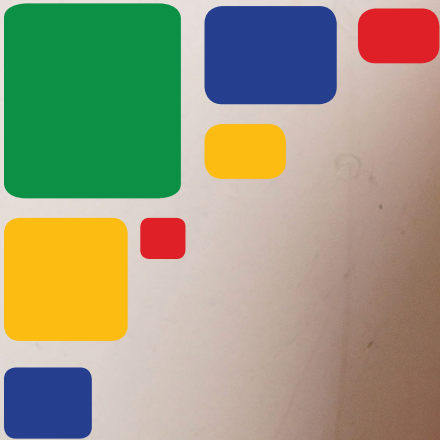




earlychildhoodalliance
ONONDAGA



2020 Annual Report

Letter from the Director

The Early Childhood Alliance (ECA) was launched in 2015 with a bold vision that all children in Onondaga County are healthy, thriving, and ready to succeed in school and in life. **The early childhood research could not be clearer; children who enter school ready to learn are more likely to achieve, stay in school, and graduate on time.**

With stubbornly high child poverty rates in our community and many children arriving to school underprepared, the ECA is committed to advancing bold solutions that are evidenced-based and grounded in family and community voice. Achieving success for our youngest children requires us to build a better system of supports for families in the early years.

In our first annual report, you will find the results of our collective efforts to mobilize resources in support of children and families during 2020. The report showcases the specific activities, outputs and outcomes for each ECA strategy and highlights initiative successes and COVID adaptations. Collectively, the ECA reached thousands of families and early childhood providers through a diverse array of initiatives, and each initiative achieved significant outcomes in 2020.

While the pandemic put many hurdles in our path, we are proud of the work early childhood partners have done to adapt, innovate and overcome. We are grateful to Onondaga County, our philanthropic partners, the business community, and all the individuals and families who dedicate themselves every day to improve the early childhood system. It will take all of us working together in 2021 and beyond to build a more effective early childhood system.

Sincerely,



Laurie Black

Laurie Black
Director

“When we support them in their earliest years, infants grow into healthy kids who are competent, empathetic, and ready for school and life, and our communities, workforce and economy become stronger and more productive.”

Meg O’Connell

Executive Director, Allyn Family Foundation
Chair, ECA Community Advisory Committee



Our Mission, Vision & Values

MISSION



The ECA facilitates cross-sector engagement and collaboration aimed at building a comprehensive and effective early childhood system that utilizes data driven solutions informed by community priorities to support young children and their families in order to advance optimal child development in Onondaga County.

VISION



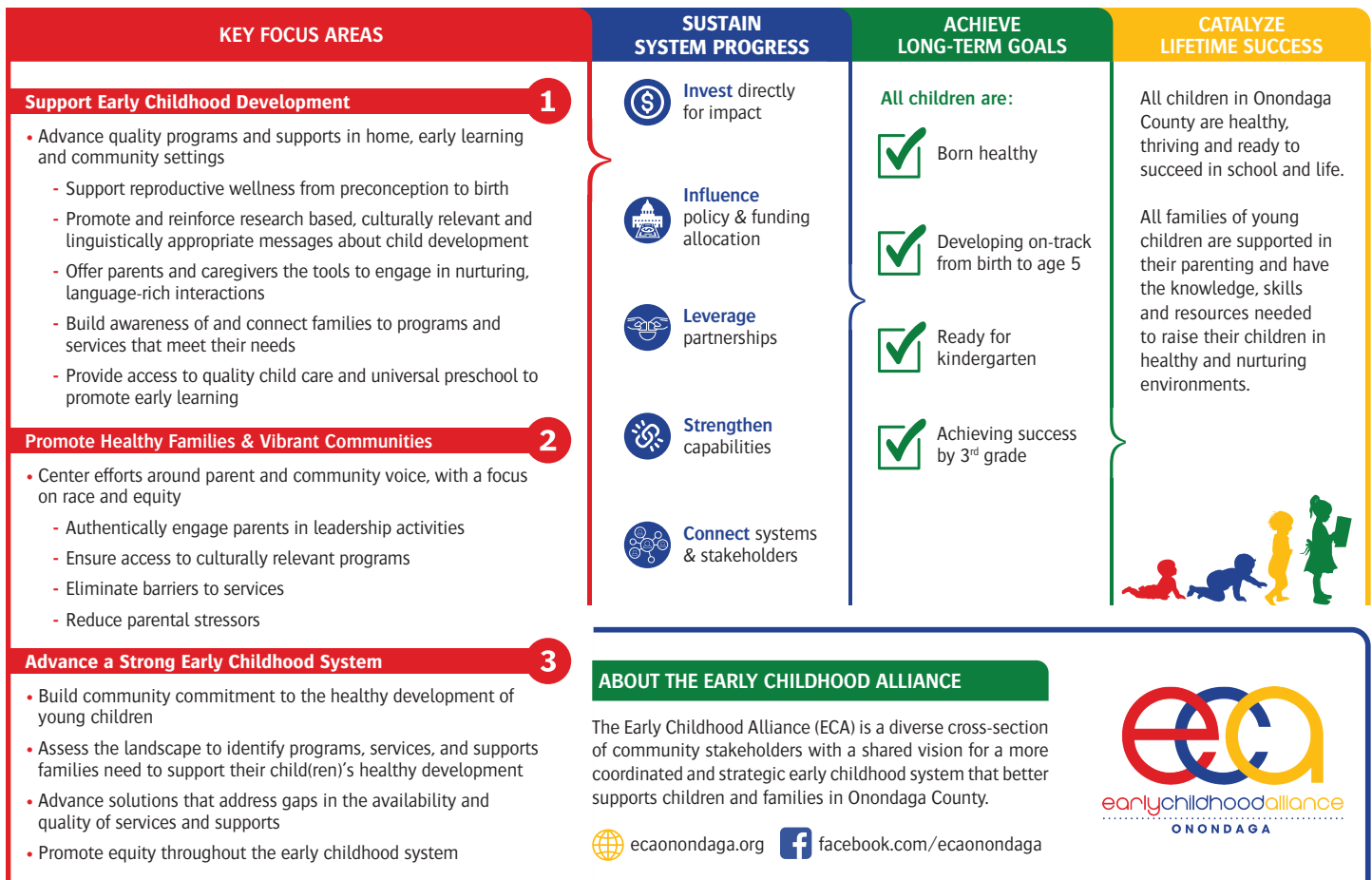
All young children in Onondaga County are healthy, thriving, and successful in school and life; and all families of young children are supported in their parenting and have the knowledge, skills, confidence, and resources they need to raise their children in healthy and nurturing environments.

