

# 25 YEARS ADVOCATING FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

1990 - 2015

**P**rince George's Child Resource Center exists to help make sure that families have access to quality, affordable child care, health care, and other support services. Each year the Resource Center supports more than 1,500 families and trains more than 2,000 child care providers, parents, and human services workers. Since 1990, we have touched the lives of nearly half a million children in Prince George's County.

We've come a long way in 25 years. Prince George's Child Resource Center has seen an array of research used to influence policy change regarding what's best for young children, and it confirms what we've always known: *quality early care matters.*

## Advancements Across the Country and at Home

Boosted by the knowledge that learning begins at birth and quality matters for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, we provide crucial bedrock services to child care centers, family child care homes, and to families seeking child care.

In 2014, the Child Care and Development Block Grant law was reauthorized by Congress for the first time in 18 years. It calls for new health and safety baselines, inspections and support for providers, and improvements to the child care subsidy assistance program. Our attention now turns to our state agencies and state legislature as we work to meet new requirements with limited

dollars. The Resource Center sees first-hand the local realities and stands ready to help providers and families succeed.

Our Healthy Families home visiting program – in coordination with Healthy Families America – has made huge strides for families since we began the work in 1998. Through the Resource Center, trained home visitors provide education to new parents facing adversity, supporting and strengthening the new family. We expanded these efforts after Maryland took advantage of new federal investment in Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV), authorized by Congress in 2010.

Child nutrition, health, and hunger all play out in our community's child care centers, family child care homes, and pre-K classrooms. Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are paying close attention to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and so are we.

We see investments in quality and endeavors to bring together a system to connect the pieces and parts that contribute to child well-being and family success through early care and education.

## The Need Continues

The advancements have been tremendous, but challenges remain and the need for PGCRC is clear every day as we work with families. We face significant obstacles to making sure every child in Prince George's County receives an equal opportunity to realize their full potential. Poverty,

hunger, homelessness, and other challenges persist, with far-reaching effects throughout our community. Often, families that come to us find it difficult to meet very basic needs. Consider:

- From 2006 to 2013, 5,600 Maryland children lost access to child care subsidy assistance. In March 2014, there were more than 1,600 children on the waiting list for assistance.
- Only 43 percent of child care centers and only 22 percent of family child care homes in our county are participating in Maryland EXCELS quality rating initiative
- Licensure is the foundation of quality, but unregulated care in Prince George's County undermines quality and our drive for improvement
- Only 36 percent of Maryland's four-year-olds are enrolled in pre-K

## The Way Forward

The most important thing we can do to strengthen our community and build a brighter future is to invest in high-quality, early childhood care and education, health care, and family support services. With more than 60,000 residents in our county under the age of 5, these investments set the foundation for better schools, safer communities, and a stronger workforce.

Marti Worshtil  
*Executive Director*

Jennifer Hoffman  
*Deputy Director*

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