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... because **strong children**  
build **strong communities**

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**Programs for Parents | Annual Report 2015**



**Programs**  
*for* **Parents**

Comprehensive Services for Families and Children

## OUR MISSION

**W**e support children, families and child care providers in Essex County, through advocacy and action, offering education, referrals, sharing best practices, and access to available financial resources.



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# Welcome

## Greetings,

**T**en years ago Lativa was 18, pregnant, and unwed. When she told her boyfriend about the baby to come, he wished her well and moved to another city to start college. Her father, her only source of emotional and financial support, died a little while later. When asked if her mother had helped her, Lativa replied, “I was born and raised in Newark,” as if that should explain everything.

But Programs for Parents (PfP) came into her life and provided Lativa with financial help so that she could afford to put her daughter in child care. With her child taken care of, Lativa was able to find and hold down a steady job as a child care provider. She later earned her Child Development Associate (CDA) credential through PfP’s educational program, which resulted in a promotion and a raise. Today, Lativa is a lab technician at a local clinic. She is able to fully support herself and her daughter and no longer needs a child care subsidy. She stays current with her CDA certification because she would like to return to being a child care provider.

We wanted to tell you Lativa’s story because it illustrates so well Programs for Parents’ strategic vision for reaching Essex County with a unique “intersection” of services: professional training for child care providers, financial assistance for parents, and quality child care for children.

Programs for Parents moved closer to that vision in 2015 through an emphasis on family engagement and community development. In February, PfP launched the Essex County Council for Young Children (ECCYC), a program that trains and organizes parents, teachers, and community stakeholders to work together on local issues that directly impact the education, health and safety of children ages birth to eight. We are excited to see what this program will accomplish in the local neighborhoods of Newark, Irvington, Orange, and East Orange. PfP also held its first “Family Engagement Summit” in September which instructed child care providers and educators to engage parents in key areas such as building literacy in their children’s lives, fighting school absenteeism, and increasing the involvement of fathers.

In 2015, P4P also ensured that its foundational emphasis on improving the quality of child care was one that could be emulated statewide. Our child development experts assisted nearly 100 Essex child care providers and early education teachers to meet the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) created by *Grow NJ Kids*, a state-funded initiative. Programs for Parents is now in year four of *Grow NJ Kids*, and we are proud to have piloted it in Newark. We believe that *Grow NJ Kids* could compete nationally with any program that aims to standardize child care and early education.

The pages to follow will provide specific numbers and details of what Program for Parents achieved in 2015 through three flagship services: child care subsidy, education, and resource and referral. The bottom line? There is no other agency in Essex County that is working at the “intersection” of these three services so that every young child can access safe, affordable, and high-quality care and education.

As we find ourselves in the midst of an extraordinary national election, when political support for key human services could swing in either direction, we believe it is the work of local organizations like Programs for Parents that will continue to be the mainstay for those who need us the most.

***With gratitude for your support,***



*Barbara A. Litwinka*

**Barbara A. Litwinka**

***President, Board of Directors***



*Beverly Lynn*

**Beverly Lynn**

***Chief Executive Officer***

# Engaging Families and Communities with their Children

## A NEW INITIATIVE EMPOWERED PARENTS

***“Birth to Eight, Make it Great!”*** That was the slogan for Essex County Council for Young Children (ECCYC), a grassroots initiative launched by Programs for Parents in 2015 to train parents to become change agents in the areas of the community that directly affect the education, health and safety of children ages birth to eight. PfP received a contract from the New Jersey Department of Children and Families to establish a county council in Essex County, and created a partnership with the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) to accomplish this important work. Last year, ECCYC organized a steering committee made up of parents and community leaders and held special events to focus efforts on the local neighborhoods of Newark, Irvington, East Orange and Orange.





**Byron Garrett**

## **PFP'S FIRST FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SUMMIT**

“Family engagement” continued to be a major focus for Programs for Parents in 2015. PFP held its first Family Engagement Summit in September, which attracted about 150 family advocates and educators. The summit featured workshops on such topics as building literacy activities for families, fighting chronic school absenteeism, and finding ways to engage fathers in the lives of their children. Keynote speaker

and former CEO of the National PTA Byron Garrett emphasized the shared responsibility of families, community partners, faith-based leaders and business professionals to enrich a child’s education and emotional development. His personal account of raising his two nephews added poignancy to his remarks. The Summit was made possible through a collaboration with Newark Public Schools/Office of Early Childhood and funding from Foundation for Newark’s Future.

