



ANNUAL REPORT

2016-2017

Educare Central Maine is a partnership among: Kennebec Valley Community Action Program, Waterville Public Schools, Buffett Early Childhood Fund, and the Bill and Joan Alford Foundation



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Vice President, Buffett Early Childhood Fund

Jim Clair
Dirigo Capital Advisors




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.**

A close-up photograph of a baby sitting in a high chair. The baby is smiling broadly, showing their teeth, and has some food smeared on their chin. They are holding a white spoon with a pink handle. The high chair has a patterned backrest. The background is softly blurred.

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

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.



FAMILY STORY

My name is Casey and I'm a single mother of a 2 year old son named Payton. I grew up in a very dysfunctional family, full of addiction and domestic violence. At a very young age, I was diagnosed with PTSD and depression. At age 16, my mom died of cirrhosis of the liver and shortly after that I found something that helped me forget all the pain and brokenness I was feeling. That was drugs, which at the time, I thought I was just easing the pain. Little did I know it was really causing so much more pain for myself and my family. I continued on that path for 12 long miserable years, using drugs and staying with a very controlling and abusive man.

Then, in the fall of 2015, I found out I was pregnant and entered rehab for the 4th time, giving birth to my son only a week later. Holding Payton, he was so little, so innocent. That was the moment I knew I had to change my life. Shortly after leaving rehab, I left my abusive boyfriend and asked for help to relocate from Northern Maine to keep us safe. We were able to move to a homeless shelter and eventually to our own place in the Waterville area. It was honestly the best decision I've ever made. In September of 2017, I celebrated 2 years of being clean! I've been able to gain employment while being a full time student at KVCC.

This was all possible because of the support of Educare, knowing that Payton is safe, happy and given the same quality full day care as I'd provide to him. It hasn't always been easy, but it has always been worth it. Our house has become our home, Waterville has become our community and Educare has become our second family.

I have been given so much supportive feedback by so many classroom staff and the Family Services Coordinator. Staff always ask me for updates and congratulate me on my progress and successes. Teachers communicate daily and help me with parenting strategies and support. We learn together to be on the same page based on Payton's individual needs as he continues to grow and change. Payton loves his teachers! He is provided great routines, nutritious meals/snacks and is able to learn so much in his school routines and environment. In addition, I participate in the Parent Ambassador Program at Educare. This has helped me tremendously in connecting with other parents, making new friends and being involved in the community.

Today, I am proud to say I am a member of the Waterville community. I am equal to others, despite my past, which is something I never thought would be possible. Today, I'm a mother, a friend and able to be present. My horizon has broadened tremendously with the love and support I've received at Educare. I'm not sure where I would be without Educare providing a safe reliable place for my son to be, while I brighten our future. I'm so thankful and look forward to a bright future in the years to come!



COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

Educare Central Maine provides a supportive environment that encourages children, families, and communities to thrive by identifying strengths and opportunities to develop strong partnerships to meet the needs of children and families.



Harold Alfond Foundation

Provides 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.

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 (MELIG)

The Maine Early Learning Investment Group (MELIG) is a group of business leaders who understand that the success of Maine's economy depends on educated, skilled and innovative workers. These leaders are concerned with student achievement and the quality of Maine's future workforce and are actively working to improve both. To this end, they have launched an initiative to raise and invest funds in the healthy development of Maine's youngest children and their families. To learn more, visit www.melig.org.

University of Maine

ECM partners with the University of Maine as the Lead Evaluation Partner to collect data, using research-based, well known assessments, observations, and interview techniques.

Buffet Early Childhood Fund Innovative Practices

Parent Ambassador Grant

ECM partnering with: Educare Seattle

ECM partners 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.

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

ECM partnering with: Milwaukee, Denver, and Phoenix.

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

ECM partnering with: Atlanta, Phoenix, and New Orleans.

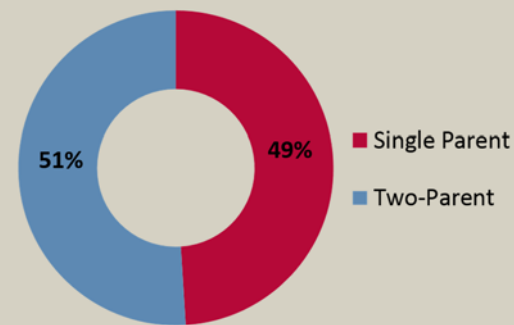
The Two Generation collaborative project is designed to address the strategic priority of partnering with parents to promote positive outcomes for themselves and their children. The goal of the project is to provide opportunities for the Educare Schools to work together to improve a two generation approach 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.



