



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020



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





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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jim Clair, Chairperson**

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**Eric Haley, Vice-Chairperson**

Superintendent, Waterville Public Schools

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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

*"Educare has been the biggest help and more than I could possibly ask for with not only her education but helping us shape her into a wonderful, caring person."*

~Educare Parent





## VISION

Every child arrives at kindergarten as an engaged learner prepared for success.

## MISSION

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



## EDUCARE CENTRAL MAINE'S FIRST DECADE

2010

Doors open to children and families September 6.  
Grand Opening event held September 27.

2011

Educare Central Maine (ECM) establishes evaluation contract with the University of Maine to inform local and national research for quality early childhood education.  
ECM is accessed as a higher education model practicum placement site.

2012

Rigorous, data-driven outcomes guide staff professional development to inform continuous quality improvement.

2014

Coaching framework developed with technical assistance from Educare Learning Network, Head Start, and the University of Maine.

2015

ECM shares expertise Beyond-the-Walls to increase quality in early childhood education settings.  
Parent Ambassador program created to build parent leadership and advocacy skills.

2016

Staff contract with Kennebec Valley Community College as early childhood adjunct instructors.

2017

Natural playground constructed; Learning by Nature for ME established.  
Thomas College recognizes Educare as an Early Childhood Lab School.  
ECM co-creates Maine's Technical Assistance Competencies with Maine Roads to Quality and the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies.  
First ECM Annual Showcase held.

2019

ECM co-hosts Maine's 1st Annual Early Childhood Education Conference.  
ECM launches First4 AmeriCorps program.

2020

Educare Central Maine celebrates its 10th Birthday.  
Soft launch of ECM Learning Hub. Badging credential developed with Thomas College.  
Thomas College brings on ECM staff as early childhood adjunct instructor.  
ECM co-creates Maine's Technical Assistance Credential.

# FLASHBACK STORIES



## AMILEY'S STORY

Amiley attended Educare Central Maine from 2013-2015 when she was age 3 to 5. Amiley is now about to turn 10 and will be starting 4th grade. She loves to swim and is on the Mid-Maine Dolphins swim team. She also loves science and reading.

I personally remember how amazingly supportive, knowledgeable and helpful her teachers were when it came to Amiley's ability to process and express her emotions safely. They were open and flexible to new ideas, and showed so much patience and consistency with Amiley's behavior. That has played a huge part in who she is today and how I parent.

I feel like I am better able to advocate for my daughter when she has needs that go above and beyond the "standard". I owe thanks to Miss Tina and her other head teacher for showing me what that looks like, and always following through.

~Ali (mom)

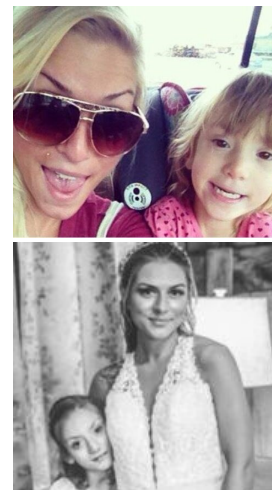
## OLIVIA'S STORY

Olivia was born with 5p-Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder causing Liv to experience developmental delays. She was still struggling to communicate effectively when she was four and I first heard of Educare.

Miss Tina at Educare became a dependable mentor and advocate for us, helping us set and achieve goals. Within the first year Liv attended Educare, she went from using a few basic words, gestures, and sign language to being able to use short sentences. The leaps and bounds Liv made during her time at Educare continue to be an invaluable component to her education to this day.

Liv just entered the 4th grade and continues to make progress. I sincerely believe Liv wouldn't be where she is today if Educare didn't provide her with the opportunity to prosper and flourish. We will forever be grateful for the kind and caring hearts at Educare who made such a positive impact on our journey!

~Brittany (mom)



# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



## JADA, JAMAICA AND JA'NEIL'S STORY

All three of my children attended Educare Central Maine. My daughter Jada was at Educare from 2010-2012, my oldest son Jamaica attended from 2012-2016, and my youngest son Ja'Neil from 2015-2020. All three of them began as infants and were able to continue at Educare until they reached Kindergarten age.

Today, they are 13, 9 & 5. Jada is in 8th grade, Jamaica is in 3rd grade and Ja'Neil just started Kindergarten.

Jada loves Tiktok, spending time with her friends and having fun. Jamaica likes gaming and playing football. Ja'Neil likes gaming, playing basketball and swimming.

