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Good afternoon, I'm Joe Ferrada, Co-Director of Parent Child Center in Washington County (Family Center), and Parent Child Center Network member. Thank you so much for taking the time to listen to the Parent Child Center testimony.

Budget Request #1: Prevent budget cuts specific to Parent Child Center's:

- Prevent the elimination of the VT Child & Family Community Response PCC Pilot, a program replication from the Colorado Community Response. The Colorado Community Response (CCR) program successfully helps to prevent child maltreatment, according to an evaluation of the initiative in 2017. According to the evaluation, "Families participating in CCR strengthened their economic security, improved their ability to cope with stress, and demonstrated an increase in positive behaviors that help prevent child abuse and neglect." In VT the pilot program being implemented in three regions, provides voluntary prevention services to families reported to FSD that screen out at the assessment stage. It represents a loss of 4.5 Family Support staff and a loss \$350,000 in prevention funding
- Prevent the elimination of community contracts for Reach Up Case Management. Approximately 21 case management staff and 1.6 million in prevention funding

Reach Up case management at the Parent Child Center (PCC) shares a common expected outcome for participants as case management in the district offices- -increased work readiness resulting in unsubsidized employment. Though the outcome is the same, the road to get there often looks very different. Embedded in the Parent Child Center, Reach Up case managers work with the youngest recipients of TANF and their families and embodies a wrap-around approach. On-site access to integrated supports such as parent support and education, child care subsidy and referral services, CIS Early Intervention/Family Support Home Visiting, food pantry and nutrition education, supported housing, Reach Up job coaching and a Reach Up community based worksite offer warm handoffs to services making it more likely that the youngest parents will engage, and therefore, grow personally and in their role as a parent. Strong collaboration with community partners ensures continuity of care and course correction for participants when necessary, especially related to housing, substance use treatment, mental health supports and DCF Family Services and corrections involvement.

Following is a “snapshot in time” (2/6/19) detailing some of the most challenging aspects of Reach Up case management and how the Family Center of Washington County Reach Up case managers support their participants:

We are currently serving: 83 Reach Up participants- ranging from minor parents to parents

The Family Center employs: 2 full time Reach Up Case Managers

The Reach Up Case Managers are completely embedded throughout other services in our agency and community partners so the cut of these two positions impacts a loss of referral and support to our other services such as CCFAP, Child Care Referral, our Food Pantry, our Early Childhood Program and our CIS services such as Early Intervention and Family Support Home Visiting.

Homeless 30% of the caseload is currently homeless or precariously housed. Homelessness refers to people living in cars, outside or in a dwelling unfit for human habitation, in GE housing at a hotel, in short term transitional housing or a homeless shelter (18%). Precariously housed: no permanent housing- couch surfing/staying with others for a day or two at a time.

- PCC Reach Up case managers take an active role in helping participants move toward affordable, stable housing. This role is above and beyond the scope of the PCC Reach Up case management contract. This includes helping participants fill out and deliver subsidized housing applications, obtain documentation necessary to apply, applying for general housing subsidies independent of project based housing and AGREEING TO BE THE LONG TERM HOUSING CASE MANAGER FOR THE PARTICIPANT (required by many housing subsidies), searching for apartments with participants, contacting landlords for or with participants, transporting participants to available apartments and meeting with the landlord and participant together, advocating for funding from the local community and Housing Review Team for deposit assistance, providing (at least) monthly housing case management visits in the apartment, acting as the liaison between the participant and the landlord when problems arise, supporting participants through evictions and beginning the process all over again if an eviction cannot be avoided.

Transportation: 53% of participants rely on others to get to appointments.

- Reach Up case managers at the PCC’s meet participants at their homes, hotels, libraries, in their cars, at educational institutions, and community service placements. Case managers also transport participants to appointments such as DCF meetings, housing appointments, ESD benefit appointments, initial community service program interviews, and visits to child care programs when

searching for care for their children. Transportation to these appointments goes hand in hand with participant support during the appointment.

Family Services Involvement: 32% of the families currently being served have an open case with Family Services (DCF).