VALUES



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
 Family-Centered
 Collaboration
 Shared Decision-Making and Governance
 Systems Building
 Data Driven

Our Theory of Change



ABOUT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD ALLIANCE

The Early Childhood Alliance (ECA) is a diverse cross-section of community stakeholders with a shared vision for a more coordinated and strategic early childhood system that better supports children and families in Onondaga County.

ecaonondaga.org facebook.com/ecaonondaga



Our Priorities

The ECA is committed to advocating for and achieving equity, ensuring that all children in Onondaga County are born healthy and reach their full potential. Our priorities include:



*Promoting optimal development for **all** children*



*Advancing high quality early literacy environments for **all** children*



*Improving quality across **all** child care providers*



*Advancing reproductive wellbeing for **all** women*



Increasing family and community engagement in early childhood system building



Enhancing the quality of supports for the early childhood workforce



Influencing the early childhood system to advance improved outcomes for children and families



“In order to have a strong economy and a vibrant community that supports all families, we need to start at the beginning to strengthen the early childhood system. The Business Council supports the work of the ECA because it is recognizing gaps in the system, identifying best practices, and analyzing data to measure the impact of new initiatives.”

Steve Gorczynski

*Administrative Vice President, Commercial Banking, M&T Bank
Chair, ECA Business Council*

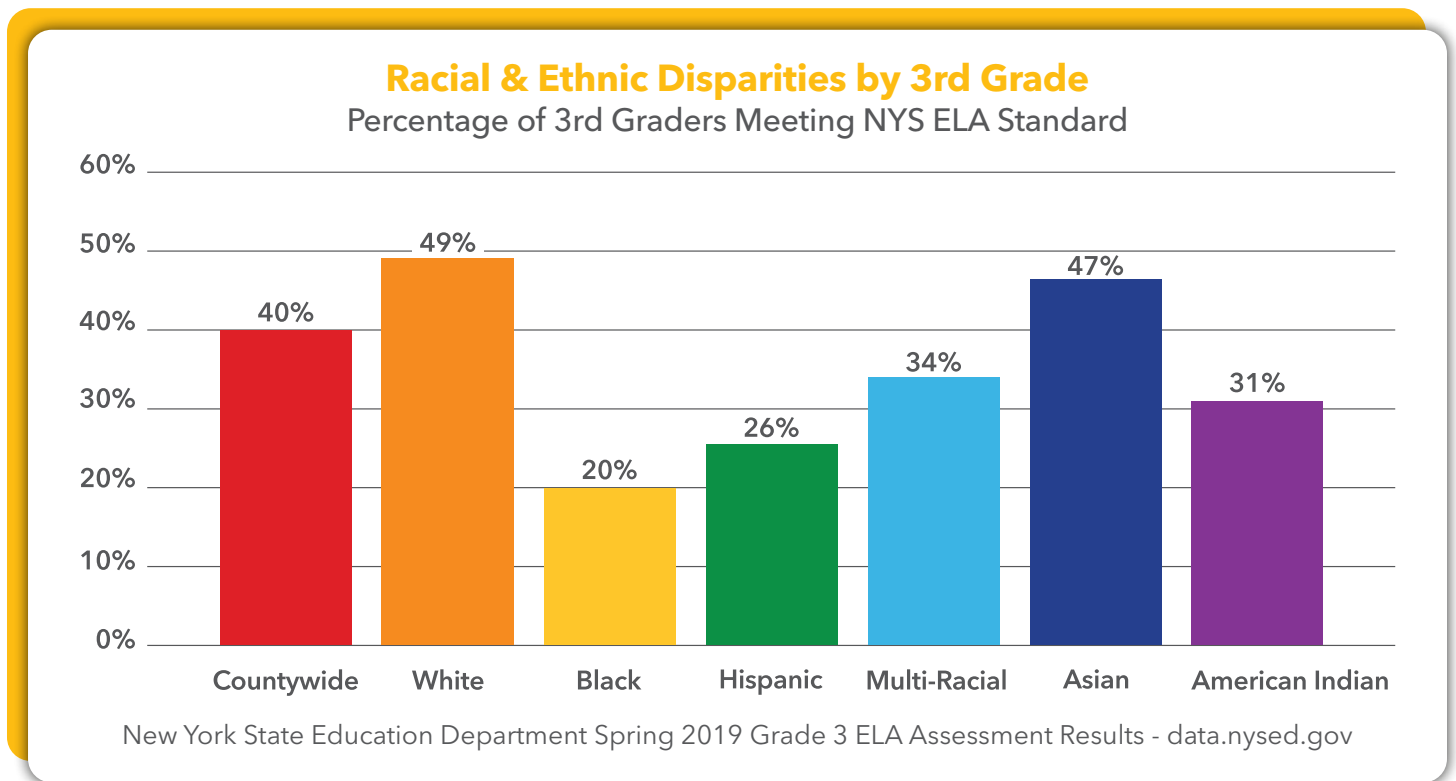
School Readiness

The North Star for the ECA

According to the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL), “children who enter kindergarten ready to meet academic, social, and emotional demands are more likely to achieve later academic and life success. Likewise, children who enter school behind their peers in these areas tend to remain academically behind and at risk for harmful behavior in adulthood (e.g., dropping out of school, criminal behavior, unemployment).” NCSL also states that “evidence suggests that more than half the achievement gap found in later school years already is present at kindergarten entry.” It is estimated that fewer than 50% of children enter school ready for kindergarten.

Unlike many states, New York does not have a kindergarten entry assessment to measure how ready children are for school. In Onondaga County, the eighteen different school districts currently use a variety of approaches to assess students when they enter kindergarten, but there isn’t a universal measure that allows us to understand the readiness levels of children entering school across Onondaga County.

In Onondaga County, the first time we get a community level assessment of how children are doing birth through eight years of age is when students take NYS’s 3rd grade ELA and Math assessments. On 2019 State Testing, 40% of the students in Onondaga County were reading on grade level by 3rd grade. In our largest school district, Syracuse City School District, only 22% of 3rd graders are reading on grade level by 3rd grade.



New York State **Prekindergarten Learning Standards Resource**

While New York State does not have a kindergarten readiness assessment, the Education Department developed the **New York State Prekindergarten Learning Standards (NYSPLS) Resource** to consolidate all learning standards into one comprehensive document that provides a:

- Framework for all 4-year-old prekindergarten children, regardless of abilities, language, background or diverse need.
- Resource for planning professional learning opportunities.
- Tool for focusing discussions on early learning by educators, policy makers, families, and community members.

The resource is organized by the following key domains of learning:

- 1. Approaches to Learning** - How children become involved in learning and acquiring knowledge.
- 2. Physical Development and Health** - Children's physical health and ability to engage in daily activities, both outdoors and inside
- 3. Social and Emotional Learning** - The emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to children's experiences in the home, school, and larger community.
- 4. Communication, Language, and Literacy Part A and Part B** - How children understand, create, and communicated meaning.
- 5. Cognition & Knowledge of the World (Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts)** - What children need to know and understand about their world and how they apply what they know.