## Financial Assistance for Child Care

**This program is the best. It has been my everything. Helping me to go to school without stressing where my kids will be at anytime.**

—*Vera Asenso*

**The PfP subsidy has benefited my grandson the opportunity to get a quality start in his education and also with my income and getting ready for retirement. It has been a blessing.**

—*Michele Robinson*

In 2015, Programs for Parents made it possible for **19,000 children to attend child care** by providing their families with a child care subsidy through two state-funded programs: *New Jersey Cares for Kids* (NJCK) and *Work First New Jersey* (WFNJ). Providing financial help for child care is among PfP's most important services to Essex County since a strong economy begins with a strong workforce, and only parents who can afford care for their children can enter the marketplace or go to school.

**New Jersey Cares for Kids (NJCK)** provides a child care subsidy to families that are employed and/or attending school full time. The program is designed for low income and moderate income families so that they can maintain employment to support their families.

**Work First New Jersey (WFNJ)** is a child care subsidy program for families participating in job training or work as a requirement of the Welfare-to-Work Program. Child care is funded through participation in a qualified welfare-to-work activity.

## Resource & Referral



### OUR EXPERT COUNSELORS SHOWED PARENTS HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT CHILD CARE

**A**lmost all parents with young children will require some form of child care at some point in their lives. In 2015, the experienced counselors in Programs for Parents' Child Care Resource and Referral department helped nearly **2,000 parents to determine which child care was right for them**. From infant care to after-school and summer camp programs, PfP's expert counselors introduced options that met parents' specific needs. Parents were instructed on how to view each child care provider and were given a checklist to help them evaluate program features. On heavy volume days, PfP counselors received up to 30 calls per day with each referral call taking between 30–45 minutes. PfP's counselors also provided other helpful information, such as community resources, bus routes and how to choose a pediatrician.

*I am very grateful. Through PfP I am proud to say as a single mother I go to school and work full time to upgrade my life.*  
—Dora Osei-Bonsu

*It is very helpful. Single father, full-time student and full-time employee. It [PfP] helps me a lot in a great deal.*  
—Emmanuel Ocran

# Professional Development

## TRAINING EARLY EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS



**T**he most pressing need among child care providers today is for more professional training in child development, theory and practice. Programs for Parents expanded its training in 2015, by offering nearly **130 early education classes** and professional development workshops to over **2,800 child care providers**. PfP's Center

for Excellence in Early Childhood Education also focused on developing child care leadership by offering the *Directors' Academy*, a course that provided skills in fiscal management, educational programming and facilities management. The Center also offered the *New Jersey Administrators' Credential* and the *Child Development Associate (CDA)* credential. About 260 parents also received parenting skills workshops and supportive services.

## FROM CAMP COUNSELOR TO CHILD CARE CENTER OWNER



**Alysse Gerbino**

**A** 15-year journey took Alysse Gerbino from teen camp counselor to the top job as director in a child care center. But Gerbino didn't stop there. She convinced a co-worker to take the plunge and together they purchased their own child care center in Whippany, NJ. When she received a call about enrolling in PfP's NJ Administrators' Credential course, Gerbino knew it was just what she

needed for this new challenge. The course provided advanced instruction in fiscal and program management, marketing, staff development, educational programming, and advocacy. "I really gained a lot of knowledge and self-awareness through the classes," says Gerbino. "This course has made me very aware of my leadership style, as well as the personality types of all of my co-workers. I highly recommend this course to all of the directors out there."

