



Public Hearing - VT House and Senate Committees on Appropriations  
Springfield, Vermont  
February 25, 2019

Dear Representatives,

I'm happy to share a personal story with you this evening about why parent child centers are the answer to many of the issues families face today.

I got pregnant when I was a senior in high school. I was able to graduate high school and enroll at Community College of Vermont. It was difficult being a young mom trying to juggle all these responsibilities and also get ahead in life. How was I supposed to be a good mom, work, *and* do well in my college courses? I needed a safe place to help care for my son full-time so I could work and study. Sadly, all the area providers cost more per week than I made at my minimum wage job. I was completely stuck. I had two options:

1. Quit my job and go on welfare
2. Quit school and give up on my hope of ever getting out of poverty and making a better life for my children.

I soon found out that I had a third option - to seek support from Springfield Area Parent Child Center. I learned about their "Child Care Financial Assistance Program," as well as their wonderful childcare programs and I applied right away. I qualified for my son to go to the childcare program full-time, for free. The relief that this gave me is indescribable.

Through the years I had two more children and continued to juggle work, college, and being a mom. It was an uphill battle every day, but today I am a college graduate who is about to have a Master's Degree. My son is a freshman at Northern Vermont University - the first in his family to ever go off to college after high school. The most amazing part is that I get to work for the amazing nonprofit organization that gave me the support I needed to be able to achieve my dreams - Springfield Area Parent Child Center.

When I think about the struggles that our community faces (poverty, substance abuse, the breakdown of the family unit, etc.) I think about how obvious the solution is. The solution to most of the issues we face can be traced back to children and families needing strengths-based, wrap-around supports so they can break the cycle and thrive. Parent Child Centers provide those supports to thousands of people each year - from home visiting, to Reach Up, to concrete supports and so much more.

Please help Parent Child Centers continue to increase their impact by maintaining all funding streams and supporting their request of \$8M, starting this year with \$1.5m to the Master Grant and a one-time \$1.5m for emergency capital improvements.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela Kelley", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Angela Kelley  
Former SAPCC Client  
Current SAPCC Employee  
Community Member