

Annual Report 2020-2021

YEARS



RIVER VALLEY CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES

Prepared by
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A Word from the Board President

Happy 50th Anniversary River Valley!! What an honor to celebrate 50 years! I have been connected to River Valley for some twenty years. I started in 2001 as an instructor of ACDS and at that time, Suzi was the director of the program. As the organization grew, I grew with it. Now I have the honor of serving as the Chair of the Board. Boy how times have changed! River Valley is a complex organization with many programs. It took me a long time to fully understand all the endeavors and activities that encompass RVCDS. I believe that Marie Phillips used that complexity to help hide her embezzlement from us. When I attended her plea hearing last month and heard her plea of guilt, I thought I would feel better- would feel some satisfaction from seeing her admit to her actions. But the truth is, I really didn't feel much at all. I realized that emotionally, I had moved on. I had been dwelling on her disloyalty for months- dealing with the fallout of her selfish actions. I was tired of feeling betrayed. I was tired of feeling hurt. But most of all, I was tired of letting her dictate my feelings. I started with ACDS because I love children and childcare providers. I wanted to make a difference- to help them and support them. I still have that burning passion and I want my energies to go to that cause, not dwell on the selfishness of one really bad apple. Yes, we have learned. We have made changes and even improvements. We're smarter and that's great. But I had to take stock of the emotional turmoil I had experienced. It's a healing process and we are going through it-together. I am reminded of a song by Needtobreathe called, "I Won't Look Back." The central line in this song is: "Let's climb to the top. If you won't look down, I won't look back." I have a very personal connection to this song. I heard it as I was debating ending a relationship. I was a widow and had just started dating a really lovely man. Our original agreement was to keep it light and fun, but before we knew it, we were both falling in love. Having been hurt before, I was terrified. I remember leaving his house one day thinking, "I should end this relationship before I get hurt again." And then I heard that song. And it reminded me that life is about taking chances. I was still scared, but I realized I didn't want to let fear and hurt dictate my actions and stop me from living my life to the fullest. That's how I feel about River Valley. Yes, we got hurt. We were betrayed and it hurt badly, but we must go forward. We must all go through the process- shock, denial, anger, sadness- to get to acceptance. But it's more than just acceptance. We owe it to ourselves, to each other, and to the families we serve to move on, be better, and to rekindle our passion. Don't let the actions of one color your efforts. Give it your all with no regrets- help River Valley be the best it can be. By the way, I stayed with that man, Glenn. We have been together for 9 wonderful years now and our marriage has created the most beautiful blended family. It isn't always easy, but living life to the fullest with no regrets is always worth it.

Here's to many, many more years, River Valley!

Kerri J. Carte



A Word from the Executive Director

This year began with a shaky start because we had to deal with major issues in our administrative department. The termination of our long-term director of business and finance revealed many overwhelming problems. We were very fortunate to bring in consulting accountants, an interim comptroller and new administrative staff who helped turn things around. The new policies and procedures that were developed and incorporated have changed the whole environment 110%. At the end of the fiscal year, our reports, grants, and finances were up-to-date.

In 2021, we are celebrating our 50th anniversary. Fifty years of providing essential services to children, families and the early childhood community is something to celebrate for sure. From our start as a pilot public kindergarten, we have always tried to meet the needs of children, families and the early childhood community. During the Covid crisis this year we provided a variety of resources for critical care child care providers, face to face care and help with virtual learning to children who weren't able to attend school, virtual training for child care providers, face to face care for our infants and virtual visits with families needing Birth to Three services. We intentionally worked more diligently than ever to make sure we were still meeting the needs of our community. That is who we are and who will continue to be in the future.

Suzi

Fulfilling our Mission



An average of 5,619 children per month received services from RVCDS.



An average of 6,228 families per month received services from RVCDS.



Approximately 3396 early childhood providers received services from RVCDS each month.



From Our Staff

Sarah
B.

My specific position with the agency fully covers all aspects of our mission. Through the WV State Registry System I provide quality services for those who have questions and/or need support. We support all of the early childhood professionals by keeping tracking of their professional development and provide quality trainings to help them to be the best they can be with the children and families they serve. Through the WV STARS Pathway Advancement Scholarship, I also cover our mission by offering tuition assistance to early childhood professionals who are working towards their associate and/or bachelor's degree. I believe this helps families of the children being cared for, feel confident in their decision of choosing a child care center, facility, or a family child care provider. It may help families know they are receiving quality care from the early childhood community. Offering the scholarship to the early childhood community shows them that we do care about their professional development and that we want to help them succeed in whatever goal they may have. Through the WV STARS Pathway to Earnings Program, I believe it supports our early childhood community the most. The EC professional are sometimes overlooked as having a very important career. Most times they are under paid and feel as if they don't always matter. With Pathway to Earnings, we are able to show appreciation for their achievements. By providing incentives for certain certificates and degrees, it allows EC professionals to strive for more. By providing these incentives, I have seen a lot of EC professionals take more trainings and some have even enrolled to start or finish their degree. What an exciting job I have!

Sara
M.

In my role of T&TA Coordinator, I believe I help fulfill River Valley's mission by delivering opportunities for providers to not only educate, but challenge themselves and their staff to reach for a higher standard of care to provide children and families. By providing trainings and conferences from experts across the nation at a lower than average cost, opportunities are available that may otherwise not be to meet those educational standards set for child care centers, facilities, and family home care.