# Grow NJ Kids



## QUALITY CARE FOR ALL CHILDREN IN ESSEX COUNTY

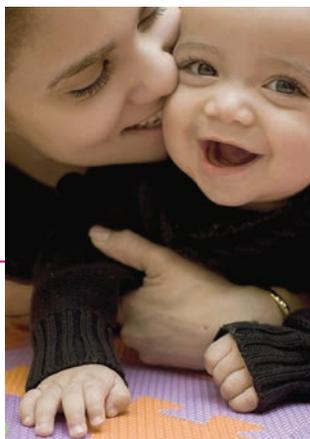
**G**row NJ Kids, the quality rating and improvement system designed to create universal standards of quality for all early care and education programs, expanded in 2015. Ninety-eight Essex County community providers, Head Start and Early Head Start, and school district based preschool classrooms participated during the year. Programs for Parents, under contract with NJ DHS/Division of Family Development, supported child care providers with free-of-charge access to resources including: shared best practices, free professional training programs, free technical assistance, educational scholarships, program incentives, and more. Technical assistance toward continuous quality improvement was individualized, based on the strengths and needs of each participating program. More than 360 site visits, phone calls, trainings and group meetings were conducted to support the participants in conducting self-assessments; creating quality improvement plans; ordering materials, equipment, and curriculum; and accessing scholarship funds to advance staff knowledge and education about infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The most important role played by PfP was in supporting the implementation of improved classroom and management practices that better meet the needs of young children and their families.

# New Jersey First Steps



## New Jersey First Steps

*A State-wide Infant/Toddler Initiative*



**“Children are born ready to learn,” says Stacy Salley-Proctor, PfP’s Coordinator for NJ First Steps Northern Region program. “We work to ensure that providers understand that and to develop best practices.”**

### **SPECIAL CARE FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS**

Child care experts often refer to the 0–5 years as being the most crucial in a child’s development. But a child is already expressing body control, eye recognition, and emotional attachment in just the first six months. That’s why Programs for Parents continued to administer The *NJ First Steps* program in seven counties in the northern region and provided training, onsite technical assistance, coaching and enhancement grants to over 2,500 participants interested in improving the quality of their infant/toddler programs. “Children are born ready to learn,” says Stacy Salley-Proctor, PfP’s Coordinator for *NJ First Steps* Northern Region program. “We work to ensure that providers understand that and to develop best practices.”

# Steps to Quality

## **EXPANDING OUR STEPS TO QUALITY**

Programs for Parents expanded its *Steps to Quality* program in 2015, which is designed to raise the quality of care in family child care homes for children ages 0–5. An additional 15 family child care providers received free onsite technical assistance visits by early childhood experts, as well as free professional liability insurance, materials, and equipment grants of up to \$1,000. In addition to using the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale to assess providers, PfP's child care experts also used the *Grow NJ Kids* Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) to familiarize providers with this assessment tool as it was about to be rolled out by the NJ Department of Human Services Division of Family Development. *Steps to Quality* is made possible through a partnership between Programs for Parents, The Nicholson Foundation, Child Care Connection, and Community Child Care Solutions.

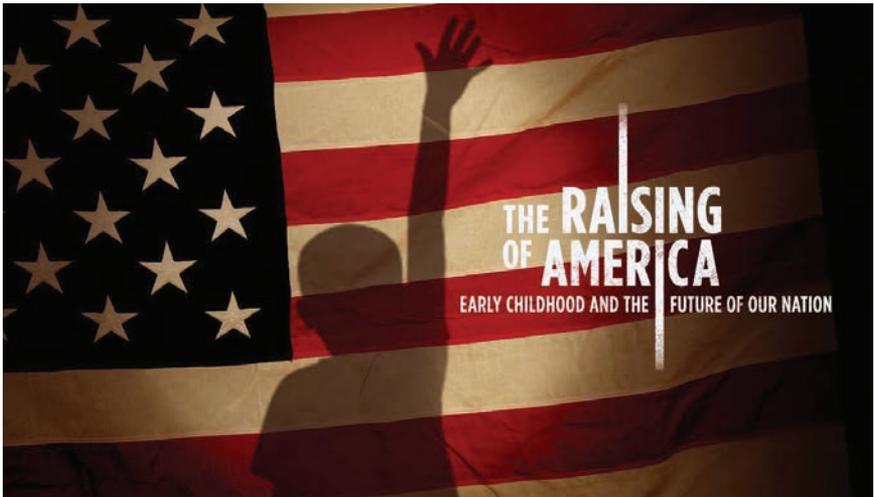
**Family child care providers received free onsite technical assistance visits by early childhood experts, as well as free professional liability insurance, materials, and equipment grants of up to \$1,000.**

**It (PfP) has allowed me to continue in my studies in school, while allowing the stress of my children being properly cared for and in a safe environment taken off my shoulders. Forever grateful for PfP!**

