






Family  
Connections  
INC.

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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## CONTACT US

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-  [www.familyconnectionscc.org](http://www.familyconnectionscc.org)
-  2508 S 8th Street, Sheboygan, WI

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2023, we celebrate a year of remarkable growth and impact at Family Connections. This past year was transformational. In addition to merging with Rainbow Kids, we became a joint agency that now includes a Family Resource Center (FRC) as part of our programming.

Since beginning the development of the FRC infrastructure in July 2023, we have worked diligently to introduce new programs designed to support families in meaningful ways. In 2023, we launched **playgroups** and created an inviting **playroom**, funded through grants, which is now open to the public for drop-in-play. Additionally, we expanded our reach by adding two new programs and welcoming four full-time staff members to help carry out our mission.

We were also honored to receive **Sheboygan County ARPA funds** to bolster child care accessibility and sustainability across the county. These funds enabled us to provide **early learning support** directly at childcare centers, offer **retention bonuses** for both current and new childcare staff, and distribute **startup and expansion grants** to strengthen the local childcare infrastructure.

While we celebrate these accomplishments, 2023 also brought its share of challenges. Navigating the integration of two agencies required extensive coordination, cultural alignment, and strategic planning. Additionally, the child care sector continues to face staffing shortages and financial sustainability concerns, making our work more critical than ever.

As we look ahead, our strategic vision remains steadfast: to **expand access to high-quality family resources and childcare support, strengthen partnerships, and advocate for sustainable solutions that empower families and early childhood professionals**. We are committed to fostering a resilient, thriving community where every child and family has the support they need to succeed.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our supporters, community partners, staff, and families who make this work possible. Your dedication fuels our mission, and we are excited for the opportunities ahead in 2024.

With appreciation,

*Colleen Steinbruecker*

Colleen Steinbruecker  
Executive Director  
Family Connections

# MISSION, VISION & VALUES

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Family Connections supports and educates families and early childhood professionals to promote healthy child development and strengthen communities.

## VISION STATEMENT

Services are available and easily accessible by families and child care professionals, so every child is prepared to thrive.

All children, regardless of economic status, religion, sex, race, or special needs, receive high quality, affordable care.

All parents seeking assistance in child care are educated on quality in child care environments and the resources available to their families.

All child care providers working in early learning, education, and care environments are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve by families and communities alike.

## VALUES

### Family

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children

### Child Care

- Professional Development
- Technical Assistance
- Recruitment
- Resource and Referral

# YEAR AT-A-GLANCE

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IN 2023, FAMILY CONNECTIONS, INC. PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING SERVICES TO CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS, FAMILIES, AND THE COMMUNITY:

