



**May 11, 2020**

**Prince George's County Council  
Final FY21 Budget Hearing**

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Mr. Chair, Vice-Chair and distinguished council, I am Jennifer Iverson, Executive Director of Prince Georges Child Resource Center.

THANK YOU for your leadership. Prince George's Child Resource Center wants to partner with you to preserve the quality of life for children and families during this COVID-19 pandemic, and as we look to future with optimism.

I recognize that you will have many more requests than you are able to grant; but it is critical that Prince George's strongest nonprofits remain strong to meet the challenges ahead, and that includes many of my partners here tonight.

We request a \$40,000 Non-Departmental grant which will support our work with hundreds of families through our home visiting services throughout the County; our nurse home visiting program launching in the Stadium Impact area; our family support center serving Adelphi, Langley Park and Hyattsville area; and our work with the child care providers who are going to need our technical assistance as they rebuild.

Like all of us, we have had to reassess how we operate. All 34 of our staff in three major programs are successfully finding new ways to serve families. We have pivoted to offering remote home visits, we are offering tele-therapy for parents and delivering groceries, diapers and gift cards to families who are in dire circumstances, and are participating in the census phone bank. We are prepared to continue to find innovate ways to meet needs remotely until we get back to normal, and our services are more critical than ever:

- During this pandemic, we are already seeing an increase in a myriad of psychosocial issues such as domestic violence and substance abuse.
- Mothers are delivering babies and sent home without support, forced to adjust to motherhood in isolation. Our home visitors can serve as a lifeline.

We cannot scale back our support; We cannot let all the gains that have been made fall away because of COVID-19.

I want to highlight how our work contributes to the economy in Prince George's County. We employ 30 Prince Georgians, and because we were strong and stable before this Pandemic, we have adapted, have not furloughed or reduced hours for any of our employees, and are committed to being nimble in our service delivery so we can continue to support the community.

Also on the economic front, I want to talk about our work as the child care resource center for Prince George's County. Prior to COVID 19, there were about 400 child care centers and about 800 licensed family child care providers in the county with spaces for 25,000 children. Now, there are only about 270 operating below capacity to serve our essential personnel. Providers are wondering how they can come back from this when they only operated with a shoe string margin in the best of times; and the business model simply cannot be sustained if re-opening will require small groups of children, socially distanced. We have upped our advocacy at the state level so they can open safely and be sustainable, and are bringing in business support for these hundreds of small businesses that MUST be in operation for parents to go back to work.

Your strategic investment in high performing nonprofits like Prince George's Child Resource Center will help Prince George's County to continue to thrive.