



**Testimony to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations
On the FY2027 Budget
2/12/2026**

Ellen Amstutz, Director, Vermont Parent Child Center Network
on behalf of the 15 Parent Child Centers.
ellen@VPCCN.org

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Ellen Amstutz, I am the Director of the Vermont Parent Child Center Network. The Network brings together the state's 15 Parent Child Centers, which are established in statute to work collaboratively to provide 8 core services for families with children under six to build family resilience and responsive parenting, support child development, protect against economic hardship, and prevent child maltreatment.

We are requesting a \$1.88 million increase in the statewide PCC Integrated Grant so that we can sustain this critical work and respond to the increasing challenges Vermont families are facing.

The Network was authorized by the legislature to work collaboratively as Agency of Human Services partner. Since implementation in 2024 we have made steady progress in establishing shared standards, strengthening accountability and aligning our work to meet both local needs while achieving statewide impact.

I would like to highlight several outcomes from the past year:

- PCCs served **more than 22,000 parents**, an increase of approximately **3,000 parents** over the previous year.
- As economic stability for many Vermont families became increasingly fragile, PCCs provided **4,220 families with concrete supports**, a **28 percent increase** from the prior year. Research consistently shows that economic instability undermines parents' ability to provide the consistent, nurturing care essential for healthy early brain development. These supports serve as a critical protective factor for young children.
- PCCs hosted **nearly 3,000 playgroups statewide**, providing essential opportunities to prevent social isolation, strengthen parent-child relationships, and connect families to additional services when needed.
- PCCs reached **1,707 families through Welcome Baby supports**, including information and home visits—reaching about **one-third of all babies born in Vermont** last year.

We are continuing to build the Parent Child Centers as the cornerstone of Vermont's system of care for families with young children. PCCs are key providers of state services including Children's Integrated Services, licensed childcare, Childcare Financial Assistance Programs, and others state services. Sustaining this role requires stable and adequate state investment.

We ask that the legislature support our full request for \$1,88 million increase to the VPCCN Integrated Grant so that we can continue to build the PCCs as a partner in supporting Vermont's families.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.