To learn more about the NYSPLS Resource, visit: bit.ly/NYSPLS

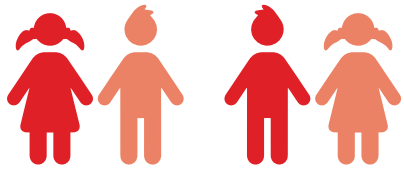


Ages & Stages Questionnaires Support School Readiness



The ECA is committed to deepening our collective understanding of what it means to be school ready. We are here to help parents increase their awareness around child development and ways that they can support their child's development from birth to age five. Through Help Me Grow Onondaga, all parents can take a proactive role in monitoring their child's development by completing the Ages & Stages Questionnaires for general development and social-emotional development. Parents can access these free screening tools at: helpmegrowny.org/onondaga-county/#questionnaire.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT



31,293 children birth-5 in Onondaga County (2017)

12,658 children birth-5 in the city of Syracuse (2017)



1 in 5 children in Onondaga County lives in poverty (2017)

50% of the children in Syracuse live in poverty (2017)

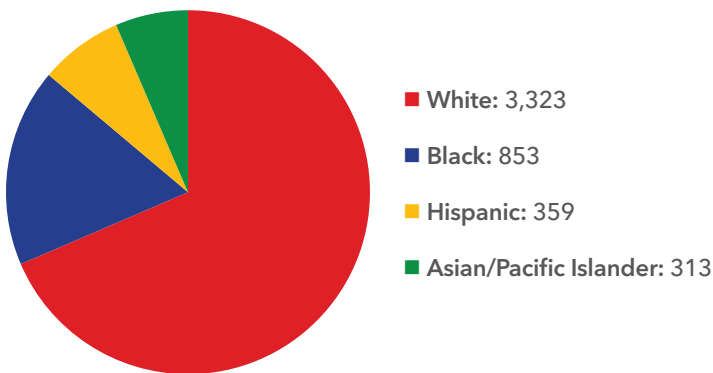


\$14,560 Annual cost of center-based care for infant in Onondaga County (2019)

\$27,300 Annual cost of center-based care for infant and toddler in Onondaga County (2019)



Number of Births in Onondaga County Per Year (3 Year Average, 2015-17)



70.4%

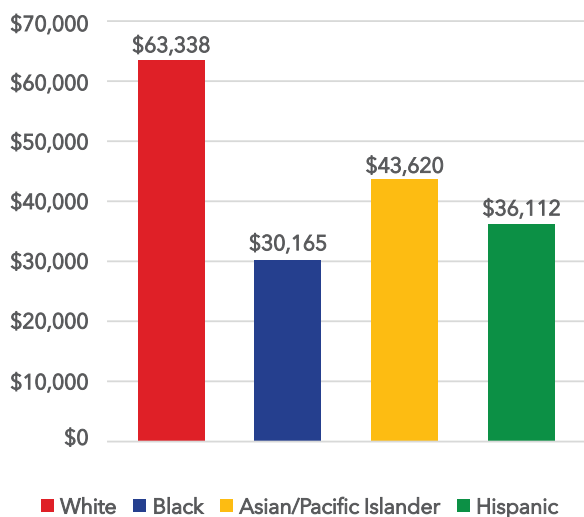
Percentage of Onondaga County children under the age of 6 with all parents in the household in the workforce (2019)

63.6%

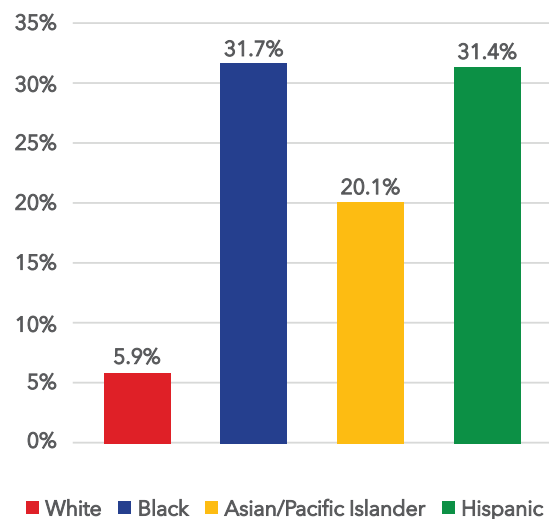
Percentage of children in the City of Syracuse under the age of 6 with all parents in the household in the workforce (2019)



Median Household Income in Onondaga County (2013-17)



Percentage of Onondaga County Families Below Poverty (2013-17)

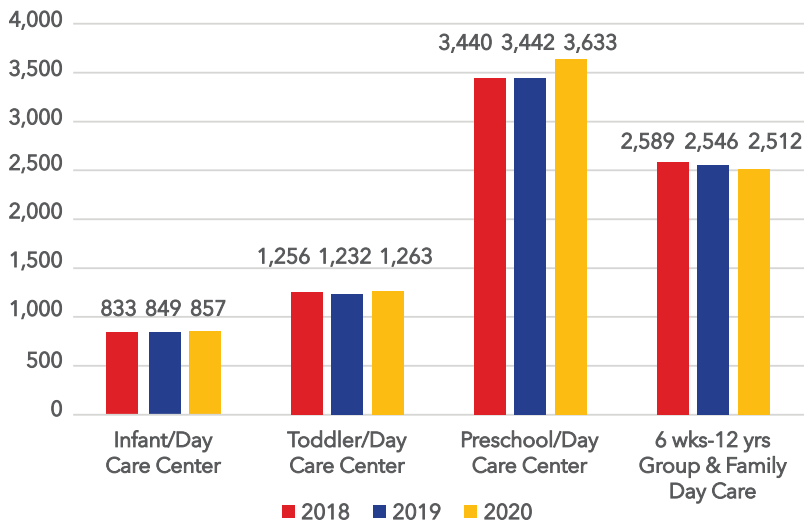


Sources: Number of Children and Children in Poverty: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates; Child Care Costs: Child Care Solutions; Births Per Year, Household Income, and Families in Poverty: New York State Department of Health - Onondaga County Health Indicators by Race/Ethnicity, 2015-2017; Parents in the Workforce: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

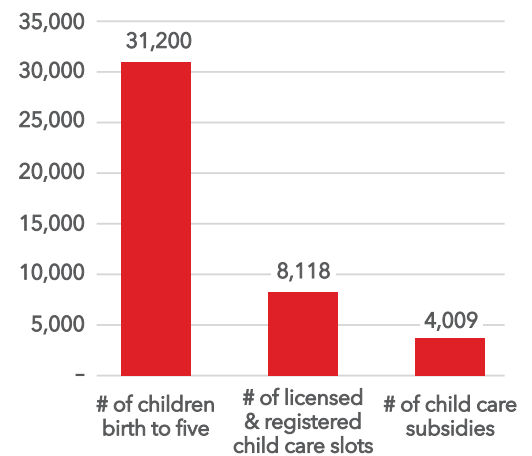
ANCHOR PROGRAMS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM



