

Humanity Starts With You

2022 LEADING FOR CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT



Leading
for
Children

A photograph of a man with a beard and a young child with curly hair looking at a book together. The man is on the left, leaning over the child on the right. They are both looking down at a book held by the child. The background is slightly blurred, showing an indoor setting with a window.

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About LFC

Leading for Children (LFC) is a non-profit organization ensuring that all children develop and learn in thriving communities. Equity for every child must begin with equity for all of the adults in their lives, because we know that stronger adults can nurture stronger children.

For this reason, LFC focuses on all the adults within a child's entire ecosystem — the family members, educators, coaches, agency leaders, bus drivers, security guards, and other community members — to develop leadership skills, trust, shared purpose, positive interactions, and commitment to equity. We use a unique, equity-based mutual learning approach to co-create community-based solutions to improve early learning.

Our Mission

Our mission is to ensure equity and excellence for all children by supporting transformational relationships among all the adults in a child's ecosystem. To create the next generation of critical thinkers and leaders, children must be surrounded by adults who model intentionality, agency, and equitable partnerships.



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Dear Friends of LFC,

2022 was a tremendous year for Leading for Children. As we navigated the effects of the ongoing pandemic, we successfully refined and expanded our approach to improving early learning. This year, we impacted 18,000 children by holding our mutual learning programs in 12 states with more than 1,200 adults.



As Leading for Children continues to grow, our focus is on humanity first. We believe that human connection is key to strengthening communities so that all children can thrive. We believe that children learn what they live and grow to live what they've learned.

At Leading for Children, our groundbreaking model creates space for all the adults in a young child's ecosystem to lead the way and co-design solutions that strengthen early learning. LFC's approach does not involve huge costs or unwieldy governmental programs, but it does break down traditional power structures to elevate the wisdom, passion, and determination to create transformative experiences for children. The knowledge already exists in communities, and in our mutual learning programs adults find new ways to reflect, connect, listen, and collaborate.

We all know that strong adults make strong children. And we know that for children, every moment counts. Claiming kindness, empathy, and respect for others, and embracing the extraordinary wisdom and power within our community; these tasks are urgent and create our only path towards a better future. Listening to each other is not extracurricular. We must be bold and stand up for what we believe in — what is fair and right — if we are to achieve the goals of inclusion and equity. Because humanity is not a lofty idea. It's what we say and do. It's how we treat others. It's what children experience and learn from every day. Building our humanity is fulfilling our true potential. It is not an option, it's a necessity. And it's not only for some of us, but for all of us.

Reflecting on our year at LFC, we are inspired by the remarkable ways that adults shared their perspectives with courage and vulnerability, elevated wisdom in others, and identified shared purpose. In finding common ground and common goals, adults from diverse roles in children's lives are co-creating environments for all children to thrive.

I invite all of you to join us in supporting every child in learning kindness, empathy, and respect for others. Humanity starts with each one of us.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Jablon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Judy" and last name "Jablon" clearly distinguishable.

Judy Jablon

Executive Director

Year *in Review*

Stronger adults mean stronger children and that, in turn, leads to stronger communities.

At Leading for Children, we offer mutual learning programs in communities so that children thrive.



LFC's Learning Networks

In twelve states and Washington, DC, we hosted online and face-to-face Learning Networks at the state and local level to invite adults in the young child's ecosystem to engage in equitable learning partnerships on behalf of children's success. Through these mutual learning experiences, adults describe an increased sense of agency and intentionality that has a positive impact on children and early learning systems.



Conferences

Presentations at national conferences for Head Start and Smart Start explored each adult's role in creating equitable systems where children thrive.

Our sessions at the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education's 2022 Early Learning Conference focused on creating equitable systems and communities where stronger adults support stronger children. LFC shared our publications in the conference exhibit, and members of our Alabama Learning Networks were panelists at the closing Plenary.

Publications

We prepared for publication of our forthcoming book, *11 Simple Rules to Create Thriving Communities for Children*. This resource will support communities in establishing a shared vision of quality relationships and interactions, environments, and learning experiences.



