



ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019

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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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Owner, Clair Group of Companies

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*Chief Executive Officer,
Kennebec Valley Community Action Program*

Bill Alfond
President, Bill and Joan Alfond Foundation

Michael Burke
Vice President, Buffett Early Childhood Fund

Laurie Lachance
President, Thomas College

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



EDUCARE'S STORY

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 what 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.



My name is Megan Rollins. When I was 16 years old I became pregnant with a beautiful baby girl. I was fortunate enough to have her enrolled in a program for teen parents and we both learned so much in that time until I graduated from high school. After high school, I decided to go on an adventure with my young child. We moved to Florida where we really didn't have anyone. That was my first mistake. I was so stubborn about "making it there" that I didn't put my daughter's needs first. Along this journey I became homeless, scrounging up \$50 a day to pay for a little room in a Motel 6. I started calling home and asking my family for money, to which they said no, but offered me a ticket home. Leaving my boyfriend in Florida, I went home in hopes he would follow me once I was on my feet. Unfortunately, he convinced me to come back to Florida, saying he found us a home to live in. Being only 18, I believed him and faithfully went back to find out it was a room in a relative's house. I was so disappointed but kept telling myself I would make it. Truth is, things were bad, he was using drugs, fighting with me, and had us living in a terrible area. I couldn't even afford shoes for my daughter. I had no resources. I finally broke down after hearing gunshots from outside of my window and took the next flight home!

Once I returned home, I was able to obtain TANF to help me financially support my child. The first thing I had to do was find childcare so that I could fulfill the

requirements of TANF. I began my search by looking at home daycares but quickly decided that was not the right fit for my family. I ended up getting my daughter into the KVCAP program at the high school for a while. I loved them but I was still pretty young and didn't always make the best decisions. TANF stopped paying for my childcare because I wasn't fulfilling my requirements.

A few years later, Educare Central Maine opened and I enrolled my daughter in the part day program. It was great that she was learning things I couldn't teach her. At that time, I really didn't get too involved in the program other than getting her to and from school.

When she was 4, I had her brother Jamaica. I soon began working fulltime and needed daycare. I put him on the waitlist for Educare. One week before his first birthday he got in. This classroom became my family. One night, my house was broken

into. A man destroyed things and I don't even understand why. He ruined our toothbrushes, threw my condiments from the fridge out of my small kitchen window, and got into the backpack I had been given for my daughter to use when she went to kindergarten. I had a hard time wrapping my head around how someone could be so cruel. The staff at Educare helped me get through this difficult time. I was in disbelief how supportive a group of people could be. I was reassured that everything would be okay and they even helped to replace some of the toiletry items that had been ruined. Educare is not just a daycare for your children, they are a family. A network of people who are there to support you no matter what you are going through.

In March of 2014, I became pregnant with my youngest child. I knew from the moment I found out I was pregnant that I wanted him to go to Educare. At about 4 weeks pregnant, I added him to the waitlist. He didn't actually get in until he was seven months old. The reason being is that there just aren't enough slots. He only made it in at 7 months old because they were able to get enough funding to open a new classroom.

My son is 4 years old today and if you met him you'd see how intelligent he is. He thinks carefully before making any decisions on his next move. He is learning his alphabet and can spell a few words. One of his favorite words to spell is STOP. He is creating and solving his own math problems. One day he took 10 empty water bottles and lined them up and counted them. He said, "Mom, there are ten water bottles here, if I take two water bottles away I will have eight left."

Educare has helped me and my family so much. I am very involved with Educare and feel encouraged to be an advocate for my children and myself. I am currently a Parent Ambassador Alumni. Next year, I will graduate from the University of Maine at Augusta with my bachelor's degree in business administration management. I plan on eventually going back for my masters as well. I have found my voice by being a Parent Ambassador and now am confident using my voice to advocate for others and myself. I recently went to Washington D.C. with some staff from Educare Central Maine and met Jarrod Golden and Susan Collins. I have also made connections with Maine Equal Justice Partners and have advocated for changes within policies in the government.

Thanks to my Educare family, I have found my voice and a support group of fellow parents who learn together!



FAMILY STORY



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. Educare Central Maine 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

Educare Central Maine partners with the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter to offer playgroup opportunities, health and developmental screenings, and resource supports for children and their families experiencing homelessness.

Kennebec Behavioral Health, Community Dental and Waterville Pediatrics

Educare Central Maine partners with health providers to offer onsite mental health screenings and intervention, dental screenings and other health services for children.

