter since 2009



"Knowing that my children are safe and cared for has made it possible for me to be there—mentally and physically—for our community during this incredibly stressful and uncertain time.

Early Connections is there for those of us that have no choice but to continue to go to work every day."

-Leah
Early Connections parent and local hospital worker



Cared for
443
children

98%
of families receive
tuition assistance

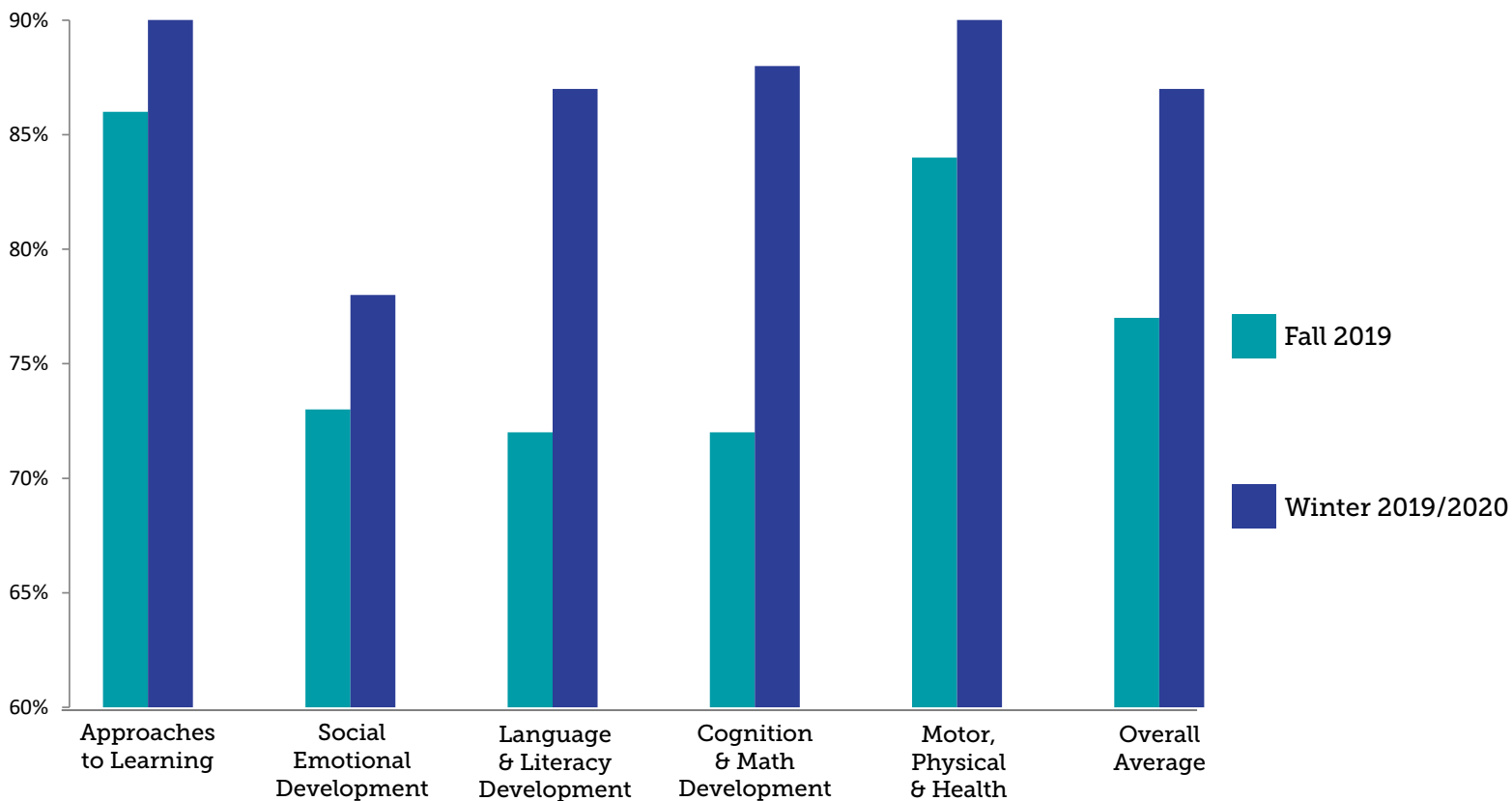
Early Care & Education



Curriculum and Assessment

Children are evaluated three times a year utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD, a Colorado Department of Education approved school readiness assessment, which measures the knowledge, skills and behaviors in all developmental domains that are most predictive of school success. Due to restrictions brought on by COVID-19, we were only able to perform two assessment periods. However, our children still met developmental goals in 2020. The number of children meeting or exceeding developmental benchmarks skyrocketed from 77% to 87%, with 100% of children showing improvement.

Children Meeting or Exceeding Widely-Held Expectations



Health

Our comprehensive health program addresses the needs of the whole child and has been a part of our program since 1897. From teaching them how to brush their teeth to intensive training and coaching for our teachers to support the behavioral and mental health of our children, we ensure that all of a child's health needs are met. Because of the high quality services we already had in place, including a contracted RN and an on-staff CNA, we were able to better navigate the challenges of the pandemic. Thanks to your support, we have two Behavioral Health Specialists on staff and deeply embedded social and emotional supports in our classrooms. Providing children with preventative mental health support while their brains are still developing is crucial to school readiness and lifelong success.

61%

of Early Connections' families are eligible for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program.

To qualify, a family of two must have an income of
LESS THAN \$613/WEEK.



