



*Nurturing children. Supporting families. Strengthening community.*

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

### Emerging Stronger from a Year of Extraordinary Challenges

On April 24, 2020, at the 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Gala we had planned, we were excited to celebrate 50 years of Teaching Tree providing affordable, quality child care to Larimer County's low- and middle-income families. That live event didn't happen, of course. The COVID pandemic arrived just as we were opening our newly expanded childcare center in Fort Collins, to help address our community's extensive childcare waitlist.

So in April, we did not celebrate a milestone birthday, or the completion of a \$2.1-million capital campaign, or the opening of our six new classrooms, or our ability to provide child care to an additional 116 families. Instead, we strategized how to keep Teaching Tree, and our client families, afloat, and safe, during the seven weeks that our centers were closed.

During that time, our dedicated team provided virtual services to our families and kiddos, developed a practical, effective plan to reopen our centers in May, and sought the funding needed to maintain our experienced staff, buy PPE, and hire additional staff to keep our centers safe.

It was our most challenging year ever.

I'm happy to report, though, that Teaching Tree survived the pandemic and was operating at full or near full capacity by summer, serving more families and providing more childcare scholarships than ever before. All this, while implementing rigorous protocols that kept COVID exposures and temporary classroom closures to a bare minimum.

We have many partners to thank for helping Teaching Tree navigate the past year. On the following pages, we celebrate the funders, partnerships, and accomplishments that led Teaching Tree to emerge from the challenges of 2020 even stronger than before.

Anne Lance, Executive Director

*"This childcare scholarship made it possible for both parents to work and afford schooling for our son while also keeping a roof over our heads and food in our bellies. We are so thankful that Teaching Tree was able to keep our son safe while we continue to serve Fort Collins as a student and a self-employed working mother."*

# Highlights

Increased the number of children served by 74%



2019  
289



2020  
391

Increased the number of low-income children served by 70%



Provided 55% more in childcare scholarship dollars



2019  
\$121,629



2020  
\$219,672\*

\*Includes normal scholarships and additional scholarships to families severely impacted by COVID.

Increased the number of scholarship recipients by 77%



2019  
114



2020  
148

Number of low-income families able to enroll their children at Teaching Tree

Increased the number of staff by 74%

2019  
39



2020  
53



Helped close the achievement gap

Provided full-day care and education for 32 children in the Colorado Preschool Program

Increased the number of classrooms by 60%

2019  
9



2020  
15

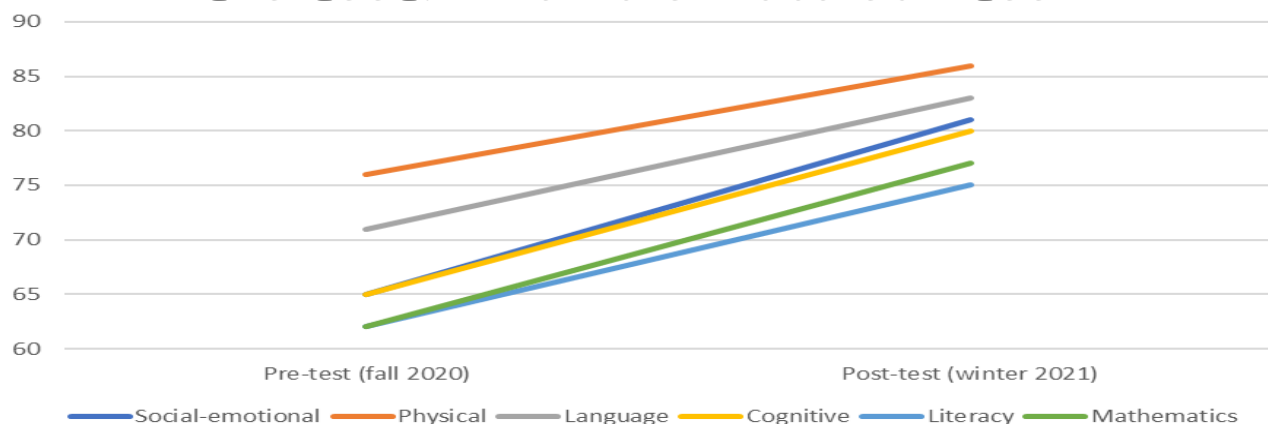


## Addressed children's mental health/behavior issues



SummitStone Health Partners, embedded in our classrooms, provided teachers and parents with strategies and resources to mitigate challenging behaviors early on and foster children's healthy social-emotional development.