Maine Early Learning Investment Group

The Maine Early Learning Investment Group consists 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. (<http://www.melig.org>)

University of Maine

Educare Central Maine partners with the University of Maine as the Lead Evaluation Partner to collect data, using research-based assessments, observations, and interview techniques with children, parents, and staff.

Buffet Early Childhood Fund Innovative Practices

Parent Ambassador Grant

Educare Central Maine partnering with: Educare Seattle and Washington State Head Start

Educare Central Maine is currently implementing a statewide parent ambassador program and a parent ambassador alumni program to keep parents involved. Educare Central Maine is also supporting four other Educare schools in the start up phase of their own parent ambassador programs.

Evaluation Grant

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

Construct Coaching

Educare Central Maine partnering with: Milwaukee, Denver, and Phoenix.

Construct Coaching, an adaptive, individualized, job-embedded coaching model that promotes the development of effective teaching practices that support problem solving, critical thinking, and language development in young children is being implemented in classrooms at Educare Central Maine. One-on-one coaching is at the center for professional development for teachers. The model is currently being used "beyond the walls" of Educare Central Maine in other Kennebec Valley Community Action Program Child & Family Services locations serving infants, toddlers and preschool children.





100%

of children attending Educare Central Maine for 3 years who have transitioned to kindergarten, meet or exceed benchmarks in social/emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy and math.

100% of parents receive parent education

90% of families expect their child to earn an Associate's degree or higher

75% of parents are working and/or going to school



Nurturing early relationships is critical to healthy brain development to support healthy attachment and adaption.

80%

of neural construction is complete by age 3.

85,142

nutritious meals and snacks were served



258

children were served in 2018-2019 at Educare Central Maine. Community partners, organizations and businesses are critical to ensuring the needs of children and families are addressed.

The cumulative lifetime fiscal savings and tax benefit to government is estimated to be

4.8 times greater

than the initial cost.*

*melig.org, Path to a Better Future, by Philip Trostel





CHILD & FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

258

CHILDREN ENROLLED

193 children, ages 3-5, and 65 children, ages 0-3, were served in part-day or full-day programming.

86%

UP-TO-DATE PHYSICAL EXAMS

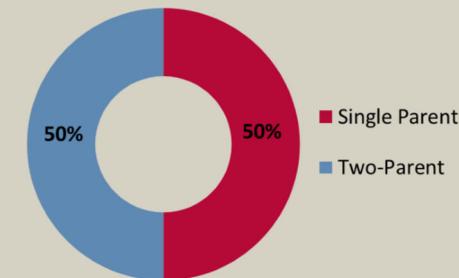
Completed with all age appropriate components of an Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment well-child exam.

78%

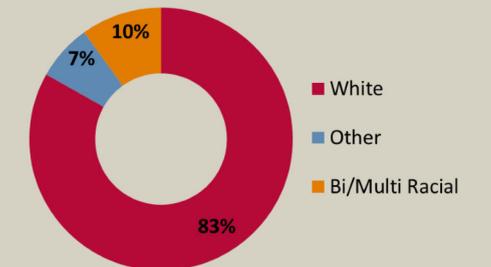
UP-TO-DATE DENTAL EXAMS

On-site or through private dental providers.

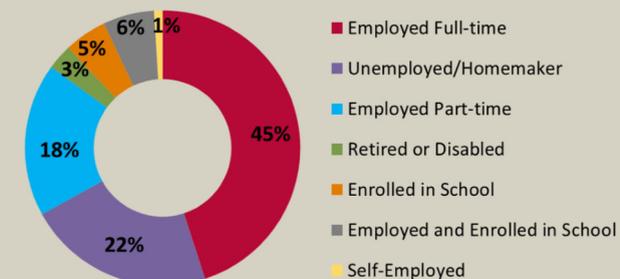
Family Status



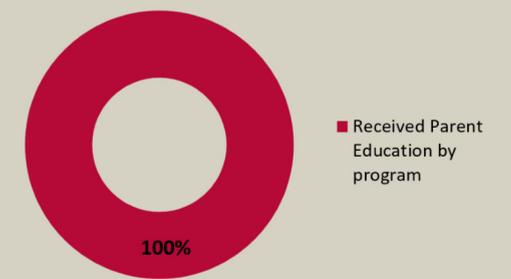
Ethnicity/Race



Parents Employment



Parenting Education





FINANCIAL REPORT

October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019

REVENUE

Grants and Contracts	\$ 3,244,393
Program Revenue	\$ 1,728,152
Other Revenue	\$ 20,670
Total Revenue	\$ 4,993,215

