

Tri-County Council For Childhood Development Inc.

Expanding Childcare Access in Southwest Michigan

Economic Recovery for Southwest Michigan

OCTOBER 2023



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Background Information

For 51 years, Tri-County Head Start (TCHS) has been the community's program of choice, a local disrupter of poverty, and a beacon of hope and opportunity, giving more than 40,000 children a head start on their education and supporting families with life-changing resources and job skills. As we emerge from this life-altering pandemic, we continue to prove that we can adapt, change mid-stride, breathe, and move forward. As we brush off the past years, we look around and see that our community needs us in a different way.

There are currently approximately 15,280 children 0-5 in our three-county area, and only 7,000 licensed childcare seats that meet the needs of working families. More than 3,000 childcare seats are needed in our local area to reach a moderate capacity for childcare. Additionally, to provide the necessary seats, 400 early childhood professionals need to acquire the skills and credentials to offer high-quality care. This leaves a significant gap in care forcing families to resort to unsafe solutions. The current childcare crisis threatens our local economy, is a severe public health issue, and puts families on a permanently lower earnings trajectory.

With strategic investment in our organization, staff, and families, we can launch an initiative that can have a history-making impact on our communities.

To begin this work, we need additional qualified staff and excellent facilities, financial security, and the ability to fundraise. The very first step is to build organizational capacity. By increasing our capacity, we can add braided and blended slots (this includes Head Start, GSRP, state subsidy, community employers, and tuition-based slots), and gives us the ability to fundraise.

Our primary focus will continue to be the proven Head Start model. However, by increasing our capacity, we can bring our whole-child, whole-family, holistic, and individualized approach to more families, changing education forever in Southwest Michigan.

Mission and Vision

The visions we offer our children, shape the future



Our Mission

To be a vibrant and progressive educational agency supporting the development of children 0 to 5 years of age while promoting healthy family functioning for Head Start children and families in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties.

The Solution

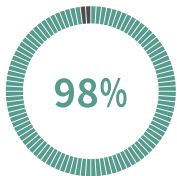
With over 50 years of experience, Tri-County Head Start is the expert in high-quality early education. It has been proven that the Head Start model helps families meet children's educational, nutritional, social, and emotional goals. Children that receive an early childhood education are ready to succeed in school and life through learned experiences tailored to their changing needs and abilities. Head Start staff actively engage parents, recognizing that family participation is key to strong child outcomes.

With the addition of the blended funding model, TCHS will offer programs with a sliding scale fee to families. This will give parents the support they need to advance their careers, increase their household income, and provide economic security for their families.

Our Impact

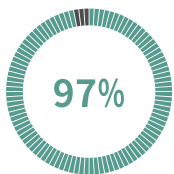


IN THE 2022-2023 PROGRAM YEAR:



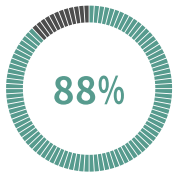
of children up-to-date on Immunizations, compared to 69.4% in the state

[Michigan League for Public Policy](#)



of children up-to-date on Well-Child Exams, compared to 91.9% nationally

[Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)



of children up-to-date on Dental Exams, compared to 52% in the state

[Michigan.gov](#)

The Lasting Benefits

The impact of Tri-County Head Start's focus on social determinants of health extends far beyond early childhood. By investing in the well-being of children and families, we contribute to:

Improved Academic Performance

Children who attend Head Start programs demonstrate improved cognitive skills, language development, and school readiness, setting them on a path toward lifelong success.

Reduced Health Disparities

By addressing social determinants of health, we aim to eliminate disparities in health outcomes, ensuring that all children have an equal opportunity to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Stronger Communities

By supporting families and strengthening the foundations of our community, we foster a more resilient and cohesive society, creating a positive ripple effect for future generations.

Accomplishing Goals

Every year we help families accomplish goals. This year, we have helped our families find housing, obtain additional education, acquire transportation, find new employment, potty train their children, and attend community events to increase community participation.

WHAT ARE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH?

Social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age. These factors, such as education, income, housing, and access to healthcare, greatly influence an individual's health outcomes. Tri-County Head Start focuses on addressing these determinants to create a solid foundation for children's lifelong health and well-being.