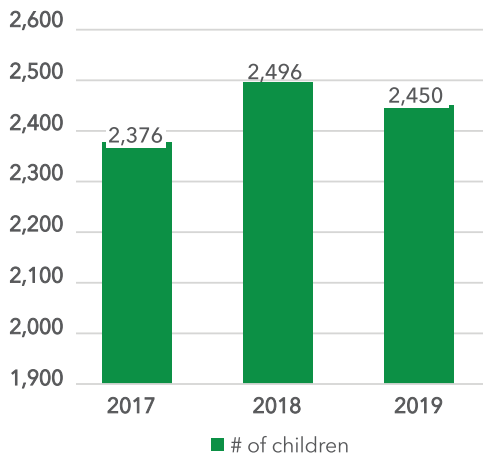
Number of Licensed & Registered Child Care Slots



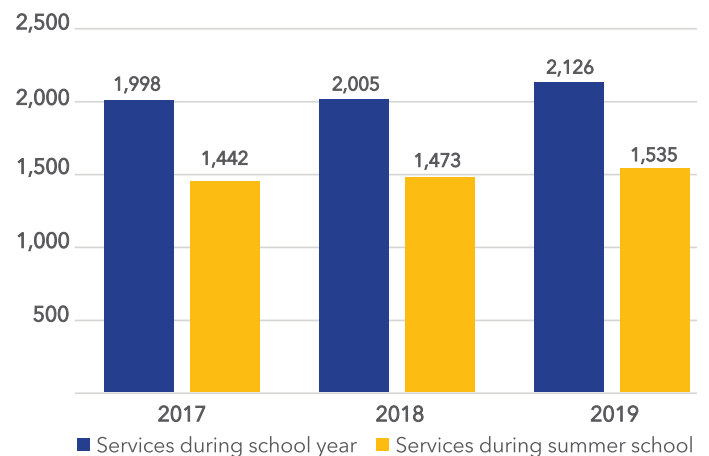
Availability of Licensed Child Care & Subsidies for Families (2018)



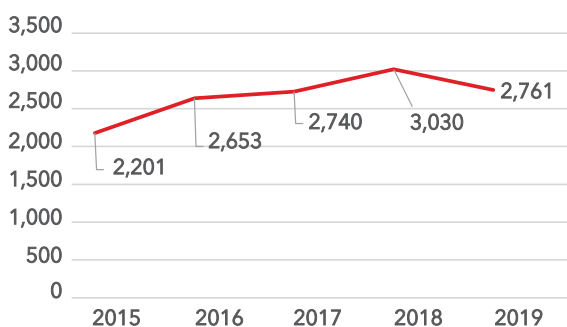
Early Intervention Clients (Birth-3 Years)



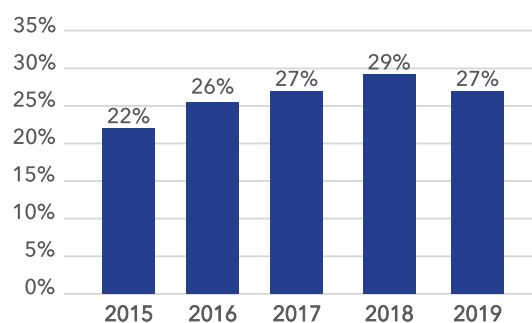
Preschool Special Education Clients (3-4 Years)



Number of 3 & 4 Year Olds Enrolled in State-Funded UPK



Percentage of 3 & 4 Year Olds with State-Funded UPK



15,658

Onondaga County children birth to age five enrolled in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library



2,685

home visiting clients (moms and infants) in Onondaga County

Commitment to **Accountability**

Since our launch in 2015, the ECA has advanced a number of initiatives to strengthen the early childhood system. We are committed to measuring programmatic impact and connecting these strategies to our system level work. In partnership with Onondaga County, we utilize an accountability framework to track our impact that focuses on whether customers are better off as a result of our initiatives. We hold ourselves accountable by reporting the impact of our initiatives across these three domains:

- 1. Activities we have implemented as part of the initiative**
- 2. The outputs related to implementing these activities**
- 3. The overall outcomes we are achieving through the initiative**

The following pages highlight 2020 accomplishments by ECA initiative.



Every Parent has Questions

Launched in 2019, **Help Me Grow Onondaga** helps children birth through age 5 reach their full potential by:

- Providing families with information on child development and parenting, fun activities to help their children thrive, and personalized connections to local services.
- Helping families and caregivers track young children's ongoing progress in building physical, social, behavioral, communications, and thinking skills.
- Improving the ability of families, caregivers, health and human service providers, and educators to work together in building a strong foundation for our children and a better future for New York's communities.

2020 Successes



Expanded staff to include three additional full time employees, allowing for expanded programming and strengthened partnerships with pediatric practices, child care, and early learning providers.



Partnered with the CNY Diaper Bank to establish a feeding (formula) bank in Onondaga County with funding support from the CNY Community Foundation's COVID-19 Community Support Fund.



Facilitated a Pediatric Learning Community that included St. Joseph's Health, the Syracuse Community Health Center, and Upstate Pediatric and Adolescent Center (UPAC).



Program Goal



Empower parents and caregivers with knowledge around child development and increase developmental screening in Onondaga County.

2020 Reach



1,128

individuals provided with child development information and support

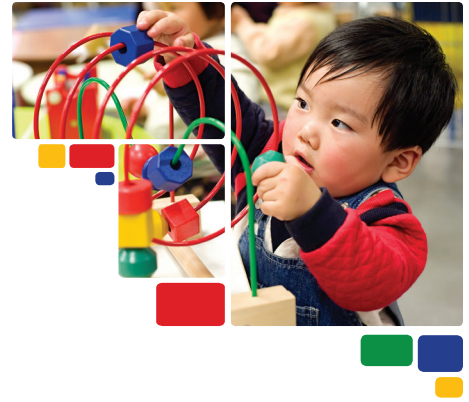
I've enjoyed working with Help Me Grow. They fill in the gaps and provide follow up that can't always happen at the pediatric practice. I feel like we're working together to help families.

Healthy Start Worker at St. Joseph's Primary Care West

Responding to COVID-19

Parents and caregivers need support, education, and connection now more than ever. Help Me Grow has worked vigilantly to connect them with the resources and services they need most during these unprecedented times and to ensure that early childhood development continues uninterrupted at home.