Webinars

In partnership with the Hunt Institute, HiMama, and Early Childhood Investigations, LFC offered introductions to the 11 Simple Rules as a framework for inclusive conversations about quality and equity in early learning.

hunt institute

Tuesday, June 7 @ 2 pm ET

early efforts

*Children Thrive in Equitable Communities:
Eleven simple rules to help us get there*

 Judy Jablon Executive Director Leading for Children	 Nichole Parks Director of Program Leading for Children	 Nikki Baldwin Director University of Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network	 Rachel Swanson Teacher / Director Encampment Preschool
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hi mama helps

Providing quality childcare: 11 rules to live by for childcare centers

JUDY JABLON AND NICHOLE PARKS FROM LEADING FOR CHILDREN AND MARNESHIA CATHEY

THURS, JUN 23RD | 2PM ET



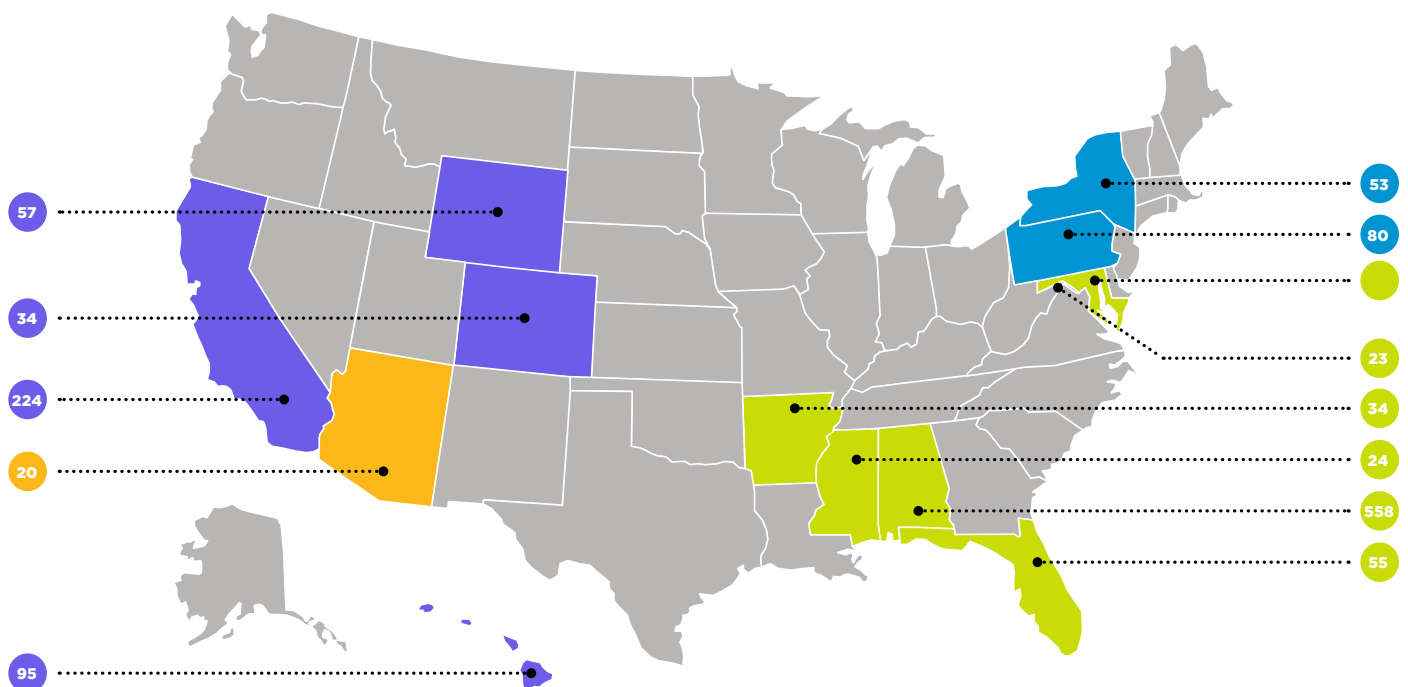




OUR YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

Programs

1,206 adults participated in **32 LFC programs**
in 12 states + the District of Colombia



