



2015 / 2016 **Annual Report**

VISION

Every child arrives at kindergarten with a healthy mind and body and is ready to learn.

MISSION

Educare Central Maine will *provide, model and/or extend high quality early care and education* practices throughout Maine to young children, their families and communities to improve school readiness and *close the achievement gap*.



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DONATE TODAY AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The ***One Child Scholarship Fund*** provides children living in poverty the opportunity to arrive at public school with the skills, learning attitudes and behaviors that lead to K-12 and lifelong success. Brain research reveals that uninterrupted high quality learning experiences are critical to healthy brain development, particularly for children who live in poverty and high stress environments.

How One Child Works:

The One Child Scholarship Fund will connect one or more donors' charitable investment to a high risk infant attending ECM. The scholarship will support his/her educational progress until successful entry into kindergarten. Each year scholarship donors will receive a report on their student and family's progress. Reports will maintain the confidentiality of each student, but allow donors to understand the value and tangible success and outcomes of their investment over the five-year period.

To become a donor or learn more about the program, contact Erin Merrill at 207-859-1678 or erinm@kvcap.org.

98% of families feel respected by staff and feel their contributions are valued.

At Educare, we believe everyone deserves a fair chance to achieve their dreams, and it starts by leveling the playing field from the day we're born. As one of the nation's most effective early childhood education schools, we make sure financially disadvantaged young children have the best possible chance for success in life. Our approach extends beyond the classrooms to help children, families and communities thrive.



Our comprehensive program incorporates everything science says young children need to flourish. We partner with families because learning doesn't stop when children leave the classroom. We support the continued learning of our passionate teachers and staff because we want to empower them to do their best work. We use research to improve our schools because we're committed to creating a lasting positive impact on every family we serve.

Educare works. When compared to their same-age peers, Educare children are just as academically, socially and emotionally ready for kindergarten. Educare parents are active in their children's education, both in school and at home. When these things happen, children grow up better prepared to follow their dreams, and our entire society thrives.

Our work is not complete until every child has an equal chance to succeed. That's why we advocate on behalf of children everywhere to improve access to quality early learning programs. We share our expertise with educators, researchers and policymakers so they know how to strengthen their communities. We build strong public-private partnerships to create strong schools and longtime champions who will amplify our call for change.

We will not stop until all children are born with equal opportunity to achieve their dreams. Our future depends on it.



A family story...

My childhood was traumatic to say the least. I lived in three different countries by the time I was 14. I lived primarily with my Grandmother, but was taken from her and brought to the United States by my mother - whom I didn't really know. The stress of all the new surroundings and new responsibilities proved to be too much for my mother to handle so she took her frustrations out on my sisters and me. I was removed from the house by the state at age 15 and was on my own by age 16.

I adopted Kiara, my oldest daughter, at age 17; she was a newborn. I felt like I had love in my heart and I needed to pour it onto someone. I struggled throughout my 20's trying to be a good mother while still dealing with the dysfunction of my family. I finally took a huge step and moved to Maine so that I could dedicate my time and attention to my kids and myself.



Fell in love with Waterville, primarily Educare. It amazed me that a community could care so much for the children in the area. I was not used to that. I met Janelle and she helped me set new goals and raise my standards, growing closer to my ultimate goals in life. As much as Head Start helps children, at the same time, it's helped me find myself, and find a new passion I've never felt before.

When AJ was approved, I felt secure knowing my son would be safe and in such a great environment while I took care of myself. I can't begin to tell you how grateful I am! He comes home so excited everyday about what he's learned and what's in store for tomorrow, at times I feel not worthy of such a place.

Head Start is now a big part of our family. We all love it! My daughters love when I attend my meetings each month so they can visit their brother's school; and he loves showing it off! I love volunteering and spending time at Educare and the environment is so positive. Being part of the Policy Council is such a great opportunity and allowed me to become a parent ambassador. Meeting people from across the country opened my eyes and has honestly been a life changing experience for me. To see my son throughout the day interacting with his new friends, hugging them and showing such a connection fills me up with so much emotion. Though the trauma I survived as a child, being so young didn't allow me to understand it at first, but with time, I am learning. I'm learning what love is.