- PCC Reach Up case managers support participants to work with the Family Services system by attending Family Services meetings with the participant, linking participants to services recommended by the Family Services team (parent education opportunities, mental health and substance use services), and aligning the Reach Up Family Development Plan goals with the Family Services plan whenever possible.

Substance Use Treatment: 27% of the current caseload is either receiving treatment for substance use or is currently addicted to a substance and not in treatment. We believe that substance use plays an even larger role in challenging the lives of this population of young parents living in poverty but are only able to report what we know for sure.

- PCC Reach Up case managers support participants by linking to substance use (and co-occurring) mental health treatment, communicating with substance use providers, occasionally transporting to UA screens in conjunction with a scheduled home visit and encouraging the development of healthy coping systems and wellness habits by introducing participants to pertinent community-based supports.

As illustrated by the above “snapshot in time”, service delivery to the youngest Reach Up families goes well beyond basic case management. This wrap-around case management (as prescribed in the current FY’ 19 PCC Reach Up contract) is both prevention and intervention oriented and has a proven track record of delivering high quality services to families.

Budget Request #2:

Increase state funding for Parent Child Centers providing essential state services (see attached platform)

All PCCs deliver critical & essential state services to families with young children, through their Master Grant and other grants and contracts with the Department for Children and Families. The Master Grant is an ongoing effort between the Parent Child Centers and the Department for Children and Families to build consistency in service delivery and outcomes measurement across Vermont for the essential state services the PCCs are delivering on behalf of the state. However, the Master Grant does not adequately fund the state services that it requires the PCCs to deliver.

Parent Child Center staff wages and benefits are continually 30% below market rates to comparable positions in education and state government. If PCCs are expected to

continue to provide high quality state services, PCC wages and benefits must sustain the highly skilled people who do the work.

Master Grant funding must increase by \$8,000,000 to close the salary and funding gap. Total PCC Master Grant funding must be \$10,000,000. PCCs are requesting a 3-year phased approach to get to the goal of \$10million/year for the PCC Master Grant.

⊕ Our request for FY2020 is to increase the Master Grant base by \$1.5million
⊕ We also request \$1.5million in one-time funding to “catch up” on deferred administrative and maintenance expenses that have been delayed as we have dealt with continued under-funding for decades.

Parent Child Centers Network

Base Increase Funding Request for salary increases and filling of vacant positions
Fiscal Year 2020

Total request over three years (FY2020, 2021 & 2022): +\$8million
FY2020 request: +\$1.5million base

Parent Child Center staff wages and benefits are continually 30% below market rates to comparable positions in education and state government. We realize this problem cannot be fixed all at once. We are asking for a three-year commitment to bring salary and benefit levels closer to market rates to reduce staff turnover, provide consistency for our clients, and reduce the costs associated with hiring and training new staff. In this first year, we propose bringing all of our staff to a base level of \$15/hour, filling some of our vacant positions, and if possible, at some PCCs, raising salaries of professional staff and/or creating needed new positions.

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The chart on the reverse of this sheet shows the staff at PCCs that are not yet at \$15/hour, and the base salary cost associated with increasing all staff to that level. The numbers below do not reflect the PCCs' share of taxes, nor do they include any benefits. The chart is meant to show the scope of the issue for the PCCs.

In addition to this chart, the PCCs conducted an internal survey this past fall, and found that:

- Over the past three years, across the 15 Parent Child Centers, we know that at least 98 people have left PCC jobs for higher paying jobs (or jobs with better benefits) with similar duties.
- Several PCCs cannot offer paid health insurance for their employees. Employees rely on spousal coverage, Medicaid, or pay out of pocket, including in at least one case, the Executive Director.
- At least 20 positions are currently vacant across all PCCs. Time to fill vacant positions ranges from 2 to 18 months.
- Based on eligibility charts for LIHEAP/SNAP/CCFAP, at least 59 employees across the state's PCCs would qualify for one or more of these benefits. This number is a low conservative estimate.
- Across the 15 PCCs, if funding were available, they would create at least 18 more jobs to fulfill their needs, in addition to the 20 vacant positions noted above. Again, this is a low conservative estimate.