- With funding support from Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, Books, Balls, and Blocks events for families went virtual, and Help Me Grow partnered with local libraries and community agencies to reach families and complete developmental screenings.
- Worked with the Department of Children and Family Services to create a needs request form so that families impacted by COVID-19 could call 2-1-1 to request basic need items to be dropped off at their doorstep.
- \$30,000 grant secured from UnitedHealthcare allowed staff to place an increased focus on screening for and addressing the social-emotional well-being of children in child care.



I learned a few new developmental activities to help my kids - I will be saving empty food boxes for them to play with and will try to make a photo book as well.

**Books, Balls & Blocks
Parent Attendee**

Initiative Activities	Initiative Outputs	Initiative Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 106 calls from 2-1-1 from parents looking for support • 349 intakes into the STAR system for care coordination • 391 ASQ-3 & ASQ-SE developmental screens completed • 333 children screened using ASQ-3 or ASQ-SE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98% of families satisfied with support provided • 90% of families who called HMG for help effectively linked to one or more service or support • 100% of screening results shared with parents who completed an ASQ • 100% of children with atypical or monitoring screens provided with supportive resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of families who completed a screen and received HMG support indicated that HMG had increased their knowledge of child development • 93% of families who completed a screen and received HMG support indicated that they are doing something new to support their child's development because of HMG

Talking is Teaching!

Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing is a public awareness and action campaign that helps parents recognize their power to boost their children's early brain and vocabulary development through simple, everyday actions. Aimed at increasing early literacy opportunities for all children in Onondaga County, the initiative has three core components:



Messaging Campaign - Robust campaign includes branding, promotional materials, social media, and community outreach.



Home Visiting Tote Bags - Tote bags filled with branded materials, books, and age-appropriate toys distributed through home visiting programs (Goal = 1,000/year).



Pediatric Practice Outreach - Free books distributed at well child visits in partnership with the Reach Out and Read program. Branded bibs and T-shirts also distributed.



Program Goal



Increase the daily talking, reading, and singing that parents and caregivers do with children birth to five so children enter school ready to learn.

2020 Reach



1,010

early learning tote bags distributed to families across Onondaga County

100,000+

individuals reached through media outreach strategies, including billboards, bus tails, WCNY advertising, and social media.

1,500

books distributed through the Reach Out and Read initiative in partnership with pediatric practices

2020 Successes

Partnering with home visitors and pediatric practices, Talk, Read, Sing Onondaga was able to reach our goal of distributing over 1,000 Talking is Teaching tote bags to families in 2020. We continue to partner with the Maxwell School X Lab to evaluate the impact of the tote bag delivery, and we have found that the bags increase the daily reading by parents. We also know from our survey results that over one-third of respondents are familiar with the Talking is Teaching Campaign, reflecting the effort to increase awareness of the brand in the community.

We are enjoying the Talking is Teaching program so much. Each time I see the colorful graphics, I am reminded of how important it is to talk, talk, talk to your children all day long and that me and my partner Douglas are their first and foremost teachers!

Early Head Start Parent

Responding to COVID-19

- Transitioned to a no-contact/virtual tote bag process with home visitors and began distributing tote bags through pediatric practices.
- Partnered with Onondaga County Public Libraries to create a new website, "Making Small Moments Big," to provide early learning support to parents during the pandemic.
- Aimed to boost parent morale during the pandemic with the "Hey Parents: You've Got This" lawn sign campaign throughout the County.



The Talk, Read, Sing tote bag strategy is an amazing resource. The surveys are easy to complete with a parent and offer additional opportunities to provide education on child development. As a bonus, the family receives the tote bag filled with age appropriate toys and books, which they're not always able to provide for their children. Healthy Start can also follow up with our parents to see if they're reading and give suggestions on how to include the toys in playtime.

Healthy Start Worker

Initiative Activities	Initiative Outputs	Initiative Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,010 tote bags distributed • 1,500 books distributed • 5,000 individuals reached through various outreach materials • 100,000 individuals reached through media campaign • 100,000+ individuals reached via social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42% (59/139) of pre-tote bag survey respondents familiar with the Talking is Teaching campaign • 58% (81/129) of pre-tote bag survey respondents know they should read to their child(ren) every day • 67% (93/139) of pre-tote bag survey respondents know that learning begins at birth • 88% (42/48) of post-tote bag survey respondents know that learning begins at birth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37% increase (51% to 70%) in parents reading four or more days a week pre-tote bag compared to follow-up survey • 13% increase (25% to 28.3%) in parents reading 7 days a week pre-tote bag compared to follow-up survey

Quality Child Care

The **Child Care Quality Improvement (CCQI) pilot** is an actionable plan for improving the quality of child care within our existing infrastructure of care. The pilot incorporates the following three priorities:

1. Improving quality across three types of child care programs - child care centers, family child care homes, and legally exempt providers;
2. Minimizing the negative impact of low pay and turnover for staff.
3. Ensuring children are developing on track and meeting developmental milestones and that, when off-track, their families are supported in connecting them to appropriate services.

With the new curriculum, I feel I'm able to come up with more fitting activities for my age group. The children are getting more hands-on learning and one-on-one opportunities, making it easier for us to build better relationships with them.

Center-Based Teacher, CCQI Program

2020 Successes

- Hired the CCQI team through Child Care Solutions (Director and three Coaches/Support Specialists).
- Trained three team members in the CLASS Tool.
- Recruited and enrolled administrators and infant/toddler teachers at three day care centers in Onondaga County.
- Recruited and enrolled 10 providers in family and group family day care programs in Onondaga County.
- Hosted a two-day training on the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Two's for the center and home-based participants and CCQI Team.
- Supported participants in implementing curriculum into their child care programs.



Program Goal



Increase the quality of infant and toddler child care available to families, resulting in optimal child development and school readiness.

2020 Reach



In response to COVID-19 restrictions, participants were polled to determine the best way for coaches to maintain contact and provide support. All participants chose email

as their preferred method of contact, followed by telephone calls. Staff were able to reach participants on a nearly weekly basis and support providers in implementing the new curriculum.

39 Participating child care providers in Onondaga County

150 Children enrolled in participating child care programs

Responding to COVID-19

- While the intention was for this project to be an in-person support program, COVID safety regulations did not allow for the volume of in-person visits initially envisioned. As such, CCQI coaches adapted the program to offer remote-support to participating providers.
- Focus shifted to ensuring that participating programs had the support they needed to stay safe and informed. Staff reached out frequently to check on supply needs, enrollment, and other general means of support and assisted in enrolling qualifying families into scholarship programs through the various CARES Acts.

Creative Curriculum has made things so much easier for me as a teacher! There is an activity for just about everything, and I've realized I've already been doing some activities from the curriculum and didn't even realize it. Also, the activities are easily adaptable to whatever topic you want to follow. I think it's great all around!