One of my favorite memories of my time spent at Educare was having a big family spaghetti dinner together and the opportunities that my children received to learn new things and interact with members of the community. I remember when Mr. Drew and His Animals Too came to Educare and my children got to experience different types of animals, it was so much fun to watch them learn!

Personally, Educare helped me grow tremendously as a person and a parent as well. When I enrolled my daughter, I was a young teen mom, not sure what my future held. The supports that Educare provided me helped me to set attainable goals for myself. As my confidence grew, I felt the world open up for me. I became an Educare Parent Ambassador and was able to travel to Washington D.C. to advocate for high quality education opportunities for children and families just like my own - wanting everyone to be able to have the type of supports I was given. Today I own my own home and recently graduated with a Bachelor's Degree.

~ Megan (mom)



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





## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

### Harold Alfond Foundation

Provides tuition scholarships to parents, who are working and/or are enrolled in educational programs to move toward 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.

### Educate Maine

Educate Maine's Early Learning Advisory Committee upholds the Maine Early Learning Investment Group's mission of expanding high-quality early learning across Maine and lends input and expertise as Educate Maine incorporates early childhood as a vital foundation to education. Building strategic partnerships within communities to foster strong connections among education partners, Head Start, childcare providers, and businesses enhance outcomes for young children. Educare Central Maine's partnerships and evaluation data are exemplar models.

### 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, implements a statewide parent ambassador program and a parent ambassador alumni program to support parents as advocates. Educare Central Maine also supports five other Educare schools across the country 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 working 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

Construct Coaching is an adaptive professional development coaching model that supports teacher's and caregivers through data-informed, individualized interventions aimed at moving and sustaining high-quality teacher and caregiver practices with children ages birth to age 5. It is being implemented in classrooms at Educare Central Maine, in other Kennebec Valley Community Action Program Child & Family Services locations and in many other Educare schools across the country.

*"I have grown from the many leadership opportunities supported by Educare Central Maine"*

~Parent Ambassador





# A DECADE OF SMILES!



From infants...



To toddlers...



To preschoolers...



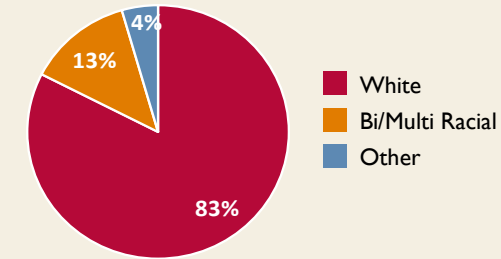
Children are ready for  
Kindergarten and beyond!



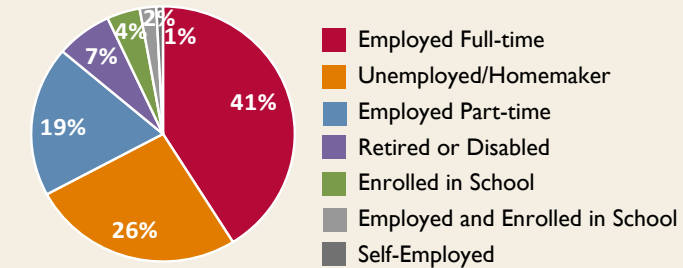
## CHILD & FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

# 2019-2020

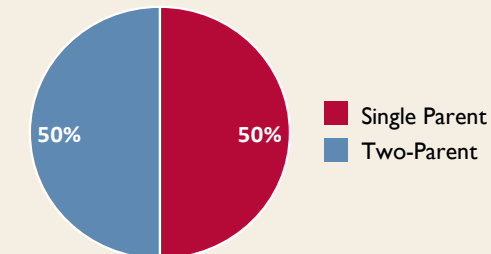
### Ethnicity/Race



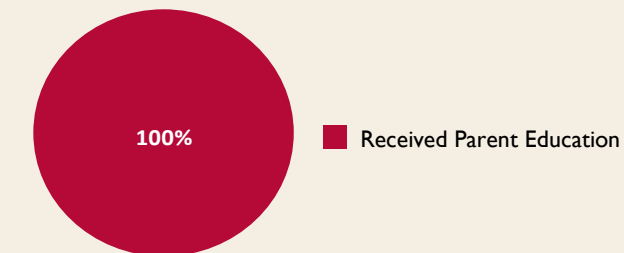
### Parent Employment



### Family Status



### Parenting Education



# 246

### CHILDREN ENROLLED

190 children, ages 3-5, and 56 children, ages 0-3, were served in part-day or full-day programming.

# 80%

### UP-TO-DATE DENTAL EXAMS

On-site or through private dental providers.

