

**Statement by River Valley Child Development Services
Executive Director, Suzi Brodof – May 1, 2021**

River Valley Child Development Services is fully aware of the indictment of a former, long-time employee of our organization for potential theft of organizational funds. This employee, who was in charge of our organization's financial records and bookkeeping, left the service of our organization at the end of August 2020.

Shortly after this employee left service, a recently-hired employee charged with maintaining our bookkeeping noticed a few "red flags" that included a couple of missing checks. Of course, this prompted a more extensive review of our records. What we uncovered as a result of a thorough investigation, which required nearly three months and extensive leg work, was very troubling. As soon as we had compiled what we believed was sufficient evidence of potential wrongdoing by this former employee, we immediately contacted the U.S. Attorney and the FBI in December 2020 to conduct a thorough investigation and to explore possible prosecution. We are also communicating with our attorneys, our insurance carrier, law enforcement authorities and other involved parties to ensure that any funds that may have been misused or stolen are restored to the fullest extent possible. Over 95% of our funds are received through federal grants; therefore we have also contacted federal agencies, which are also interested in the recovery of these funds.

As a non-profit that started work in 1971, our organization has been audited every single year as required by law. Since 2000, we have utilized the services of the same firm of certified public accountants to perform these audits. Our last audit performed by this firm was completed in October 2019. No financial improprieties were found in any of these audits. To ensure the integrity of our financials moving forward, we have contracted with another firm to perform our 2020 audit and are also enlisting the help of trusted external, independent accountants to ensure additional financial safeguards are in place.

River Valley Child Development Services is now in its 50th year of providing quality services and support to children, families and the early childhood community. We are proud of the life-changing work we've performed and look forward to continuing our legacy of service in the decades to come. While uncovering this potential wrongdoing has been very disappointing for our organization's leadership, we vow that this will not diminish the enthusiasm we have for our work with families and children throughout the region.

We humbly ask for the community's continued support as we work through what would be a challenging time for any organization. This is especially difficult for River Valley Child Development Services because we have worked so hard to earn a stellar reputation and to develop a deep level of trust in our community for five decades. Moving forward, we will do everything within our power to not only correct any injustice done to us, to our supporters and ultimately to the children and families we serve, but to also work diligently every day to ensure that this type of issue can never happen again.

As this is now a legal matter that involves both law enforcement and the courts, we will be unable to make additional comments until this issue is resolved by our judicial system. Thank you for your understanding and support.