

Statement from the Director, Nan Mann, Brattleboro Centre for Children February 8, 2016

Brattleboro Centre for Children operates a program that has received 4 STARS, rated as a high-quality program. 85% of our families are eligible for part or full-time subsidy through CCFAP. Even 100% tuition rate assistance leaves most families with a weekly co-payment for our full-time care. These vary depending upon a family's own income and the perceived service need.

With rates that have not kept pace with rising costs of doing business for the past 7 years, families are being asked to make up that difference, at increasing costs that sometimes make it prohibitive to their budgets. This means some families have been forced to withdraw their children from our care. Withdrawing hurts the family, as they have to care for their children without the support of our program; it hurts the children who lose out on being in a high-quality early education program; and it hurts our center because we have to try to fill that vacancy to maintain our income, often leaving us under-enrolled for weeks at a time.

CCFAP is meant to help Vermont's lower-income families give their children access to high-quality early childhood care. But in reality, because of how low the rate of assistance is, this is not always the case. When children are pulled from high-quality programs because parents cannot afford them, it is the children who pay the price in the long run. Increasing funding to CCFAP will help these families and programs like Brattleboro Centre for Children work together for the good of these children's education.