# 15%

### OF CHILDREN ARE DIAGNOSED WITH A SPECIAL NEED

Additional referrals and monitoring occur in our inclusionary classrooms.





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

## FINANCIAL REPORT

October 1, 2019 - September 30, 2020

### REVENUE

Grants and Contracts	\$3,710,168
<u>Program Revenue</u>	<u>\$1,470,338</u>
<b>Total Revenue*</b>	<b>\$ 5,180,506</b>

### EXPENSES

Personnel	\$2,847,553
Payroll Taxes and Employee Benefits	\$780,922
Staff Development	\$28,832
Travel	\$18,251
Office Costs	\$31,838
Telecommunications	\$25,874
Contract Services	\$127,243
Materials, Supplies & Food	\$224,348
Indirect/Administration	\$573,619
Other	\$20,464
<u>Facilities</u>	<u>\$253,277</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,156,754</b>

\*Excludes COVID Payroll Protection Program

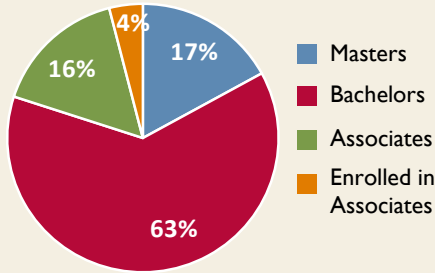


## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

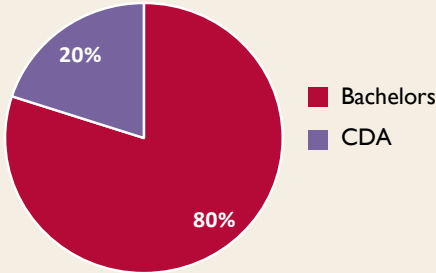
Professional development is a major focus for continued quality improvement. One-hundred percent (100%) of preschool classrooms at Educare Central Maine have a teacher with a minimum of a Bachelor's degree and Department of Education (DOE) certification. One-hundred percent (100%) of preschool classrooms 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/revise individual professional development plans ongoing and as part of their annual evaluation process.

**Educare Central Maine's  
Staff Turnover Rate is 4.76%**

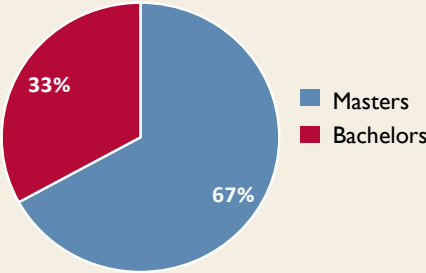
Lead & Mentor Teachers



Family Service Coordinators



Content Specialists



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



## 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 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.



# DEMONSTRATING RESULTS

## 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 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.

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> grade are usually still poor readers at the end of 4<sup>th</sup> 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 language comprehension and vocabulary reveal the following outcomes:

### Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test

This test measures English vocabulary with a mean score of 100 considered a good score. **ECM:** 102.0

### 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 1-7) is used to measure classroom quality. **ECM** rates at 6.7 in Emotional Support; 6.1 in Classroom Organization; and 3.6 in instructional Practices, exceeding national averages in all three categories.

*“Thanks to Educare, my children’s education has thrived, my family has always been supported and we have the tools to succeed.”*

~Educare Parent

Children living in poverty who enter Educare programs at age one do not experience an achievement gap upon kindergarten entry.





YOUR DONATION CAN  
**IMPACT THE FUTURE**

## 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 helps to ensure that day to day operations occur without disruption. These donations help children attending Educare Central Maine receive 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.



### THE NEXT DECADE

For the past 10 years, Educare Central Maine has served more than 1,300 children from more than 1,000 families in our community.

As we celebrate our 10th Birthday throughout the coming year, your donation will help to launch Educare into the next decade of service in our community.



### LEGACY GIVING

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.

To become a donor or learn more, contact Erin Merrill:  
(207) 859-1678 • [erinm@kvcap.org](mailto:erinm@kvcap.org) • visit [www.educarecentralmaine.org](http://www.educarecentralmaine.org)



*"I have endless appreciation for this great and much needed school. The endless amounts of love and support they have in place; the extra food for my family on my broke weeks; the non-judgmental staff and caring eyes on the weeks that I can't pay my parent fee; the speech services my son needs and wouldn't get any other way; the social work that keeps me informed on financial programs that are local to me just when I thought I was going to have to choose between groceries and my light bill. All I can say is Thank You!"*

~Educare Parent



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