The base increase requested for FY2020 will not address all of the issues listed above, but it would allow the PCCs to begin to address these issues that have arisen over many years of inadequate state funding for the essential state services that Parent Child Centers were created to provide

Please see the Parent Child Centers are the Answer Legislative Platform 2019 document for further details

Parent Child Centers are the Answer Legislative Platform 2019



Parent Child Centers (PCCs) are a network of 15 community-based non-profit organizations, serving all of Vermont. *PCCs were created through Vermont Statute, and the purpose of each PCC is to provide “prevention and early intervention services such as parenting, education, support training, referral and related services to prospective parents and families with young children, including those whose children are medically, socially, or educationally at risk.”* PCCs are essentially the hub of services for families with young children – an actual place in the local community where families are always welcome and can always get the support they need, regardless of economic status or family status.

Budget Request:

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**Parent Child Centers
Core Services**
Home Visits
Early Childhood Services
Parent Education
Playgroups
Parent Support Groups
Concrete Supports
Community Development
Information & Referral

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Research has proven that prevention services targeted at reducing and treating ACEs can dramatically reduce long term health care costs. The PCCs use a family-centered, multi-generational, strength-based approach that both treats and prevents ACEs in families.

Parent Child Centers also support the following Legislative Agendas:

- FaMLI Coalition
- Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance
- Reach Up Coalition
- Let's Grow Kids

PCC Contact Information:

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LUND

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Parent Child Centers Network

Base Increase Funding Request for salary increases and filling of vacant positions

Fiscal Year 2020



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FY2020 request: +\$1.5million base

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Agency	# of Positions/FTEs Below \$15	Current Wage Costs Below \$15	New Wage Costs @ \$15	Total Cost of Increasing to \$15
Lamoille Family Center	(12) - 6 FTEs	\$172,487.00	\$193,656.00	\$21,169.00
Family Center Washington Cty	(11) - 10.05 FTEs	\$275,179.03	\$313,560.00	\$38,380.97
The Family Place	(1) - .1 FTE	\$2,694.00	\$3,120.00	\$426.00
Janet S. Munt Family Room	0			\$0.00
Milton Family Center	(11) - 9FTE	\$207,835.20	\$244,200.00	\$36,364.80
Addison Parent Child Center	(2) - 2 FTEs	\$57,765.00	\$64,700.00	\$8,935.00
NEKCA - North	(10) - 9.5 FTEs	\$259,875.00	\$296,400.00	\$36,535.00
LUND	(occasional subs)			\$5,000.00
Rutland Parent Child Center	(18) - 18 FTEs	\$465,920.00	\$569,920.00	\$104,000.00
NEKCA - South	(13) - 11.8 FTEs ?	\$293,110.00	\$338,338.00	\$45,228.00
Orange Cty Parent Child Center	(13) - 11.6 FTEs	\$320,566.00	\$361,920.00	\$41,354.00
Springfield Parent Child Center	(12) - 10.15 FTEs	\$148,586.88	\$181,350.00	\$32,763.12
Parent Child Center of NCSS	0 FTEs less than \$15	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sunrise Parent Child Center	(7) - 5 FTEs	\$139,348.70	\$176,684.70	\$37,336.00
PCC of Early Education Services	(30) - 22 FTEs	\$576,342.00	\$643,500.00	\$67,158.00
TOTAL Cost of Wage Increase to \$15		Total does not include federal or state taxes or benefits.		\$474,649.89

Parent Child Centers Network

One-Time Funding Request for deferred administrative & maintenance expenses

Fiscal Year 2020



Parent Child Center Network One Time Project List (note projects are NOT in priority order – these are a list of projects the PCC could complete right away if funds were available)

Total request: \$1.5million in one-time funding

These projects are only the tip of the iceberg and represent a sampling of projects that could be completed right away if one-time money were made available. Completing some or all of these projects would relieve some of the ongoing stress of continual underfunding. Also, continually deferring expenses is more expensive in the long run. We are not asking for the full amount of need this year, but we would welcome any and all funds that could be made available. The total need represented on this list is \$2,821,422. We will of course track and report on all projects completed with one-time funding in FY20.