With the time I have during the day, I'm able to work and go to school full time. After several years and countless attempts, I am passing school and on track to graduate with a GPA of 3.85! On December 15th, we moved into our own single family home with the biggest back yard on the street. The dreams I'm watching come to fruition wouldn't be possible without the help I get daily from the Head Start program. The fact that Kiara told me she was proud of all the progress I've been making throughout the past year - that's the best gift I've ever received. What more can you ask for, than to make your child proud?

~Flavia

A child's experiences and
environmental
influences can affect
his or her health
well into adulthood.



Families report that they are their child's most important teacher and play an important role in their child's education.



Results from a longitudinal study of Educare sites around the country indicate that earlier is better. Children living in poverty who enter Educare programs at age 1 do not experience an achievement gap upon kindergarten entry and are on par with children from other socio-economic groups.

Educare Central Maine collects data and conducts comprehensive child assessments for children in full-day, full-year programming. Focus areas are social-emotional development, language and literacy skills, and math. The process is designed to describe and document the progress of the children and families, as well as inform program improvement efforts, individualize practices to the needs of the children and families and to satisfy accountability requirements set by funding agencies.

In conjunction with the Educare Learning Network, ECM incorporates the latest findings from academic research and lessons learned from the day-to-day experiences with young children, families and staff.

Local evaluation and program directors from each Educare school are partners in decision-making about the evaluation design. A technical work group of experts provides advice and links with the latest science in a variety of domains that impact early care and education work. Local evaluators collect data at their site, using research based, well-known assessments, observations, and interview techniques. Frank Porter Graham processes and summarizes data across sites and ensures that high standards for training and reliability of data collection are maintained.

Continuity of service. Continuity of care in the early years of life is an essential component of effective, quality early care and education. Often children and families experience numerous adult caregivers before the child enters kindergarten. Lack of care continuity disrupts child development and studies have found that multiple and changeable caregivers for infants and toddlers is associated with lower intelligence scores, poorer social relationships and more insecure attachment with mothers. Trust and relationship building are critical for both the children and their parents during the early learning years.

96% of families feel comfortable letting staff know about concerns and work together to find a solution that works for both.

Research and Results

Literacy Skills. Children who begin school with prior knowledge and skills in a variety of language and literacy areas are more likely to become successful readers in elementary school. This is significant because children who struggle as readers at the end of first grade are usually still poor readers at the end of 4th grade. Reading problems can be prevented through early detection and immediate intervention. There is a strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. Educare's child assessments in the areas of vocabulary, phonological awareness and alphabet knowledge (letter and beginning sounds), rhyming, and concept of the words in text reveal:



Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. This test measures English with a mean score of 100 considered a “good score.” **ECM:** 105.5

Classrooms of high quality. Quality early childhood programs have been linked to immediate, positive developmental outcomes, as well as long-term positive academic performance. The Classroom Assessment Scoring Scale (CLASS) (score range is 0-7) is used to measure classroom quality. ECM rates at 6.0 in Emotional Support; 5.8 in Classroom Organization; and 3.5 in Instructional Practices.

School Readiness. School readiness skills of young children are assessed in six subscales of the Bracken School Readiness Assessment: colors, letters, numbers/counting, sizes, comparisons and shapes. The range that is termed “average” is 86-114, with 100 being the mean score. **ECM:** 94.5

100%

of families feel their child has the opportunity to use a variety of materials (i.e. age appropriate toys, materials, etc.) that meet his/her individual needs while attending the program.