Total Learning Network Members

Northeast

133

Southwest

20

Southeast

694

West

410

1,257
TOTAL
MEMBERS

Conferences

| More than **5,000 adults** attended **5 conferences**

BUILD Initiative 2021

Virtual | July 2021

Strengthening Early Learning Systems: Beginning with Equity of Voices

Alabama Early Learning Conference

Virtual | October 2021

Promote Equity in Early Learning: Be an Optimistic Leader for Children

2022 Smart Start Conference

Virtual | May 2022

Forging Equitable Learning Partnerships to Strengthen Early Learning Systems

2022 National Head Start Conference

Baltimore, MD | May 2022

The Five Commitments of Optimistic Leaders: Creating Equity in Early Learning

Regional VI Head Start Association Conference

Jonesboro, AR | September 2022

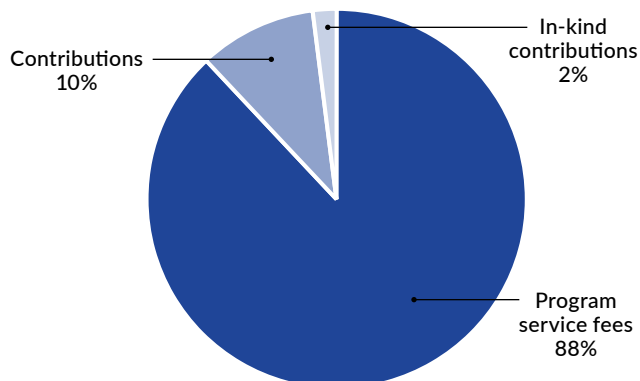
11 Simple Rules for Thriving Communities: An Equitable Approach to Collaboration

Webinars

| More than **1,500 adults** attended **3 partnered webinars**



Where Our Money Comes From

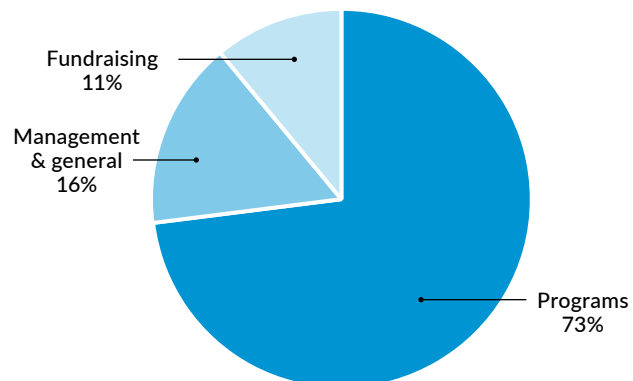


Support & Revenue

(for the year ended June 30, 2022)

Program service fees	\$1,127,197
Contributions	\$124,248
In-kind contributions	\$24,000
Total Support & Revenue	\$1,275,445

Where Our Money Is Spent



Operating Expenses

(for the year ended June 30, 2022)

Program & supporting services	\$941,018
Management & general	\$203,097
Fundraising	\$147,503
Total Expenses	\$1,291,618

Source: Leading for Children Financial Statements June 2022 and 2021 audited by Sobel & Co., LLC.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of June 30, 2022

Assets

Current Assets

Cash	\$355,812
Accounts receivable	\$258,254
Prepaid expenses	\$9,447
Total Current Assets	\$623,513

Liabilities & Net Assets

Current Liabilities

Accounts payable & accrued expenses	\$58,031
Deferred revenue	\$9,607
Total Current Liabilities	\$67,638

Net Assets

Without donor restrictions	\$496,631
With donor restrictions	\$59,244
Total Net Assets	\$555,875

Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$623,513
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Follow the Leader

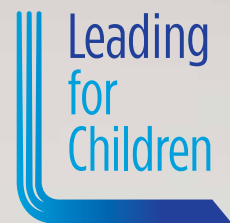
Children listen, look and model themselves after what's around them. By exhibiting human kindness, you teach them to be compassionate, little humans.

Humanity is not a lofty idea, it's the heart of our daily life and what we say and do — how we treat others. It is the soul of our community, and it is what children experience and learn from every day.

Building our humanity is fulfilling our true potential. It is not an option, it's a necessity. And it's not only for some of us, but for all of us.

The Humanity First Model
Developed by **Judy Jablon**

Humanity Starts With You



Stories of Impact



By talking with other Learning Network members, I have learned about resources that have been helpful to families I serve. This helps to break down silos within the early learning field.

When I arrived in the U.S. from Brazil 22 years ago, my first job was at a daycare. I knew right away that the early child care field was the right fit for me. I love working with kids because I can help them develop and teach them to do the right thing. I feel motivated when I see their gains in learning. When I started the Leading for Children's mutual learning program, I was the only home care provider in the room. As an immigrant, mother of three, and non-native English speaker, there were many barriers for me, but I have always felt welcome here.

Mutual learning creates space for exploratory conversations and relationship building. We broke out in smaller groups to discuss topics and brainstorm. By talking with other Learning Network members, I have learned about resources that have been helpful to families I serve. This helps to break down silos within the early learning field. Now, I am more intentional, and I actively refine my communication. I've shared the concept of intentionality with my staff and my children. I see the ripple effect of positive outcomes in the field.