Expansion Strategy

Childcare is a pressing concern for families in Southwest Michigan. Parents are struggling to find safe, affordable, and high-quality child care options for their children, which has severe repercussions for both children and parents alike. This crisis not only affects parents' ability to maintain employment, but it also hinders children's early development and future opportunities.

Recognizing the urgency of this situation, Tri-County Head Start has developed a comprehensive expansion strategy that aims to tackle the childcare crisis head-on. The impact of this expansion will be far-reaching.

Key Initiatives:

- **Increase Capacity:** Both organizational and physical infrastructure will be expanded. By creating new internal systems and establishing warm, welcoming, innovative education spaces strategically located, TCHS can serve more children and alleviate the overwhelming demand for quality early education programs.
- **Strengthen Accessibility:** With commitment to ensuring no child is left without access to care due to financial constraints. Through the generous support of donors, TCHS will be able to utilize various funding sources including offering scholarships and financial assistances to families.
- **Community Engagement and Collaboration:** The childcare crisis requires collective efforts. TCHS will actively engage with community stakeholders, including businesses, local government, and other nonprofit organizations, to foster collaboration and enhance a strong network of support.

Impacts:

By providing increased access, Tri-County Head Start will:

- **Empower Parents:** With reliable childcare, parents can pursue employment opportunities, contributing to the economic growth of our community.
- **Promote Child Development:** By investing in early education and comprehensive support services, Tri-County Head Start will set children on a path to lifelong success.
- **Strengthen Community:** A thriving community begins with strong families. By supporting these efforts, you will be investing in the future of our community.

We invite you to join us in our mission to address the childcare crisis and shape a brighter future. Your contribution will directly impact the lives of children and families in your community.

Together, we can create a sustainable childcare ecosystem that benefits all families in Southwest Michigan.

Project Budget

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY ECONOMIC IMPACT \$22,000,000 PER YEAR

Phase 1 - Business Plan Development \$12,500

In partnership with enFocus, our objective is to develop a business model with a fiscal braiding structure, which will allow TCHS to sustainably grow enabling our ability to expand the eligibility criteria to serve more children and families in our community.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR PHASE 1	AMOUNT
Berrien Community Foundation	\$6,830
South Haven Community Foundation	\$3,375
TOTAL	\$10,205

Phase 2 - Increase Organizational Capacity \$675,000

Phase 1 will serve as the foundation of our capacity building initiatives. Leveraging the enFocus strategy we aim to enhance our organizational capacity to effectively engage in fundraising activities and maximize our ability to secure blended and braided funding sources. Strategically approaching our organizational capacity plan will provide us with the financial resources required to support our growth.

To complete phase 2 of the project an estimated \$675,000 to increase organizational capacity will be required. The estimated budget includes three years of salary and benefits for a fund development professional, a percentage of the administrative teams salary and benefits for two years allowing them to participate in the capacity building, funds for a marketing campaign and implementation and upgrading of software programs required to meet the needs of the new business model and fiscal structure.

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
% of Admin Salary/Fringe Benefits (taxes, medical insurance)	\$297,000
Fund Development Professional Salary/Fringe Benefits (3 years)	\$278,000
Marketing/Capital Campaign	\$60,000
Software update and implementation (Accounting, Billing, and Fund Development)	\$40,000
TOTAL	\$675,000

Phase 3 - Strategically Placed Facilities and Staff

The implementation of phase 1 and phase 2 will provide the additional funding and capacity required to obtain high-quality facilities in strategic locations throughout our communities meeting the needs of our families. Furthermore, these resources will allow us to train the required workforce for expansion through a training hub, and attract and retain highly qualified staff members by offering competitive compensation packages that recognize their expertise and contributions to our mission.

Our Current Facilities



Dowagiac Center



Decatur Center



Bangor Center

The Vision



GRCC Phyllis Fratzke Early Childhood Learning Laboratory



GRCC Phyllis Fratzke Early Childhood Learning Laboratory



Starfish Family Services Marygrove Early Education Center



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