Resiliency. Resilience is important because it is the human capacity to face, overcome and be strengthened by, or even transformed by, the adversities of life. Children from low-income families need to become resilient to overcome the adversities they face. They cannot do it alone. A child's ability to form positive responses to adverse childhood experiences depends upon the quantity and quality of protective factors. How parents and other caregivers respond to situations, and how they help a child to respond, separates those adults who promote resilience in their children from those who destroy resilience or send confusing messages that both promote and inhibit resilience. Educare staff is trained to promote resiliency in children and families. High protective factors equate to lower behavior concerns. In Spring 2015, these results were:

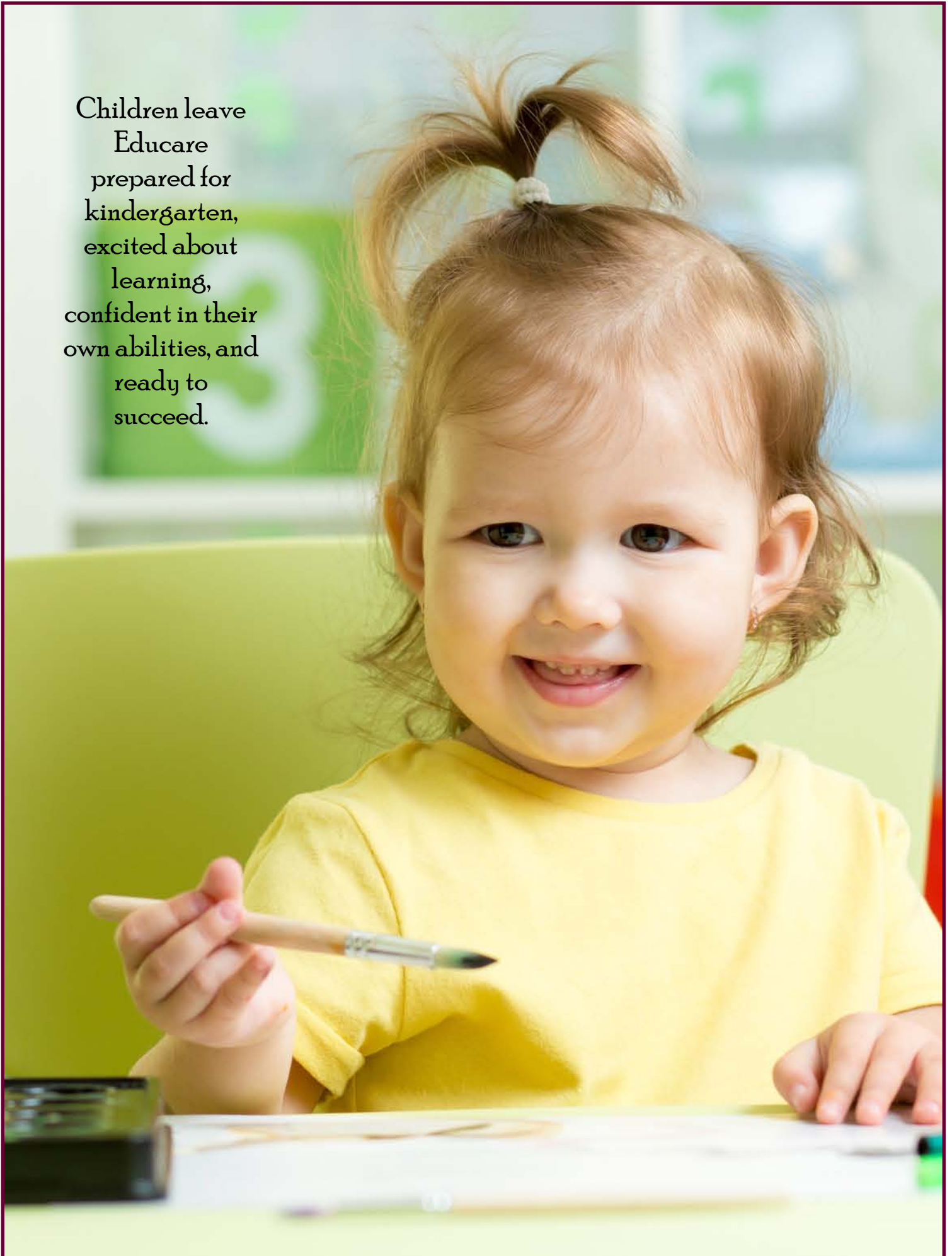
ECM Protective Factors. A lack of protective factors was a concern for 10% of children.