Center-Based Teacher, CCQI Project

Initiative Activities	Initiative Outputs	Initiative Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39 child care staff and 4 coaches trained in Creative Curriculum • 905 coaching visits conducted with child care staff to promote curriculum implementation to fidelity • 26 Talking is Teaching tote bags delivered • 5 playgroups held to coach caregivers on nutrition, child development, and early literacy activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94% of trained child care staff participated in coaching visits and implemented curriculum in their classroom/program • 83% of child care providers received stipends, and 72% of the value of the stipends was distributed • 92% of caregivers reported reading to the children in their care daily after the intervention • 50% (5/10) of Legally Exempt enrolled caregivers attended regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 114 children in child care centers and 36 in family child care homes exposed to new curriculum/resources • 35 child care providers received pay parity with average County wages by level of education • Staff turnover in child care centers was only 6% • 96 children exposed to increased frequency of talking, reading, and singing • 9 infants and toddlers were exposed to educational activities, enjoyed nutritional snacks, and received books and educational toys • 100% of caregivers reported learning new ways to engage with the children in their care

ParentChild+

Equal Possibilities From The Start


Launched in Onondaga County in 2018 by Catholic Charities, the **ParentChild+ Core Model** provides two years of twice-weekly home visits to under-resourced families with children between the ages of 18 months and four years. All services begin when the child is between 18 months and 3 years old. Services, books, and toys are provided to families at no cost. The ParentChild+ Core Model empowers parents as their children's first and most important teachers and helps parents create a learning-rich environment in their homes.

The **ParentChild+ Family Child Care Model (FCC)** builds on the success of the Core Model to reach even more children through family or home-based child care. Early Learning Specialists work with family child care providers to provide professional learning support that capitalizes on their talents and passions while strengthening their observational and reflective capacities. Over the course of the 24-week program, family child care providers receive 48 home visits and acquire a library of books, educational materials, and guide sheets that support the facilitation of learning through play.

2020 Successes


- 100% of the families that remained enrolled in the Core Model received the minimum required number of home visits, and Cycle 2 families were able to graduate in June/July. The majority of clients received over the minimum number of visits, as the Early Learning Specialists met with them virtually during the pandemic, however additional Verbal Interaction Stimulus Materials (VISM)s were not delivered to the families during this time.
- For the FCC program, all scheduled books and toys were delivered along with enrichment materials and guide sheets. The Early Learning Specialist for the FCC portion of the program resigned prior to the pandemic, so the Program Coordinator took over and supplied the ongoing services to FCC providers. Using text messages, phone calls, and emails, five of the six providers were able to complete the program.
- The FCC program met its goal of recruiting six Family Childcare Providers and retained five of those providers despite the challenges of implementing during the pandemic (the provider that was not retained closed her program due to COVID).

Program Goal



Increase the school readiness of participating children.

2020 Reach



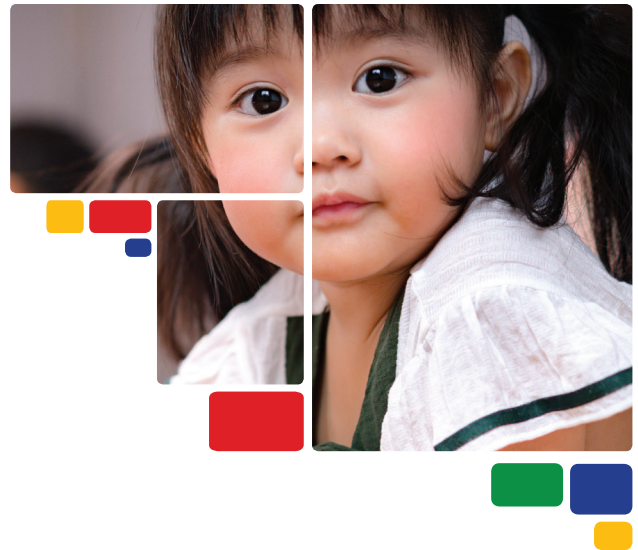
76 Children served in the Core Model

31 Children served in the FCC Model



Responding to COVID-19

In response to the pandemic, ParentChild+ went virtual, providing home visits through whatever technology worked for families. Resources were delivered to family's homes, and staff did whatever they could to meet family needs during this difficult time. Staff also innovated to keep families engaged in the virtual environment.



An excellent program. I especially enjoyed the dedicated time for me and my child, as well as the VISMs.

ParentChild+ Parent

The program was well organized, and the Early Learning Specialists were awesome.

ParentChild+ Parent

Initiative Activities	Initiative Outputs	Initiative Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76 families served through the Core Model • 31 children served through the FCC Model • 3,177 home visits completed • 1,712 books/toys distributed • 136 assessments of parents and children completed • 127 FCC Model newsletters distributed • 49 Core Model newsletters distributed • 11 Core Model graduates • 5 FCC provider graduates • 24 FCC children graduates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of Core Model families received minimum required number of home visits, and Cycle 2 families graduated in June/July • 100% of Core Model parents surveyed were very satisfied or satisfied with the program • 100% of Family Child Care providers surveyed were very satisfied or satisfied with the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 64% (32/50) of children in Cycle 1 of the Core Model demonstrated an improvement in the five (5) behavior areas: child's independence, social cooperation, task orientation, cognitive ability, and emotional stability • 91% (10/11) of Core Model graduates demonstrated strengthened and improved parent- child interactions. • 73% (8/11) of Core Model graduates enrolled in pre-K

Reproductive Well-Being

Launched in Onondaga County in 2018, **Layla's Got You** is building a local movement to encourage and support young women and their partners to have complete information about all contraceptives and be able to choose the method that is right for them, without any cost or access barriers.

The Layla Campaign is strongly committed to reproductive justice, woman-centered care, dispelling myths, and changing social norms to empower young women with positive self-images and independent choice. Strategies include:

- Social norms campaign on social media;
- Engagement of Black and Latina women, ages 16-25;
- Creation of a chatbot named Layla that provides answers to questions about reproductive wellness;
- Helping young women of color be seen and heard through power building.

2020 Successes

- Updated the campaign website (laylasgotyou.com) to include a hub of tools and resources informed by questions submitted to the Layla chatbot about sex, love, and relationships.
- Expanded culturally tailored video and creative content, including two new web series - "The Morning After Show" and "Layla at Home" - that air monthly.
- Engaging young women through a digital platform provided some insulation against COVID's impact on reach.
- Worked with 17 local partners to implement reproductive well-being as a part of a city-wide summer youth program.
- Partnered with the CNY Diaper Bank to distribute 2,500 re-usable grocery bags filled with diapers and resource information for local families.
- Chosen through a competitive national process by Power to Decide to participate in a learning community with nine other cities, focused on building our local capacity to lead reproductive well-being policy and systems change.



Program Goal



Reduce unintended pregnancies and increase reproductive wellness in Onondaga County.