Contact Person: Amy Shollenberger – 802-793-1114 / amy@action-circles.com

Addison County PCC (\$344,277)

1. Heating system \$15,749
2. Roof \$25,000
3. SEC windows \$9,324
4. SEC classroom (countertop, bench, finish) \$2,383
5. SEC classroom (chairs and desks) \$2,383
6. Classroom (lights) \$1,452
7. Classroom (carpet) \$2,000
8. Childcare (rugs, window covers) \$10,836
9. Building expansion to accommodate additional childcare room for 9 infants, bathroom and common area- \$150,000
10. Solar system \$60,900
11. Replacement windows \$40,000
12. Insulated blinds for meeting and office space \$10,000
13. Commercial freezer \$8,000
14. Stroller shed \$6,200

Rutland County PCC (\$442,000)

1. Finish current construction project for Chaplin addition. This is a Whole Family Education Center providing an additional 29 Infant/Toddler slots, in house-CIS therapy rooms, and 1/3 of the building space is allocated to a gathering space for adults, career pathways, AA/NA meetings, a full-sized dining room so parents can have early morning breakfast with kids before first shift, and a weekly community meal. This project is already in motion and has a \$300K shortfall in funding which will most likely become a loan. \$300,000
2. Replace driveway and parking areas at the Brandon facility. \$80,000
3. Kitchen equipment at the Whole Family Center where meals will be served daily to all children (breakfast, lunch, and snack), breakfast for the whole family, and a community meal once per week. \$10,000
4. Technology upgrade at the new facility. CIS computers and backup, computers for our Learning Together program, computers for parents to use in developing career pathways. System crashes often and people cannot work. \$20,000
5. Security systems for ECE center at Chaplin and Brandon. \$20,000
6. New heater for Chaplin ECE facility. (Duck tape is amazing but we're hangin' on by a thread.) \$12,000

NEK-South PCC (\$81,000)

1. Roof \$50,000
2. Parking Lot \$25,000
3. Electrical updates \$6,000

Family Center of Washington County (\$152,000)

1. Parking lots repairs including repaving \$60,000
2. Kitchen improvements and new equipment \$10,000
3. Technology improvements including continuing investment in data system development \$35,000
4. Playground replacement and improvements \$10,000
5. Safety Building Needs \$5,000
6. New roof Community Outreach building (COB) \$15,000
7. Prep and paint Childcare building \$8,000
8. Replacement Windows COB \$9,000

LUND PCC (\$582,500)

1. Roof Replacement- West Wing: \$65,000
2. Elevator to improve facility accessibility \$150,000
3. Parking lot repair resurfacing/repaving and signage: \$50,000
4. Computer Network Server and back up upgrades: \$39,000
5. HIPAA/Privacy compliance policy and practices consultation: \$5,000
6. New Accounting Software migration and training: \$30,000
7. On-line Training modules system: \$11,500
8. Upgraded outdoor lighting: \$5,000
9. Window Treatments- for our safety/violent intruder response policy and procedure \$24,000
10. Onboarding/HR Software: \$24,000
11. Cultural competency consultant/staff training series \$27,000

The Family Place (\$51,545)

1. Exterior painting (will require scraping and priming some sections), three buildings: \$38,545
2. Resurface gravel/dirt parking lot (in bad shape): \$4,000
3. Add insulation in roof cavity above child care: \$1,500
4. Add insulation to roof in largest building: \$7,500

The Janet S. Munt Family Room (\$40,000)

1. Build onto existing playground, including fence ext. \$3,000
2. New flooring and carpeting in entryway and hallway \$5,000
3. Shade structure and storage for garden equipment \$11,000
4. Kitchen upgrades- new stove and refrigerator \$2,000
5. Partitioning of office space \$6,000
6. New carpeting in preschool and infant toddler room \$6,000
7. Build partition for Parent Room \$4,000
8. IT Support (currently none) \$3,000

Family Center of Northwestern VT (\$15,000)

1. Early childhood playground improvements \$5,000
2. Professional development - mindfulness/wellness/doula certification \$10,000

Lamoille Family Center (70,500)