## INCREASED CHILDREN'S SKILLS IN DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS ESSENTIAL TO SCHOOL SUCCESS



# COVID Impacts



Number of days **CLOSED** due to COVID lockdown

36 (March 20-May 10, 2020)

Responded to childcare needs of essential workers.



## Provided services to families during closure

- Ongoing phone and email communications to monitor families' childcare needs and impacts of COVID on families
- Virtual classroom activities for children
- Video visits with classmates

Received \$265,800 from the Paycheck Protection Program to retain staff and reopen classrooms.

Loan was forgiven in March 2021.



## Provided remote learning for 26 school-aged children

Created individual learning pods and provided staff to monitor school-aged children completing their virtual schooling while regular schools were closed.



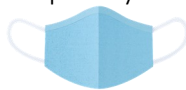
## Reopened safely and gradually

- ⇒ May 11-June 4: Maximum of 10 children per classroom.
- ⇒ June 4-July 31: As classrooms remained safe, enrollment gradually increased to an average of 200 children.
- ⇒ August: Resumed operating at near capacity with 245 children enrolled.



## Implemented numerous safety protocols

- ◆ Staff cohorting
- ◆ Outdoor check-in
- ◆ Extra staff hired
- ◆ Cleaned and sanitized bathrooms after each use
- ◆ Cleaned and sanitized equipment frequently throughout the day
- ◆ Kept children socially distanced
- ◆ Provided masks for all staff
- ◆ No outside visitors
- ◆ Performed contact tracing for anyone who had been exposed



## Tuition lost

\$610,785



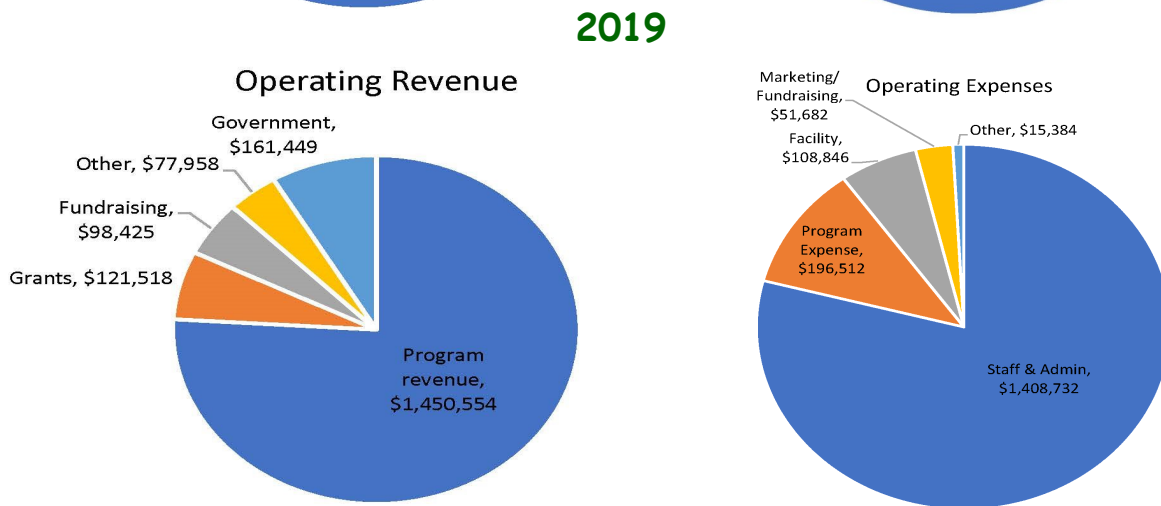
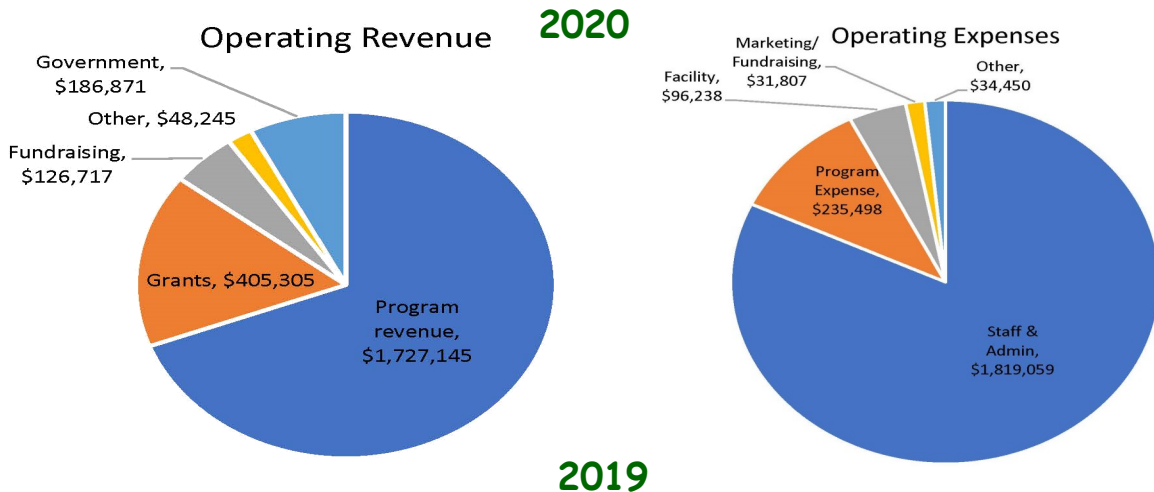
## Provided extra help for families