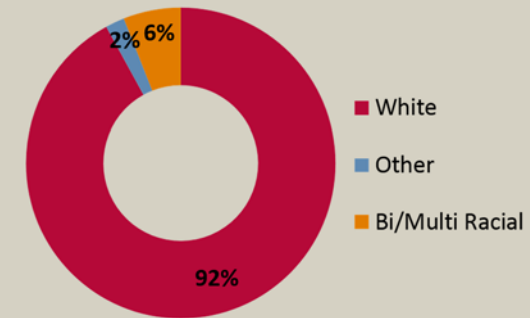


CHILD, FAMILY & PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS

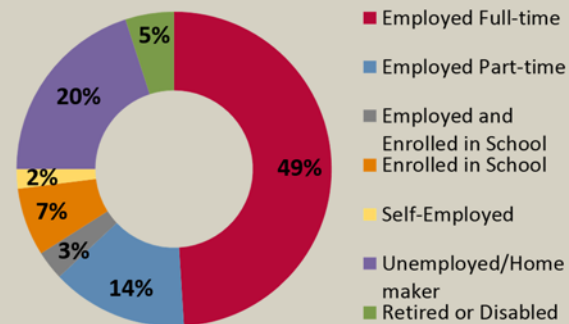
Family Status



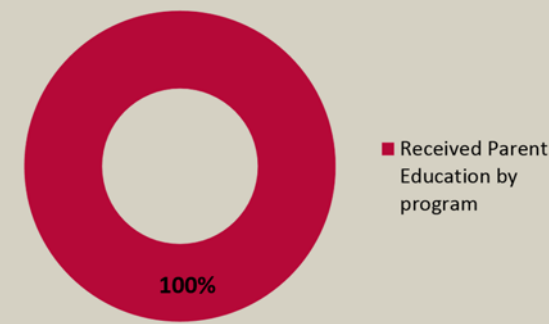
Ethnicity/Race



Parents Employment



Parenting Education



208

CHILDREN ENROLLED

Of which, 160 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.

94%

UP-TO-DATE
DENTAL EXAMS

On-site dental services provided to all enrolled children through a partnership with Community Dental.

91%

UP-TO-DATE
PHYSICAL EXAMS

Completed with all age appropriate components of an EPSDT well-child exam.



FINANCIAL REPORT REVENUE & EXPENSES

October 1, 2016 - September 30, 2017

REVENUE

Grants and Contracts	\$ 3,173,307
Program Revenue	\$ 1,170,704
Other Revenue*	\$ 114,468
Total Revenue	\$ 4,458,479

EXPENSES

Personnel	\$ 2,183,151
Payroll Taxes & Employee Benefits	\$ 708,469
Staff Development	\$ 21,830
Travel	\$ 27,117
Office Costs	\$ 33,536
Telecommunications	\$ 20,523
Contract Services	\$ 268,062
Materials, Supplies & Food	\$ 183,791
Indirect/Administration	\$ 513,040
Other	\$ 22,059
Facilities - Administration	\$ 275,346
Facilities - Other	\$ 149,462
Total Expenses	\$ 4,406,386
Net Revenue over Expenditures**	\$ 52,093

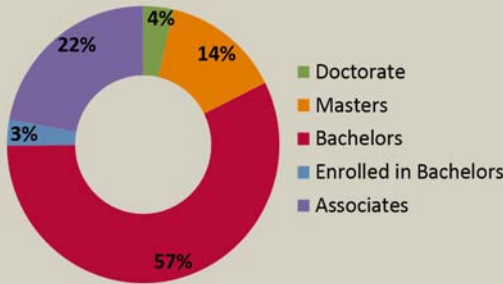
* (Harold Alfond Foundation Scholarships, New Market Tax Credits Interest, etc.)
 ** Includes depreciation/amortization of capital lease.



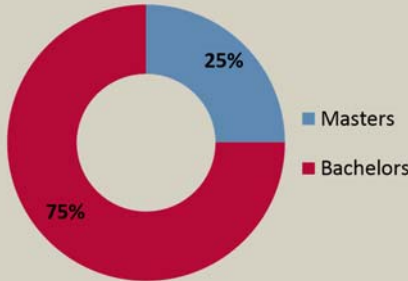
STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

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 one 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 development plans as part of his/her annual evaluation process.

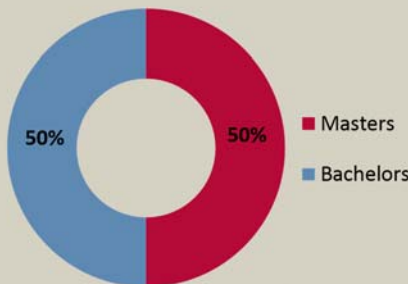
Lead & Mentor Teachers



Family Services Coordinators



Content Specialists



Content Areas: Education, Infant/Toddler, Health and Nutrition, Family Services, and Disabilities



93%
of families feel
respected by staff and
feel their contributions
are valued.

DEMONSTRATING RESULTS

Educare Central Maine (ECM) 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.

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.



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 the following outcomes:

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:** 100.4

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 6.6 in Emotional Support; 6.1 in Classroom Organization; and 3.6 in Instructional Practices.



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

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 19% of children.

Behavioral Concerns. Behavioral concerns were an issue for 18% 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:** 94% of parents read three or more times a week to their child; and 66% read six or more times a week 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.



**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, while allowing donors to understand the value and tangible success and outcomes of their investment over the five-year period.

**YOUR DONATION CAN
IMPACT THE FUTURE**

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



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