Behavioral Concerns. Behavioral concerns were an issue for 24% of children.

Parent engagement. Parent engagement in their child's learning is intricately linked to a child's school readiness. Research shows that greater parent involvement in a child's learning positively affects the child's school performance, including higher academic achievement. Simple interaction, such as reading to children, leads to greater reading knowledge and skills. Parent involvement outside of home, such as participation in literacy events and/or classroom activities relates to their reading, general knowledge, and mathematics knowledge and skills. **ECM:** 89% of parents read twice weekly; and 63% read daily to their child. **All parents** participate in other program activities.



Children leave
Educare
prepared for
kindergarten,
excited about
learning,
confident in their
own abilities, and
ready to
succeed.



100% of families feel they have the opportunity to influence their child's learning and development.

Community Highlights

Harold Alfond Foundation

ECM partners with The Harold Alfond Foundation to provide tuition scholarships to parents, who are working and/or are enrolled in educational programs to move towards improved family stability. ECM promotes the Harold Alfond College Challenge and assists families in opening a NextGen account to add to their children's future education funds. (<http://www.500forbaby.org>)

Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter

ECM partners with the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter (MMHS) to offer playgroup opportunities for children and their families experiencing homelessness. Parents learn strategies to support healthy child development, developmental screenings and referrals for intervention services, connections with Early Head Start and Head Start enrollment opportunities, and assistance in accessing a variety of community resources.

Kennebec Behavioral Health, Community Dental and Waterville Pediatrics

ECM partners with health providers to offer onsite mental health screenings and intervention, dental screenings and other health services for children and parents.

Maine Early Learning Investment Group

The Maine Early Learning Investment Group (MELIG) is investing in preventing an achievement gap for Somerset County's impoverished children. The initiative is called "Elevate Maine Somerset Partnership". MELIG is partnering with Educare Central Maine (ECM) to replicate components of its high quality early care and education model in rural community settings. Components of ECM's service model (embedded professional development, evaluation, and parent engagement) are extended to center and family child care community providers throughout the communities. At the same time, the partnership is supporting parents to pursue and complete their education and gain workforce skills and employment. MELIG knows that Maine cannot afford to construct an early learning school like Educare in every community, but families, including those in rural areas and those with tremendous need, should have access to well-coordinated high-quality early care and education services.



Buffett Early Childhood Fund Innovative Practices

Parent Ambassador Grant

Educare Schools involved: Seattle & Central Maine

ECM will partner with Educare of Seattle to build on the success of its Parent Ambassador program. The purpose of the Parent Ambassador is to develop shared values on parent leadership; share the evolution, successes, challenges and lessons learned from Seattle's Program; and, generate ideas on promising family engagement practices for ECM, including ideas on how to partner with and empower parents as leaders and advocates in their families, schools and communities.

Evaluation Grant

University of Maine (the Lead Evaluation Partner {LEP} for ECM) is one of six LEP's that has been funded by the Buffett Early Childhood Fund through a subcontract with University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a partner in a multi-site grant to conduct a three-year follow-up study of Educare children and families into elementary school. Child assessments will include measures of vocabulary, language, and executive function.

Early Childhood Quality Teaching Initiative

Educare Schools involved: Milwaukee, Denver, Phoenix, and Central Maine

The Early Childhood Quality Teaching Initiative is an extension of a demonstrated intentional coaching intervention model which promotes the development of effective teaching practices that support problem solving, critical thinking, and language development in young children. The primary goal is to establish a sustainable and replicable coaching intervention model which can be implemented by early care and education programs.