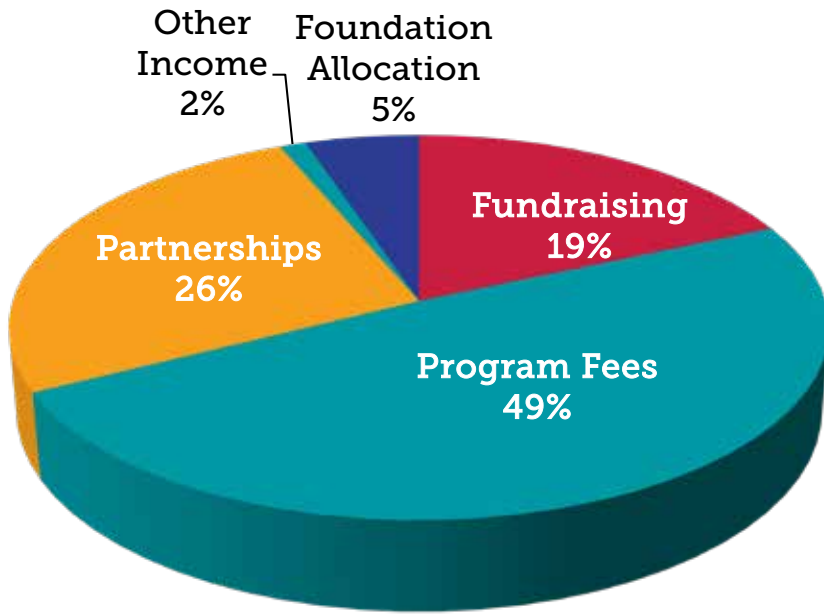
Family Engagement & Support

We believe families are a child's first and best teacher as they play a critical role in preparing their children for success in school and life. Home visits and conferences enable teachers to learn more about each child, to share information regarding progress and to set goals with the parents for the child. We also offer parenting classes, teaching families how to support their child with the same strategies used in the classroom, providing continuity of care. As 67% of our children are in single parent families, we stand shoulder to shoulder with all our families to provide the supports they need for success.

Home Network of the Pikes Peak Region

We continued our work to build quality early education options for families in local Family Child Care Homes in 2020. Of the 17 home businesses we worked with, 15 earned high ratings for quality in the State's rating system, Colorado Shines, including four who received the highest possible rating. The success of these Family Child Care Homes reflect the excellent programs and high quality training and supports offered by Early Connections Learning Centers through Home Network to increase early care and education quality in our community.

FINANCIALS



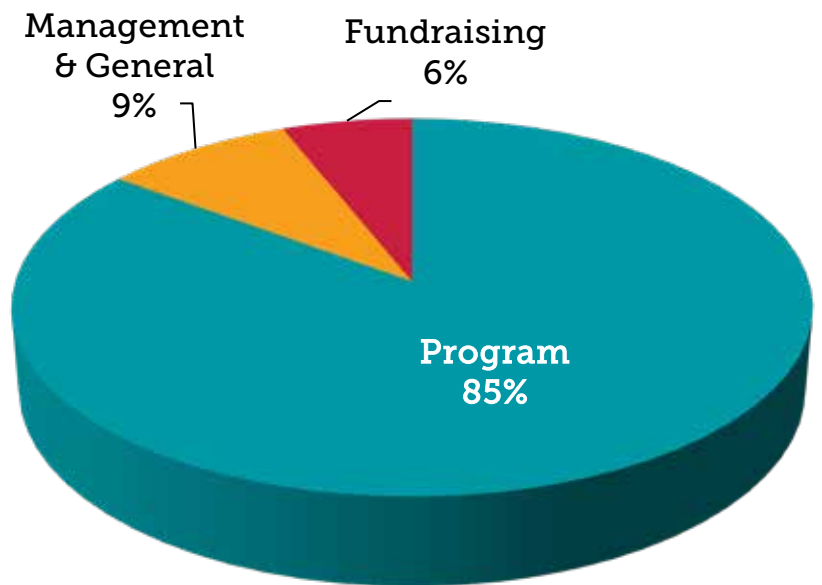
2020 Income*

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|------------------|
| Fundraising | \$ | 874,059 |
| Program Fees | \$ | 2,337,376 |
| Partnerships | \$ | 1,247,132 |
| Other Income | \$ | 56,171 |
| Foundation Allocation | \$ | 244,205 |
| | \$ | <u>4,758,943</u> |

2020 Expenses*

| | | |
|----------------------|----|------------------|
| Program | \$ | 4,207,701 |
| Management & General | \$ | 433,457 |
| Fundraising | \$ | 296,534 |
| | \$ | <u>4,937,692</u> |

* UNAUDITED



Partnerships



WHY WE GIVE

"Sue and I have been blessed in our lives together. We are enthusiastic supporters of organizations that focus on children and their education. Our first tour of Early Connections impressed us and made our decision to support the building of a new center as well as making a gift to the annual campaign very easy. Witnessing the energy and engagement of the teachers and smiling faces of the kiddos in their classrooms, we knew Early Connections was an organization that has stood the test of time and generates so many positive results for families and children in need.



We know many families and children are struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for volunteer and financial support is greater now more than ever. Never turning a child away and providing them a safe, loving place to learn and play is an amazing mission. The teachers and staff at Early Connections are clearly making a difference in the lives of the families and children they serve. They have earned and deserve our support."

-Tom and Sue Neill
Supporters since 2019



105,527
healthy meals
served



Current Locations

Antlers Place
Ages 18 months to 6 years

Day Nursery
Ages 2 1/2 to 13 years

Atlas Elementary
Ages 3 to 14 years

South Chelton
Ages 6 weeks to 6 years

Sand Creek
Ages 5 to 12 years

For complete donor list, visit earlyconnections.org



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earlyconnections.org