**47** trainings were offered to providers involving a total of:

**1,076** hours of continuing education

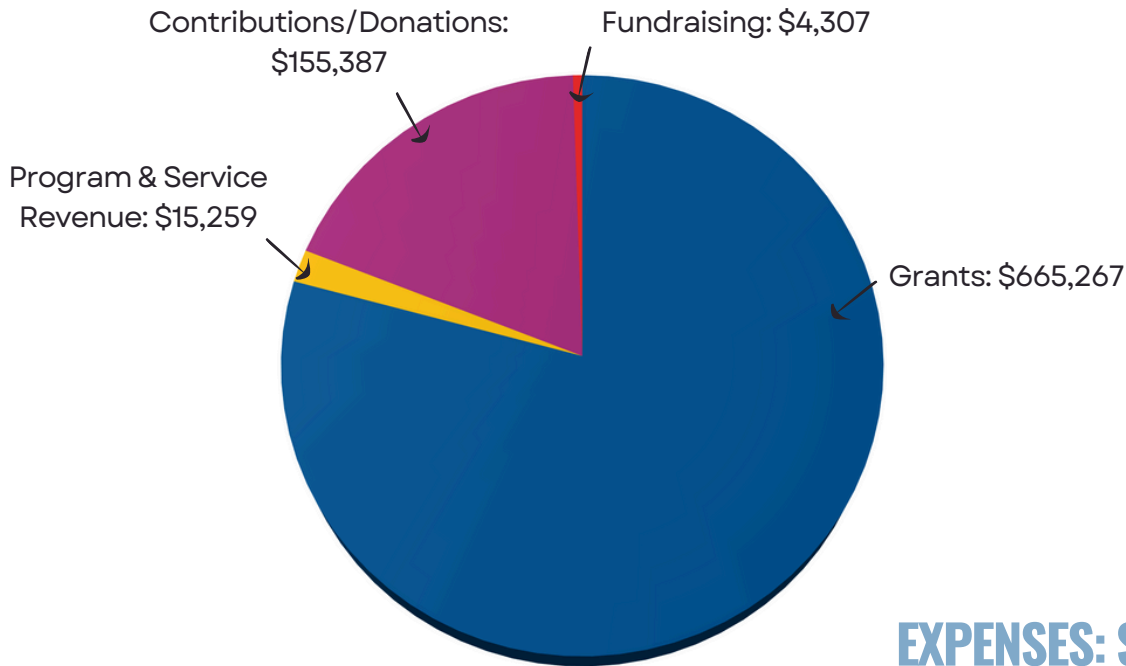
**414** total participants

**84** adults and **124** children participated in the Parent Café workshops

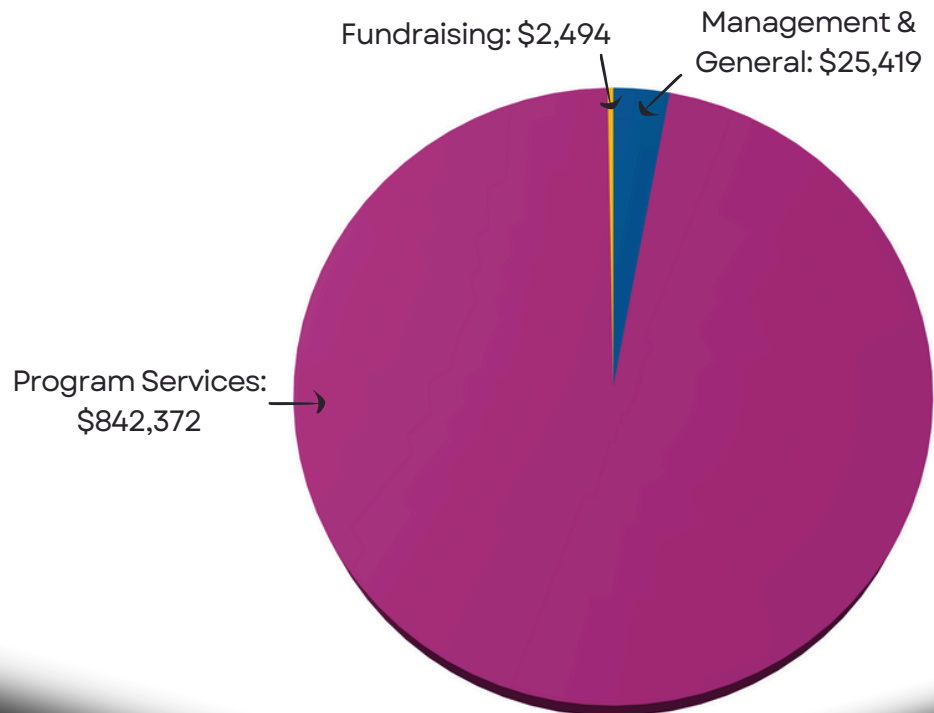
**883** families were visited through the Welcome Baby Program

# 2023 REVENUE & EXPENSES

## REVENUE: \$879,459



## EXPENSES: \$870,285



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAININGS

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**1,076** hours of continuing education

**414** total participants

## PARTICIPANT NUMBERS

Art in Action **53**

ASQ-3 **44**

Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care **14**

CPR **25**

Discovering Science **45**

Fundamentals of Family Child Care **11**

Fundamentals of Infant & Toddler Care **45**

Guiding Behaviors **51**

Introduction to the Child Care Profession **45**

Skills & Strategies for the Child Care Teacher **30**

Strengthening Families Through Early Care and Education with Mandated Reporter -  
Presented Online **20**

Wisconsin Infant & Toddler Pyramid **6**

Wisconsin Pyramid Model **25**

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAININGS

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## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

“Loved the training content and I will always remember the information from today and also will be useful always.”