2020 Reach



1,368

followers on social media (Facebook, Instagram, and twitter)*

300

young women engaged through period poverty program

150

women reached through menstrual cup partnership with Diva Cup

100

young women reached through bi-monthly newsletter

160

cross-sector stakeholders reached through monthly newsletter

100

young women reached through in-person info sessions and talking circles*

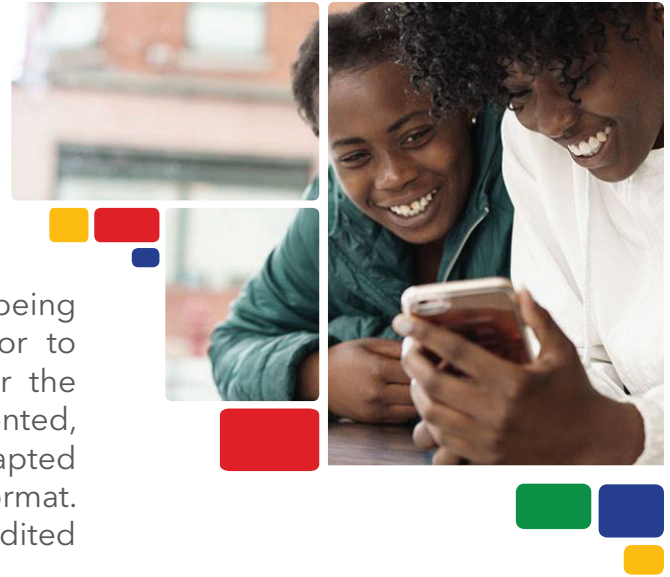
50

adult (women) stakeholders reached through in-person meetings

*Duplicated

Responding to COVID-19

Photography and videography are the tools Layla use's to develop content that is relevant and timely, to communicate inspirational and empowering cultural messages, and to share reproductive well-being information and messages with our audience. Prior to COVID-19, Layla was filming on location, but after the lockdowns and social distancing rules were implemented, filming in person was no longer an option. Staff adapted by transitioning all video production to a digital format. Interviews were conducted via Zoom and were then edited and stylized by the creative team.



It's my choice to decide who I allow in my life, as well as what I allow. It's no one else's choice but mine.

Layla Ambassador

To have control is to have say over what happens to you and your body in your life.

Layla Ambassador

Initiative Activities	Initiative Outputs	Initiative Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 website, 1 chatbot and 4 social media platforms • 15 in person meetings reaching 100 young women • 3 in person meetings reaching 50 adult women • 4 Reproductive Well-Being Committee meetings reaching 80 professionals • 1 Reproductive Well-Being Workshop reaching 20 professionals • 1 Pulse Check Survey reaching 100 youth • Bimonthly newsletter reaching 100 youth and monthly newsletter reaching 160 professionals • 4 young women engaged as ambassadors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.6 million impressions and 30,400 engagements across social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) • 12,396 unique website views • 2 new web series • 480 new followers across social channels • 93,800 YouTube video views • 60 new subscribers to newsletter for partners • 2,800 chatbot users, 3,100 messages received • 450 women supported through period poverty distributions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of campaign followers were women between 18-24, with Instagram having the largest following at 46% • Key health messages viewed by target audience 40+ times per month • 49 influencers engaged with a combined total of 36,000+ followers • Overall impressions grew 7% across all platforms; video views grew 1,300%; followers grew 51%; and overall engagements quadrupled • Videos had an average retention rate of 57% • Instagram had an average engagement rate of 10.1%, far above the industry average

Parents as Leaders

The **Parents and Communities THRIVE Initiative** seeks to build partnerships with families, identifying their strengths and connecting with nonprofits to support community programs. THRIVE is charged with building a collaborative early learning system that centers the voice of parents in the decision making and planning.

2020 Successes

- Received a two-year grant from the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York to fund a peer-to-peer support project utilizing the Co-Creating Well-Being Human-Centered Design approach.
- Five parent leaders joined the newly implemented Parent Advisory Committee.
- 16 agencies participated in THRIVE's phase 1 survey, showing a commitment and a need for the ECA to be a leader in family leadership.
- More than 50 parents contributed to deepening the ECA's collective understanding of how to incorporate parent voice into the work of the ECA.




Program Goal



Increase parent voice in the work of the ECA and partner organizations.

2020 Reach



Worked with **50+** families to create a peer-to-peer project

Engaged **16** local agencies in formulating a common definition of Parent Engagement

Working with THRIVE is REFRESHING!

THRIVE Parent Advisory Committee Member

Responding to COVID-19

The THRIVE Initiative has shifted to being entirely online due to the pandemic, which does have its drawbacks. People really need to know who you are and why they should spend their time with you. Personal connections are more difficult, but THRIVE has still managed to engage a number of parents through trusted community partners.



Working with the Early Childhood Alliance has been such an amazing experience. We have worked with the community on a lot of other projects, like lead, child hunger, schooling, and referrals to community resources. Helping and understanding the realities communities and families face has helped create a platform for ways we can make it better for not only the city, but for our children.

THRIVE Parent Advisory Committee Member

Initiative Activities

- Engaged **125** parents
- **16** agencies participated in the CSSP Leadership Survey
- Held **10** Parent Workshops
- Hosted **4** Parent Cafes
- Convened **4** Parent Advisory Committee meetings
- Convened **4** THRIVE Steering Committee meetings
- Hosted **1** large Virtual Parent Forum

Initiative Outputs

- **1** parent-led project (funded)
- **80% (16/20)** of solicited agencies participated in Phase 1 Report on Parent Leadership in Onondaga County
- **5** Parent Leaders identified and supported

Initiative Outcomes

- **88%** of participating agencies said that the ECA has a role in advancing parent leadership
- **50%** of participating agencies agree that parent engagement is crucial, regardless of funding
- **71%** of THRIVE Steering Committee members feel they have expanded knowledge of parent leadership



ECA Systems Operations



The ECA is a coalition of partners focused on improving the system of services available to support children and families in the first five years of life. The target population for the work of the ECA and our partners are families with children birth to age five in Onondaga County. The ECA both advances specific initiatives as well as attempts to influence the existing system of services that are designed to support children and families. The ECA works to increase the quantity and quality of services to ensure more children are entering school ready and on track for success in school. In partnership with early childhood providers, we advance evidenced based programs. Early childhood cross-sector partners, the business community, and individuals engaged in the early childhood system are our target population for our system level work. In partnership with providers, the ECA hopes to build a system to reach and support all children and families in Onondaga County with health supports, early learning supports and supports for families.

It has been a pleasure and a learning experience for me, both personally and professionally. I want to commend the staff for taking the ECA from the concept stage to a viable set of practices that have impact in our community.