**—Carla Magrini**

## Moving the Child Care Agenda Forward

Since more than 400,000 New Jersey children ages five and under spend at least part of their week in some form of child care because their parents work, it is essential that high quality child care options are available. Unfortunately, finding high quality, affordable child care is a challenge for many New Jersey families. According to a recent market rate report released by Child Care Aware of New Jersey, the average annual cost of child care in a licensed center for an infant up to 12 months was \$11,534



In June, P4P screened a new documentary called, *The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation* as part of public engagement campaign. This national documentary takes an in-depth look at how a strong start for all children leads to greater individual success and a more prosperous and equitable society.

in New Jersey and \$9,776 in Essex County. In 2015, Programs for Parents continued to be a strong advocate for raising awareness about the high cost of child care. In June, PfP screened a new documentary called, *The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation* as part of our public engagement campaign. This national documentary takes an in-depth look at how a strong start for all children leads to greater individual success and a more prosperous and equitable society. It also details how the U.S. lags far behind other developed nations in child well-being and in other issues such as maternity and parental leave. The screening was made possible through a partnership between Programs for Parents, Child Care Aware of New Jersey, The Nicholson Foundation (which provided funding), and the Essex County Human Services Advisory Council (HSAC).



**The screening was made possible through a partnership between Programs for Parents, Child Care Aware of New Jersey, The Nicholson Foundation (which provided funding), and the Essex County Human Services Advisory Council (HSAC).**

## Major Community Partners 2015

New Jersey Department of Human Services  
Division of Family Development

New Jersey Department of Children and Families

New Jersey Department of Education  
Office of Early Childhood Education

New Jersey Department of Health

Essex County Division of Employment & Training

Investors Bank Foundation

Newark Public Schools

The Nicholson Foundation

The Schumann Fund for New Jersey

Professional Impact NJ

Essex County College

Montclair State University

Child Care Aware of New Jersey (formerly NJACCRRA)

School Readiness Consulting Inc.

Essex County Council for Young Children

Essex Project Launch

Rutgers University—Newark OUCP

The Turrell Fund

Victoria Foundation  
United Way of Essex and West Hudson  
United Way of Northern New Jersey  
Becker's School Supplies  
Kaplan Early Learning Companies  
Irvington Public Schools  
East Orange Public Schools  
Advocates for Children of New Jersey  
Foundation for Newark's Future  
Family Support Organization of Essex County  
Newark Fairmont Promise Neighborhood Planning Council  
Newark Preschool Council  
The Leaguers  
Orange Public Schools  
Urban League of Essex County  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC)  
Newark Regional Business Partnership  
The Salvation Army, Montclair Citadel

# 2015 Financial Statement

## REVENUE

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
<b>Public Support and Revenue:</b>		
N.J. Department of Human Services Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)	\$7,010,049	\$7,838,364
N.J. Department of Agriculture Child Care Food Program	828,658	436,353
Grants	486,500	480,700
Program Revenue	790,666	521,484
Fundraising	22,687	11,798
Interest Income	4,231	4,372
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b><u>\$9,142,791</u></b>	<b><u>\$9,293,071</u></b>

## PROGRAM AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
<b>Support Services</b>		
Unified Child Care Delivery System	\$5,816,484	\$6,297,716
Training and Grant Programs	2,077,099	1,338,187
Management and General	1,117,136	1,526,565
Fundraising	36,019	20,382
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$9,046,738</u></b>	<b><u>\$9,182,859</u></b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>96,053</b>	<b>110,221</b>
Unrestricted net assets—beginning of year	879,059	768,838
Unrestricted net assets—end of year	<u>\$975,112</u>	<u>\$879,059</u>



# Programs *for* Parents

Comprehensive Services for Families and Children

## Newark Office

570 Broad Street, 8th Floor  
Newark, NJ 07102  
973-297-1114

## Montclair Office

500 Bloomfield Avenue  
Montclair, NJ 07042  
973-744-4050



Programs for Parents is accredited through Child Care Aware of America, which works with more than 600 state and local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies nationwide so that all families have access to high-quality affordable child care.

### Check us out at:

[www.programsforparents.org](http://www.programsforparents.org)  
Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.



Programs for Parents is designated as the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency for Essex County by the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Family Development. The major funder of Programs for Parents is the State of New Jersey.