Two Generation Grant

Educare Schools involved: Atlanta, Phoenix, New Orleans, and Central Maine

The Two Generation collaborative project is designed to address the strategic priority of partnering with parents to promote positive outcomes for themselves and their children. The goal of the project is to provide opportunities for the Educare Schools to work together to improve a two generation approach that draws on the deep expertise of Educare Learning Network (22 schools nationwide) members and experts in the field and craft a sustainable two generation approach that improves child and family outcomes.

Families report that they are their child’s most important teacher and play an important role in their child’s education.

Enrollment

ECM enrollment provided services to 212 children; of which 164 were preschool age (3-5) and 48 were infants and toddlers (0-3). One hundred fifteen (115) children were enrolled in Head Start; 43 in Early Head Start.

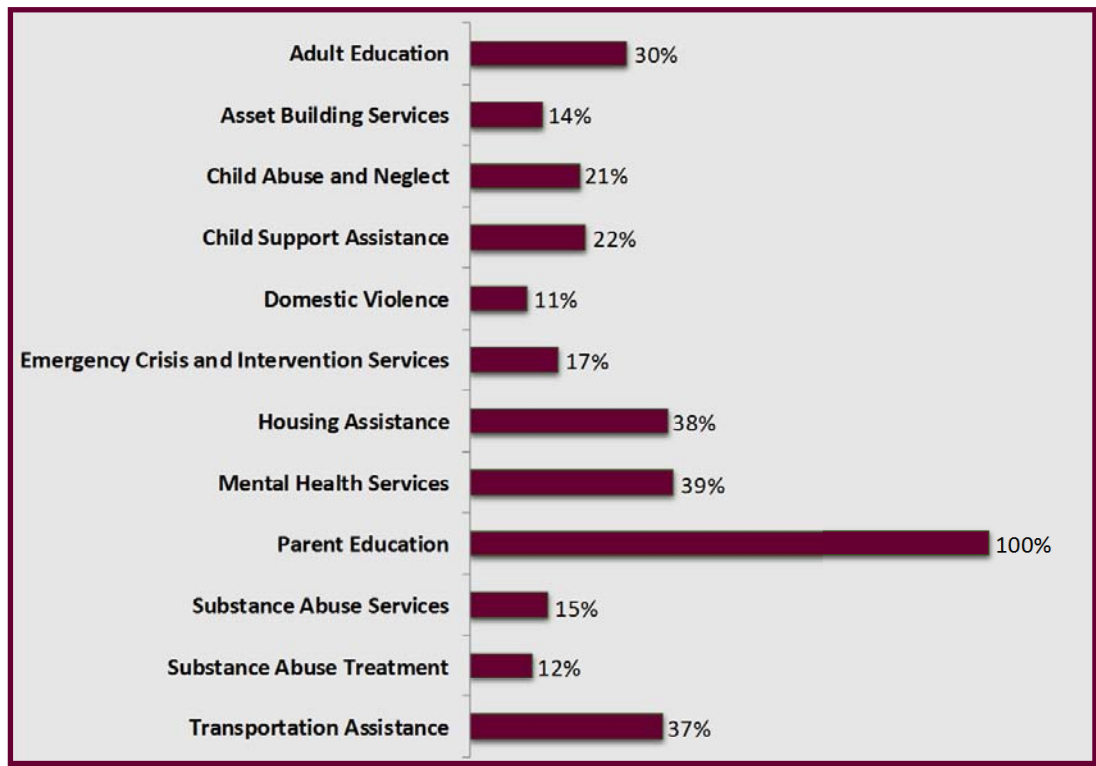


Ethnicity/Race



Family Services

Educare Central Maine assists parents in their efforts to improve the quality of life for themselves and their children. The following services/referrals were made for families in 2015-2016:



Percentage of Enrolled Children...



