



THE  
RIVERFRONT  
CHILDREN'S  
CENTER

# Annual Report 2017

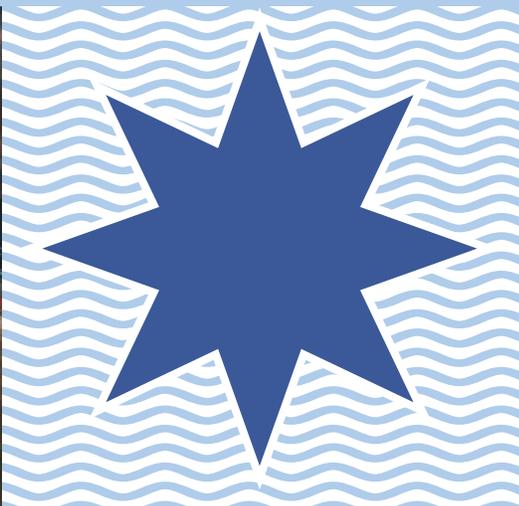
## Why we do what we do.

**MISSION:** to provide high-quality, affordable child-care and educational services, while comprehensively nurturing the unique needs of children and their families.

**VISION:** a community of families, staff, volunteers and donors working towards a common vision where all children are safe and receiving the highest quality education with all families self-sufficient and succeeding.

**NAEYC:** The center is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children; 2017 was spent preparing for a reaccreditation review. In November the center was awarded a five-year renewal.

**WHO WE SERVE:** Families live throughout southeastern Connecticut, with the majority residing in Groton and New London. Most parents work at entry level jobs in health care, manufacturing, and the service/hospitality industry, or are attending school or training programs; 59% of the children live in a single parent household; 57% of the families earn less than \$30,000 per year.



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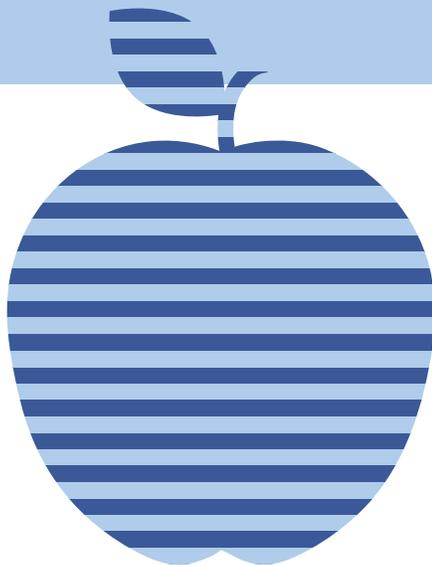
**SERVICES:** Early care and education is provided for children ages 12-weeks to 12-years-old, with five classrooms serving 40 infants and toddlers, four classrooms serving 66 preschoolers and one classroom for 20 before and after school care; 96% receive tuition subsidies and scholarships. Children and families have access to wraparound services, including a food pantry, personal care closet, donated clothing and social and emotional health supports. Staff help families to connect with community partners who can assist in housing, fuel assistance, legal issues, employment and more. Partnerships with local school districts, Birth to Three and the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership provide supports to teachers and families, in order to meet the needs of children with developmental delays. Approximately 25% of the children have a diagnosed special need and 29% have been diagnosed, or are in the process of evaluation, for social-emotional needs.



**OUTCOMES:** 144 children received high-quality care and education allowing their parents to work, attend school or receive job training.

As a result of individualized lesson plans and school-home partnerships:

- 95% of infants and toddlers reached milestones in the area of gross and fine motor skills, and problem solving; 92% met personal social skills goals and 86% met communication goals.
- 100% of preschoolers met 90% or more of creative expression and physical performance goals; 95% met 90% or more of personal social performance goals, and 89% met 90% or more of cognitive performance goals.
- Five infant and toddlers and six preschool children were screened for delays and have a plan in place to receive services or continue to watch progress.



## Year-At-A-Glance

**NEW STAFFING:** Kersten Elenteny, Development Director, is responsible for grants, donor development and events. Camille Alberti, Finance Director oversees finance and human resources.

**OUTDOOR CLASSROOM:** The vision of an outdoor classroom was realized with the help of grants and donations. One grant connected us with the UCONN Extension Master Gardener Program, with a student Master Gardener assigned to help us improve the gardens and support the development of a farm to classroom curriculum. Through her guidance staff, children and families were involved in the planting, care and harvesting garden goodies. The project was selected as a "signature project", indicating that a student will be assigned yearly to continue this partnership. Denise Heinrich, this year's student, will oversee the project. A gazebo was installed, adding space for reading, exploration of findings, and much more. A \$1,000 anonymous donation launched a fence campaign. The area was fenced in November and is now licensed for use by all ages. Classrooms use the space to enjoy lunch or story time, as well as work in the garden. The Rotary Peace Garden was dedicated in April and recognition was given to Susan Corrice and her retirement after 25 years at Riverfront. There are plans to develop musical events for children and families to participate in.

**BRANDING:** A new logo has given a fresh look to the visual materials people see in connection with Riverfront. New signs around the building highlight the logo and direct visitors to the entrance. With business stationary and promotional materials designed around the logo, there has been an increase in brand recognition.