Delayed annual tuition increase from June 1 to Aug. 1.

Suspended childcare fees for families when Teaching Tree closed a classroom due to COVID exposure.

*"I am grateful beyond words. I am a single parent and without this assistance, I would not be able to work."*

# Financial Report



COVID-related grants: \$191,166  
 Other grants: \$214,139  
 Annual fundraising event: \$26,009 (vs. \$50,903 at 2019 fundraising event)

## Thank You to Our 2020 Major Donors

Anonymous Foundation  
 Blue Federal Credit Union  
 Bohemian Foundation  
 Buell Foundation  
 City of Fort Collins  
 City of Loveland  
 Colorado Dept. of Human Services  
 Community Foundation of Northern Colo.  
 Early Childhood Council of Larimer County  
 Foothills Rotary  
 Individual Donors  
 Larimer County Behavioral Health Services  
 Larimer County Dept. of Human Services

Larimer County Child Care Fund  
 NoCo Unify  
 Nordson Foundation Corporation  
 OtterCares Foundation  
 Poudre Golden K Kiwanis  
 Realities For Children  
 Rotary Club of Fort Collins  
 Rotary Club of Loveland  
 Run Rabbit Run LLC  
 Sam S. Bloom Foundation  
 The Colorado Trust  
 Tony Grampsas Youth Services  
 United Way

## Challenges Ahead

Sustaining our organization is based on a business model of keeping all of our classrooms full or nearly full for the entire year. Staffing is an ongoing challenge and impacts our ability to keep all of our classrooms open year round. Our board and administrative team continue to address this problem.

Other challenges we are addressing are how to meet the increased need for childcare scholarships due to families' loss of income/jobs, while also generating income to meet the increased expenses of operating a much larger program with a larger staff and payroll. To maintain our quality staff and recruit new staff, we must increase hourly wages for all positions.

Teaching Tree has developed effective strategies to keep our classrooms open as the pandemic continues and if it becomes exacerbated over the next year. We continue to follow effective health and safety measures and keep our centers safe. We've learned what we need to do to provide our families with the child care they need to maintain or work toward self-sufficiency, and we've added additional staff and mental health supports to help relieve the COVID fatigue and stresses that continue to affect our staff. We expect the majority of staff to be vaccinated in early 2021 and are hopeful that COVID exposures will continue to diminish as the year progresses.

We must continue to seek additional funding opportunities to ensure that we can keep our classrooms open and safe, help families continue working, and provide our community's youngest and most vulnerable members with consistent quality care, nutritious meals and snacks, and an early learning program that will prepare them to succeed in school.

Building and maintaining healthy reserves is critical to sustaining our organization. As a result of the pandemic, we hope more funders will understand the importance of maintaining three to six months of reserves to help our organization stay afloat when the unexpected occurs.

## How You Can Help

**Donate.** Your contribution to Teaching Tree will increase the quality and availability of child care in our community, benefit at-risk children, and help bring in matching dollars. Consider also our planned giving opportunities.

**Volunteer.** Serve on our board or committees, help with fundraising events, assist in our classrooms or help with playground improvement projects.

**Advocate.** Children are our most precious resource and our hope for a vibrant future. Learn more and spread the word about the importance of affordable, quality early care and education.

**Thank you.**

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