EXPENSES

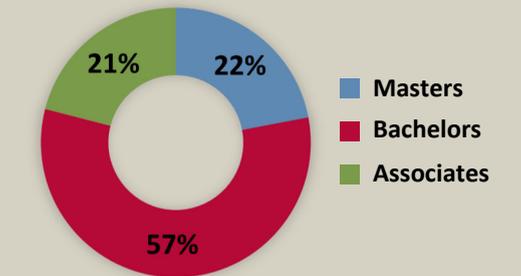
Personnel	\$ 2,406,604
Payroll Taxes & Employee Benefits	\$ 784,867
Staff Development	\$ 56,308
Travel	\$ 43,384
Office Costs	\$ 47,785
Telecommunications	\$ 28,549
Contract Services	\$ 152,553
Materials, Supplies & Food	\$ 182,113
Indirect/Administration	\$ 565,559
Other	\$ 32,719
Facilities	\$ 412,866
Total Expenses	\$ 4,713,307



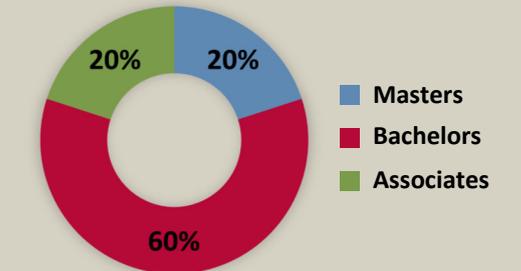
STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Professional development is a major focus. One-hundred percent (100%) of preschool classrooms at Educare Central Maine have a teacher with a minimum of a Bachelor's degree and Department of Education (DOE) certification to embed the practice of continuous quality improvement. One-hundred percent (100%) of preschool classrooms also have at least one staff person with DOE Maine Early Learning and Development Standards training. One-hundred percent (100%) of Infant/Toddler classrooms have a teacher with a minimum of an Associate's degree in early childhood education. Staff discuss professional development needs during his/her orientation period, and reviews/ revises individual professional development plans as part of their annual evaluation process.

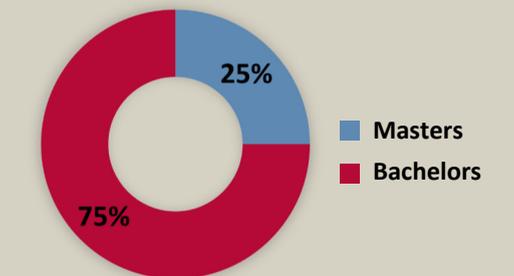
Lead & Mentor Teachers



Family Service Coordinators



Content Specialists



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

98%

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



DEMONSTRATING RESULTS

Data. Educare Central Maine collects data and conducts comprehensive child assessments; 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, Educare Central Maine incorporates the latest findings from academic research and lessons learned from the day-to-day experiences with young children, families and staff.

Local Evaluators 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 schools and ensures that high standards for training and reliability of data collection are maintained.

Continuity of Care. In the early years of life, continuity of care 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 this continuity disrupts child development and studies have found that multiple and changing 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 schools 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 Central Maine’s (ECM) 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 85-115, with 100 being the mean score. **ECM:** 104.8

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. This test measures English with a mean score of 100 considered a “good score.” **ECM:** 106.5

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 System (CLASS) (score range is 0-7) is used to measure classroom quality. **ECM** rates at 6.4 in Emotional Support; 6.0 in Classroom Organization; and 3.5 in Instructional Practices, exceeding national averages in all three categories.



98%
of families feel comfortable letting staff know about concerns and together they 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 2019, these results were:

ECM Protective Factors. A lack of protective factors was a concern for 6% of children.

Behavioral Concerns. Behavioral concerns were an issue for 11% of children.



DONATE TODAY AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Your donation 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.



Annual Fund

Gifts to Educare Central Maine's annual fund help to ensure that day to day operations occur without disruption. These donations help children attending Educare Central Maine get nutritious meals, dental and eye exams, and ensure that every child arrives at kindergarten with a healthy mind and body and is ready to learn.



One Child Scholarship Fund

The One Child Scholarship Fund connects one or more donors' charitable investment to a high-risk infant attending Educare Central Maine, giving them the opportunity to arrive at public school with the skills, learning attitudes, and behaviors that lead to K-12 success.



Planned Giving

Planned giving or legacy giving offers a variety of ways to support Educare Central Maine during your lifetime or at death as part of a donor's financial and/or estate planning.

Planned giving can be cash gifts, appreciated securities, life insurance, retirement accounts, and wills/bequests.

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 or visit www.educarecentralmaine.org



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