ECA Leadership Council Member

2020 Reach



While 2020 was certainly a unique and challenging year, the ECA managed to maintain our schedule of quarterly committee meetings and bimonthly Leadership Council meetings by transitioning to virtual convenings. New parent engagement strategies were launched through the THRIVE Initiative, Talking is Teaching innovated to provide families with early learning resources, and Help Me Grow played a pivotal role in COVID-19 basic needs responses. We facilitated important community discussions around gaps and opportunities in the early childhood system and engaged with state and federal partners. We continue to expand our influence and find ways to communicate the work through social media, newsletters, and other forms of outreach.

187
Leadership touches

339
Partner touches

772
Community touches



2020 Successes



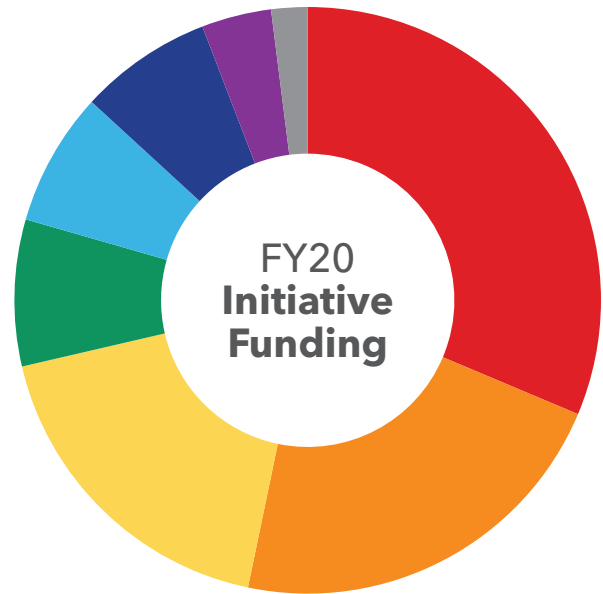
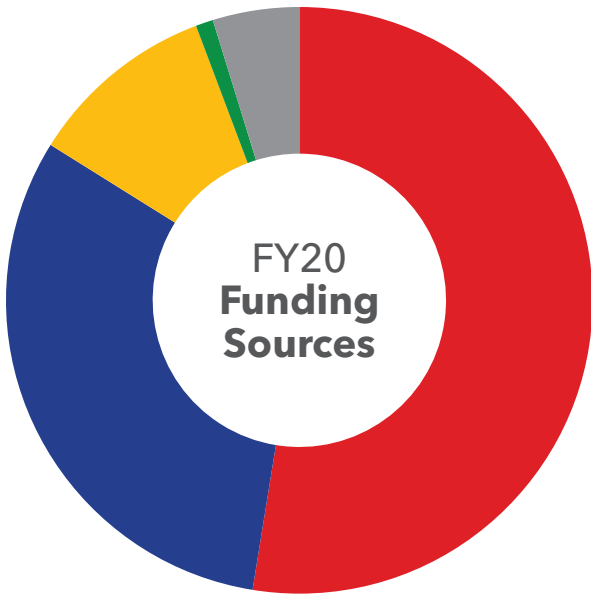
- Increased resource investment in ECA strategies from public and philanthropic sources from \$1.1 million in 2019 to \$2.6 million in 2020.
- Expanded staffing to include three full-time staff - Director, Assistant to the Director, and the Director of Community and Family Initiatives.
- Completed the second year of the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers/Pritzker Fellowship and transitioned the Pritzker Fellow to the ECA staff.
- Coordinated ten ECA committees that held over 40 meetings and engaged over 200 community stakeholders.
- Participated in early childhood system-building work at the state and national level (e.g., CSSP’s EC-LINC, National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers, New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council, Kids Can’t Wait Campaign, and Home Visiting Coordination Initiative).
- Launched a new monthly professional development forum for front-line workers in Onondaga County.
- Worked with Child Trends and local stakeholders to revise the ECA’s [Theory of Change](#) and systems-level data collection strategy to guide work for the next five years.
- Developed the ECA [Overview Document](#) to highlight initiatives currently underway.

Having a coordinating entity with the level of expertise, energy and passion for the work puts Onondaga County far above many others and makes us competitive.

Community Advisory Council Member

Initiative Activities	Initiative Outputs	Initiative Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 Leadership Council & Business Council meetings • 40 committee meetings • 5 trainings for frontline workers • 63 community meetings attended • 6 ECA bi-monthly newsletters • 1 website, 4 Facebook pages, and 2 Instagram pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100,000+ community members reached by the ECA initiatives • 2,300 social media followers for ECA, Talking is Teaching, THRIVE and Help Me Grow (may include duplicates) • 500 individuals engaged in ECA meetings (includes duplicates) • 100% (6/6) of ECA initiatives achieved programmatic impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of partners indicate that the ECA is adding value to the early childhood system • 86% of surveyed ECA partners indicated that the ECA has positively impacted how they do their work and can identify at least one way that the ECA has benefited their organization and/ or the community • 117% increase in resources supporting ECA strategies

Financial Overview



■ County	\$1,366,500	53%
■ Philanthropy	\$814,745	31%
■ State	\$270,000	10%
■ Business	\$25,000	1%
■ Other	\$124,000	5%
Total:	\$2,600,245	100%

■ Child Care Quality Init.	\$815,000	31.3%
■ ParentChild+	\$570,000	21.9%
■ Help Me Grow	\$470,864	18.1%
■ Reproductive Wellness	\$210,000	8.1%
■ THRIVE	\$191,745	7.4%
■ ECA Admin	\$190,636	7.3%
■ Talking is Teaching	\$100,000	3.8%
■ Other Initiatives	\$52,000	2.0%
Total:	\$2,600,245	100%



Community Advisory Council

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Allyn Family Foundation

Jaime Alicea

Syracuse City School District

Marnie Annese*

Health Foundation for
Western & Central New York

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*Leadership Council Member

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Kayla Delaney
Early Learning
Resource Specialist

Phyllis Koester
Pediatric Resource
Specialist

Miranda Walker
Family Resource
Specialist

Partners & Funders

The ECA is grateful to all the funders that make these new initiatives and system work possible. County Executive Ryan McMahon and the Onondaga County Legislature prioritized early childhood investments as part of their anti-poverty strategy for Onondaga County, and our philanthropic and private sector partners continue to match County support to strengthen the array of services for children and families.

- Allyn Family Foundation
- CNY Community Foundation
- Excellus BlueCross BlueShield
- Health Foundation for Western & Central New York
- Onondaga County
- Reisman Foundation
- Sisters of Saint Francis of the Neumann Communities
- UnitedHealthcare
- United Way of Central New York*
- Business Council Members Including: M&T Bank; SRC Inc.; Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C.; Bousquet Holstein PLLC; and Dannible & McKee, LLP

Special thanks to our national partners at the Center for the Study of Social Policy - EC-LINC program and the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers (NCIT) for the strong support they have provided us in our early childhood system building work.

*Provides in-kind support as the employer and fiscal agent to the ECA.



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