19%
With a Disability



82%
Up-to-Date Dental Exams



80%
Up-to-Date Physical Exams





Educare advocates for families, works within the community to help resolve issues, and more importantly, empowers the families to help themselves.

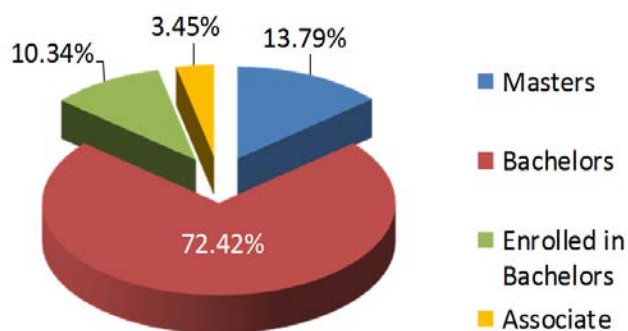
30%

of parents are continuing their own education. Further, 79% hope their child(ren) will get at least a Bachelors degree.

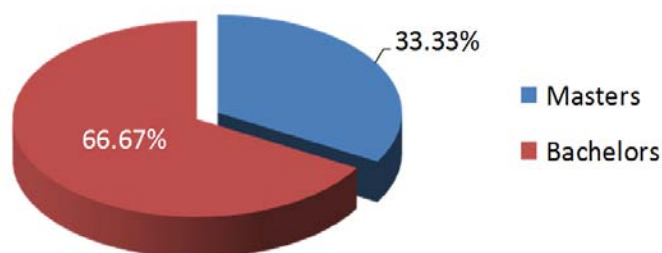
Staff Qualifications & Development

Professional development is a major focus. One-hundred percent (100%) of preschool classrooms have a teacher with a minimum of a bachelor's degree and Department of Education certification. One-hundred percent (100%) of preschool classrooms also have at least 1 staff person with Maine Early Learning and Development Standards training. One-hundred percent (100%) of Infant/Toddler classrooms have a teacher with a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Staff discuss professional development needs during his/her orientation period, and reviews/revises individual professional plans as part of his/her annual evaluation process.

Lead & Mentor Teachers

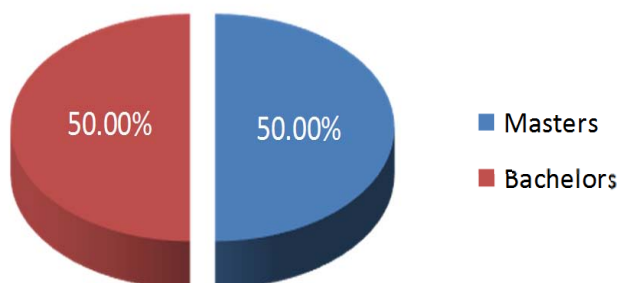


Family Services Coordinators



Content Specialists

(Education, Infant/Toddler, Health & Nutrition, Family Services, Mental Health, and Disabilities)



* Degree information as of December 31, 2016

Statement of Revenues & Expenditures

10/1/2015 - 9/30/2016

Revenue:	
Grants and contracts	\$2,266,283
Program revenue	\$1,678,574
Other revenue (Harold Alfond Foundation Scholarship, New Market Tax Credits Interest, etc.)	\$335,778
Total Revenue	\$4,280,635

Expenses:	
Personnel	\$2,099,783
Payroll Taxes & Employee Benefits	\$698,198
Staff Development	\$34,391
Travel	\$17,907
Office Costs	\$28,234
Telecommunications	\$21,488
Contract Services	\$226,686
Materials & Supplies	\$172,092
Indirect/Administration	\$493,449
Other	\$23,234
Facilities - Administration	\$275,321
Facilities - Other	\$112,108
Total Expenses	\$4,210,175

Net Revenue over Expenditures*	\$70,460
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*Includes depreciation/Amortization of Capital lease.





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