**BUILDING UPGRADES:** Staff now have their own email accounts and voice mail, thanks to an upgrade in phone and internet services. Repairs to the sprinkler system were needed to address old pipe and sediment issues. Five classrooms received new countertop work stations, bringing together the microwave, refrigerator and food prep space. A parent built a new larger and improved shed to replace one destroyed in the fall microburst. The large tree in the White Fence playground also came down. Much appreciation to Jon's Quality Landscape for their quick removal and repairs to allow the space to only be closed for five days.

**EVENTS:** Using the success of the garden project, the annual fundraising gala was redesigned to call attention to the farm-to-classroom curriculum. The Farm-to-Table Gala held in November at the Velvet Mill, with a silent auction was a fun and successful fundraiser. The annual Fishing Tournament was held under the volunteer direction of Shennecossett Yacht Club and the ABC Bowling Tournament was a fundraiser conducted in partnership with Lighthouse and Higher Edge.

**VOLUNTEERING:** Several new groups were added to the volunteer list this year. Mystic Congregational Church adapted a long-standing early-childhood literacy program and selected Riverfront to provide twice per month volunteer readers, and the donation of books for children. Riverfront was selected by Comcast to serve as a Comcast Cares Day site. Over 125 workers from Comcast, Riverfront, Coast Guard Academy, ARC of New London County, Rotary Clubs, and Girl Scouts spent five hours on a Saturday in April making repairs and upgrades to the grounds. A lot of hard labor went into installing a fence, spreading 3" of wood chips in the preschool playground, creating crushed stone paths around the raised-bed gardens, cleaning out and refilling the sandbox, general landscape cleanup, painting and cleaning the basement. This was all made possible by the coordination of a Comcast Team that reached out to so many businesses for donations to support the work. When this work was completed a contractor came in and resealed and stripped the parking lot. When a group of people come together, great things happen! Thank you to all!

#### **WHAT'S NEXT**

- Bring music to the garden
- Expand the use of the outdoor classroom
- Launch the Endowment Fund
- Increase partnerships and links to resources
- Update the strategic plan
- Continue to explore options on how to serve more children.

## **How You Can Help**

### **MAKE A MONETARY DONATION TO:**

The Scholar Dollar Program; \$300,000 is needed to cover the cost of tuition subsidies for families in need.

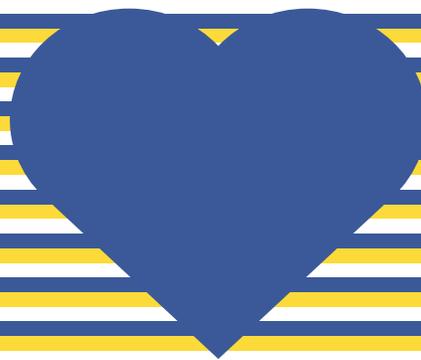
The Endowment Fund and see your legacy continue in the years ahead.

Provide unrestricted funds for items like emergencies or capital improvements.

Fund a special project, such as music, outdoor classroom, or human services.

**CONDUCT A DRIVE:** Collect items for the Family Resource Room; Suggestions: Gently-used clothing, non-perishable food, hygiene products, diapers, children's books, craft supplies.

**GIVE YOUR TIME:** Have a special skill and you like to work with children? Please consider sharing. This could be a one-time event, multiple sessions, or a regular visit throughout the year.



Riverfront's mission is supported through the donation of money, time and service. The contribution from businesses, donors, grants, partners, sponsors and volunteers are critical to our success. Together you contributed \$275,595 to support children and families!

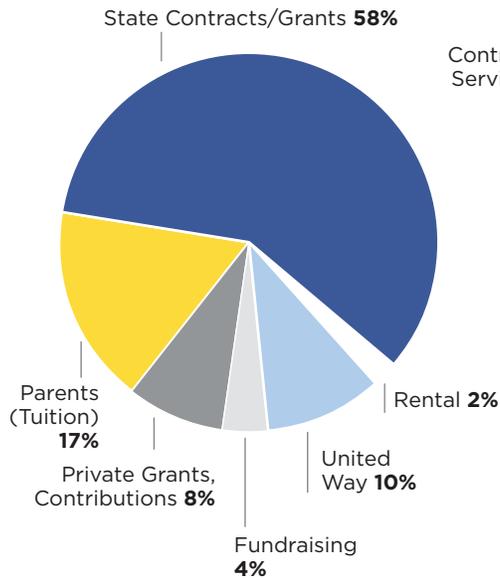
**THANK YOU!**

**2017 GRANTS and MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS**

Brownington Foundation	\$22,000
Chamber of Commerce of ECT	\$2,950
Chelsea Groton Foundation	\$3,000
Community Foundation of ECT	\$19,000
CFECT-Anonymous Donor	\$15,000
Dominion Foundation	\$2,500
ECT Association of Realtors	\$500
Edward & Mary Lord Foundation	\$15,000
First Congregational Church	\$2,000
Frank Loomis Palmer	\$15,000
George & Grace Long Foundation	\$2,000
Groton Education Foundation	\$500
Joan H. Butler	\$2,250
Ledelight Health District	\$500
Ledyard Rotary Foundation	\$1,000
Liberty Bank Foundation	\$5,000
Mystic Garden Club	\$410
Mystic Lions Club	\$2,000
Mystic Women's Club	\$500
New London Telephone Employees	\$680
Noank Baptist Church	\$600
St. Andrew's Church	\$500
United Way EFSP	\$1,000
United Way	\$136,017
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$249,407</b>

DONATIONS from businesses, events and individuals totaled: \$25,688

**INCOME**



**EXPENSE**