1. Security System upgrades \$2,000
2. New rug installation (1200' 1st floor and 1400' 2nd floor) \$26,000
3. Paint Building \$7,000
4. Expand Parking Lot \$2,000
5. Repair and re-pave existing asphalt 3,300 sq/ft \$14,000
6. Accordion Privacy Divider for living room/kitchen \$3,500
7. Roof repair to fix leak \$10,000
8. Child Care storage space/electrical improvements/light fixtures \$6,000

Springfield Area PCC (\$63,600)

1. Improve IT Systems \$11,600
2. Enhance Child Care Playground \$33,500
3. Improve Building Security \$18,500

Early Education Services Windham County (\$125,000)

1. Keyless card entry system and security cameras for higher security at our sites \$75,000
2. New roof for one and paint our two Westminster buildings that provide programming for preschoolers, infants and toddlers \$30,000
3. Update furnishings for family meeting spaces at 130 Birge (diaper changing station, comfortable chairs, energy efficient lighting) \$20,000

Orange County PCC updated (\$64,000)

1. Technology upgrade to replace computers that are over 10 years old \$15,800
2. Resurface parking lot \$5,000
3. Security blinds throughout building \$8,000
4. Scrape, replace clapboards and paint exterior of building \$20,000
5. New boiler and work on heating system \$10,000
6. Kitchen Remodel/Upgrades to convert small home kitchen to commercial kitchen serving 80 kids and adults 3x/day \$5,200

NEK-North PCC (\$226,000)

1. Scrape and Paint exterior windows and trim \$15,000
2. Upgrade kitchen downstairs (use for classes/ community gatherings) \$10,000
3. Create welcoming child and family space (paint, renovations, furniture) \$15,000
4. Enhance food shelf program/storage (purchase commercial refrigerator/freezer units; increase storage area) \$11,000
5. Install an elevator to create handicap access to 1st and 2nd floors (Handicap access is currently only basement) \$150,000
6. Energy efficiency upgrades (i.e. window replacements/ heating and cooling system) \$25,000

Sunrise Parent Child Center (\$209,000)

1. Updated laptops for 15 staff @ \$600 each \$9,000
2. Data program \$10,000
3. Structural repairs to our 4 aging buildings including handicap ramp and porch repair to our High School building, one redo of ramp and second story dangerous porch repair to Victorian Building. \$90,000
4. Residing of Main Building and exterior paint of 4 buildings. \$60,000
5. 6' Chain Link Fence around play yard, \$10,000
6. Upgrade heating and electrical systems. \$30,000

Milton Family Center (\$355,000)

1. Repave and re-level badly cracked parking lot and walkways (the water pools in 1/3 of the parking areas that make in inaccessible for families and staff to get to the building, and in the winter the pooled water becomes a dangerous ice rink). \$40,000
2. Replacement flooring in childcare space and flooring throughout building. Childcare has small grant to purchase materials for child care but need funds to cover labor costs. Throughout building, carpet in hallways is threadbare and is a tripping hazard. Families have complained that our building is "depressing and gloomy", and despite them loving our programs, the physical space being old, faded, and badly in need of repairs/upgrades, takes away from the "warm welcome" they are looking for. \$12,500
3. Prep and paint all of exterior building. Exterior of building is wooden batten that is rotting in places and very visibly chipped everywhere. \$15,000
4. Privacy fence in front of dumpsters to avoid unauthorized "dumping" & improve first impressions of site (dumpsters are one of the first things you see when drive onto property). \$2,500
5. Board Training at a national non-profit conference such as BoardSource (board needs better training on their roles and responsibilities... good intentions, but support and guidance needed). \$5,000
6. Replace heating/cooling system. Still running with original air handler from 1976, central air does not work, so we install individual ac units that do not effectively cool space. Have had to shut down center during winter days when weather is below freezing because despite the constant repairs on current air handler, the building cannot get above 65 degrees to meet minimum licensing requirements to be in operation. Current system also highly inefficient and expensive for our monthly utility costs. \$160,000
7. Elevator to the currently non-accessible 2nd floor. Upstairs is where the classroom and large meeting space is located. Although due to the age of the building, we are not required to upgrade to meet the current accessibility codes for building use, it is a barrier to families and providers who need to attend classes in an accessible space. \$120,000