

Hello, my name is Mary Feldman and I am the ED of the Rutland County Parent Child Center. RCPCC is home to 50 committed, effective, and well-educated staff members who connect with hundreds of families throughout our programs across Rutland County. Over the course of a year, we support up to a thousand children and their family members.

Committed to the importance of early childhood education and family support, this spring RCPCC is opening a Whole Family Learning Center so that both parents and children have a safe space to learn and thrive. This center will help stabilize the workforce in Rutland now and over the next twenty years.

I am asking for your commitment to the Parent Child Center Network FY 2024 Budget Request for an Increase in Base Funding for the PCC Integrated Grant by \$5.2million with a goal of \$10million statewide.

Parent Child Center staff ARE the professional experts in supporting children and families. We understand child development and family needs in ways that are unparalleled. All families benefit from our work regardless of economic status.

Thank YOU for supporting the work of Parent Child Centers and for acknowledging through your funding decisions how important and critical this work is to a sustainable Vermont.

PCC's have for decades received level funding - we are catching up on years of the disadvantage of limited resources to do some of the most important and proven work in the state. PCC's provide a plethora of services that stabilize families with young children and prevent unwanted outcomes. These services are provided through long standing trusted relationships with PCC professionals who time and again have been asked to sacrifice salary, health insurance, and professional respect to do this work. Our agency is competing with the starting salaries of supermarkets. This increase in the PCC Integrated Grant funding would allow the Parent Child Centers to increase wages and/or benefits to be competitive in the workforce marketplace so that families with young children can receive consistent, high-quality services and supports from people that they know and trust.

That is why it is important that we receive the full \$5.2 million request.

Thank you.

Mary Feldman, M.S.Ed.
Executive Director