The Learning Network always felt like a safe space, where all members can be ourselves. We were always respected by the program leaders and the rest of the group. I wish that everyone had a chance to participate in this. It is very personal. It touches me and makes me think about many things — from early childhood education to my family to my community.

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Mutual learning with Leading for Children is a reminder that all the adults in early learning are working for that same goal, for the children. We talk about perspective-taking a lot, and that reminds me to take a breath and try to understand what the other person is thinking. If our goal is the same, I know we can get there. This is when it really clicks for me: Instead of just reacting, I can actively feel myself pause and say, let's talk about this in a different way. This way, I can contribute to finding solutions.

I've really been trying to be more aware of my impact. We talk about it to kids a lot, but plenty of adults could benefit from hearing it too — is the impact of my words helpful or hurtful? Am I contributing to the solution? Sometimes you just don't need to say anything. I've realized that I have a choice.

That's where the LFC Optimistic Leadership framework has really helped. You have foundational commitments to fall back on. Sometimes what we learn during professional development doesn't stick, but this is different; the Learning Network is not just a conference that lasts an hour and a half with a couple of handouts. This is an active effort to build a community across the state. The Learning Network makes concepts applicable to your life and your work, and so you keep doing it and it stays relevant. It's real life, and it's you. You are the one who has to be self-aware. You have to choose to communicate this way. It becomes part of who you are.



Casey Sims

Teacher, Alabama

The Learning Network makes concepts applicable to your life and your work, and so you keep doing it and it stays relevant.

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Leigh Sargent

Agency Director, Mississippi

As Executive Director of the Tallahatchie Early Learning Alliance, my role is to unite my community in supporting children to thrive. I became aware of the need for unity and shared purpose several years ago, when there was a big push for developmentally appropriate practice from the state level — talking about effective ways to teach children. Everybody wanted the best for the children, and there was a lot of information for people to utilize, but many didn't have the confidence or sense of permission to make changes. When adults cannot access their power, children don't see models of what it means to be powerful.

Leading for Children creates space for communities to co-construct solutions. Now, we own the ability to create our own power within the community; others do not create the power for us.

Not only am I seeing changes in my community; I'm seeing changes in myself. If, as individuals, we self-reflect, practice self-awareness, and think about impact, we're more effective as leaders. A lot of times, I made decisions based on emotion but not always based on the impact. Now, I'm looking at my work and thinking about the impact that it is going to make. With this self-awareness, I'm becoming a better leader — as a person, not just as a director, not just as a teacher, not just as a parent. I'm digging in my heart and I'm changing in order to be effective.

I got involved with Leading for Children as part of the group that created Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality — a statewide framework for ensuring equity and quality for children. At first, I thought it would be a group of all parents, but then I found out that everyone else was an expert in their field. Leading for Children did a great job of making everyone feel that their voices mattered. Even though I kept thinking "I don't run a daycare; my expertise is in pharmaceuticals!", I saw how my experience as a parent has given me important knowledge to share.

Sometimes, it feels like parenting a kid is a totally different world from taking care of a child at a center or running a preschool, but I discovered so many similarities in our understanding of ways to support thriving children. Children do need space, and they need somebody to listen to them, and they need somebody to be on their eye level. The Learning Network was a great place for sharing wisdom and helped me feel better about parenting.

I'm a college professor as well, and I've started incorporating the practice of staying present that I learned from LFC into my classroom. Whatever is going on, we're here to learn. I also do this personally, and it helps me realize that sometimes my body is present but my brain is not. Tuning into that was such a big piece for me. I also valued the acceptance of everyone's ideas. It was a new way to listen, to be compassionate. Spending time with people who are that way makes you want to bring that into your life. And ultimately, the Coherent Path to Quality framework we made was pretty incredible; I hope that it's used to bring everyone in early learning to a more equal ground.

When adults cannot access their power, children don't see models of what it means to be powerful.

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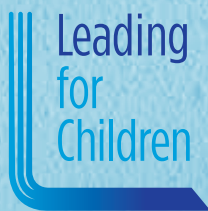
THANK YOU

To Our Donors and Supporters

Many thanks to the generous supporters who made significant gifts to support Leading for Children in 2022. Your partnership and commitment ensure that we are creating the communities that ensure children thrive. Together, we are elevating the humanity in us all.



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