“This training was easy to understand, and the content was great in helping teachers to see things from a different perspective.”

“Presenter did an excellent job!”

“Like the hands-on part and make and take. Good ideas to use next week.”

“The training was very informative and was presented in a variety of ways which helped to meet the learning styles of our diverse group of learners. this information will help focus attention on promoting the social emotional and behavioral.”

# CONNECTIONS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

- 33 adults/ 42 children monthly fees
- 42 families received payment for child care initial registration fees
- 3 ALICE participants

## FOND DU LAC COUNTY (ALICE Participants)

- 16 participants received 3 months of financial assistance
- 2 families received payment for child care initial registration fees
- 3 families received child care debt assistance



# WELCOME BABY

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**883** families visited through the Welcome Baby program

**663** hospital visits

**296** parents qualified for Parents as Teachers

**117** parents who agreed to Parents as Teachers

## THROUGH THE WELCOME BABY PROGRAM, FAMILY CONNECTIONS DISTRIBUTED...

**13,260** diapers to families

**1,326** baby hats and onesies



# PARENT CAFÉ

## COMMUNITY PARENT CAFÉS

**84** adults and **124** children participated in the Parent Café workshops

**March 16** - 9 adults and 17 children

**April 20** - 12 adults and 13 children

**May 18** - 10 adults and 16 children

**September 11** - 14 adults and 18 children

### Spanish Cafés

**April 11** - 12 adults and 15 children

**April 25** - 9 adults and 15 children

**May 16** - 9 adults and 17 children

**November 21** - 9 adults and 13 children

## PARENT CAFÉ PARTNERS

Family Resource Center  
Mental Health America  
Sheboygan HHS  
HeadStart  
Sheridan

## PARENT CAFÉ CHILDCARE PARTNERS

Child's Play  
Growing Generations  
HeadStart  
Family Connections

# STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

“ They are doing an amazing job for our families and the community!! ”

“ The staff is friendly. ”

“ Thanks to Family Connections, our staff feel supported and more confident as teachers! ”

“ Excellent resource to the community. ”

“ Loved the cohort trainings for child care teachers! ”

“ A huge support and resource to families in early childhood programs. ”

“ I have always been grateful for this community resource. They have helped fulfill continuing education requirements for myself, staff, helped provide insight into YoungStar, are an incredible resource to answer questions we have, and they feel like supporters in our field! ”

# STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS

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## FAMILY CONNECTIONS STAFF

Colleen Steinbruecker *Executive Director*

Terri Schultz *Family Support Coordinator*

Michelle Christus *Early Learning Support Specialist*

Deb Streblow *Welcome Baby Resource Specialist*

Michele Hemb *Family Support Specialist*

Shanda Yang *Welcome Baby Resource Specialist*

Cassie Weber *Recruitment Specialist*

Erin Williams *Recruitment Specialist*

Susan Crisp *Welcome Baby Resource Specialist*

## FAMILY CONNECTIONS BOARD MEMBERS

### Executive Board Members

*President* Mike Gustafson - *Executive Director Sheboygan Falls YMCA*

*Vice President* Tami Prunik - *Special Needs/Mental Health Manager Sheboygan County Head Start*

*Treasurer* Rebecah Wickert-Carini - *Wisconsin Bank and Trust Banking Center Loan Manager*

*Secretary* Pam Kugi - *Former Principal Early Learning Center*

### Additional Board Members

Jason Lederman - *Director of Special Education and Pupil Services Sheboygan Area School District*

Katie Hall - *Program Coordinator Fond du Lac County Birth to Three*

Luke Wacek - *Brand Manager Johnsonville*

# DONORS