Vanessa
C.

I feel we fulfill our mission by providing childcare needs to the families, not only assisting with financial burdens and safe environments for their children at this time, but also answering questions and concerns families have regarding the procedures of applying, choosing a daycare, assisting with the application process, returning phone calls, or e-mails promptly. Just being available to answer questions and interacting with families with friendly, courteous, professional conduct can alleviate some of their concerns in these stressful times.

*Our staff work tirelessly to fulfill
our mission.*



**\$6.6 million awarded
in sub-grants &
scholarships**



**On-going
collaborations**

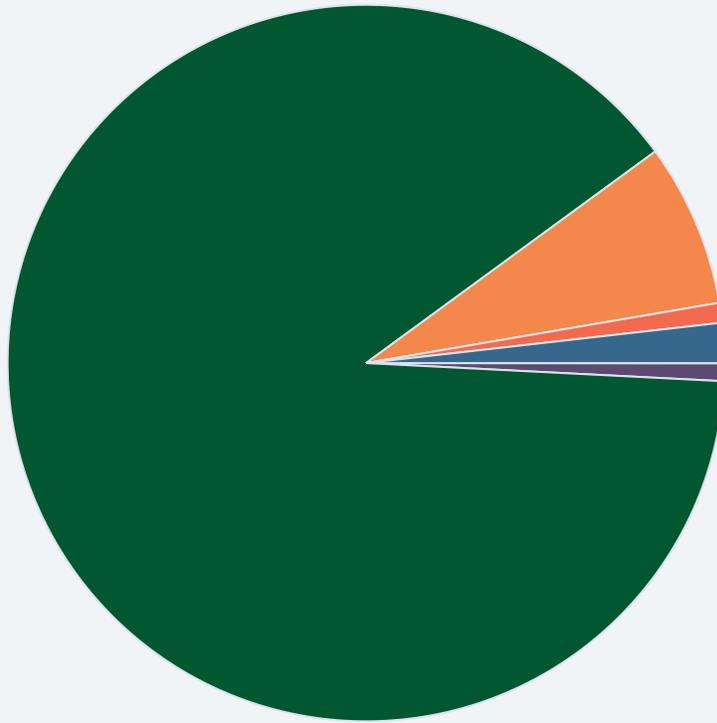


55 counties
received
early childhood
education services



Community

Funding

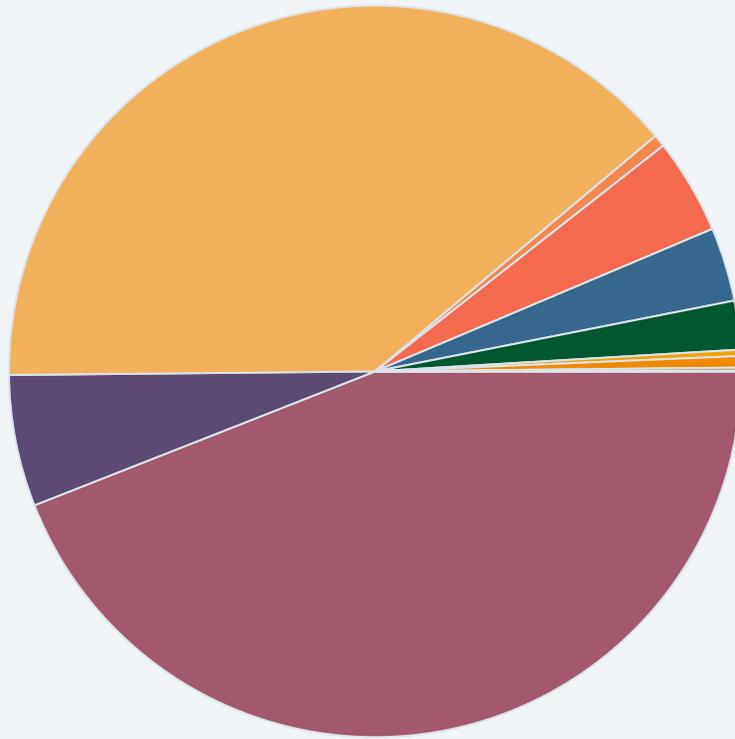


Contributions	2,511	Local Grants	135,458
DHHR Grants	15,217,697	Program Service Fees	1,257,540
Investment Income, Net	152,593	Other Income	307,386



\$17 million in funding

16.9 Million in Expenses



Wages/Benefits	7,480,531	Rent/Occupancy	987,293
Grants/Donations	6,630,132	Diversion of Assets	91,700
Supplies/Equipment	716,907	Professional Services	554,888
Technology/Communication	365,797	Insurance	47,324
Travel/Conferences	86,018	Interest	26,737
Misc	1,244		

Our Board Of Directors

Kerri Wade, Chair

Marsha Dawson, Vice Chair

Cathy Lawson, Treasurer

Pam Scaggs, Secretary

Linda Spatig, Member emeritus

Mindy Thornton

Debbie Chapman

Sherrone Hornbuckle

Debbie Lockwood

Shane Randolph

Sarah Dick

Lora Wells

Marianna Footo Linz

Amy Thompson

Shirley Birchfield