



Maryland Committee for Children

2007 2008
2009

Sandra J. Skolnik



dear friends

It is with deeply mixed emotions that we look back over the past three years at the advances achieved for families and young children and at events here at Maryland Committee for Children (MCC).

In November 2007, MCC's Executive Director Sandra J. Skolnik passed away. Sandy was a seminal leader who built MCC into a national powerhouse for the advancement of early childhood education. Sandy assumed leadership of MCC in 1974 and under her stewardship MCC grew from a part-time staff of two to its current 75-member staff and \$10 million annual budget.

Sandy played a major role in the founding of Friends of the Family, served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies from 1993 – 1997, and was the first Board Chair of Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations. In Annapolis, she was a staunch protector of all programs that contribute to early care and education.

During Sandy's illness, and after her untimely passing, the staff of the organization worked hard to continue the tradition of excellence that has been Maryland Committee for Children's. We were able to secure several new grants, including training grants aimed at improving the professional development of infant toddler care giving staff, improving the professional development of before and after school staff, and improving the professional development of all caregivers in the area of language and literacy. We also continued grants with new partners in the area of learning differences and learning disabilities, including a pilot program with the Frank Porter Graham Center at the University of North Carolina. We started a second "iteration" of our work with military families, with a federally funded effort to provide enhanced LOCATE: Child Care Counseling to active duty military families in Maryland. We also continued and grew our commitment to children entering school ready to learn

with a professional development grant that not only allowed us to update the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) training, but through funding from MSDE also allowed us to provide a stipend that allowed us to subsidize training to make it more affordable to participants.

Continuing on the positive side, MCC is looking to the future through a new lens. In May 2009, MCC merged with its long-time ally and "sister organization," Friends of the Family (FOF). FOF is the statewide intermediary for Maryland's network of Family Support Centers – 25 in all. These centers reach at-risk parents – especially adolescents – who are raising infants and toddlers and give them the parenting skills and education necessary to raise healthy children and lead self-sufficient lives.

The new organization that develops from this merger will have the expertise, resources, and statewide capacity to lead Maryland (and the nation) in the creation of a new system of care for children ages birth to five and their families. The vision guiding the new organization, identified in the short term as Friends of the Family – Maryland Committee for Children (FOF-MCC), is that of a State in which every family has access – in their home community – to family support, child care information & referral, high quality child care, and comprehensive services that support physical and mental health. Such a system is consistent with MCC's current mission and programs, and it will ensure that all young children and their families have resources to learn and to succeed. It is our hope that all who have supported MCC and FOF over the decades will be eager to move forward with us in this new endeavor.

Sincerely,

J. Michael Riley, *President*

Steve Rohde, *Acting Executive Director*

LOCATE: Child Care

resource
referral
data



MCC's Locate: Child Care department houses two functions that are critical to the organization's mission:

- child care resource and referral services that assist parents in finding and evaluating child care, and
- data collection initiatives that collect and analyze statistics on the supply, demand, and cost of child care in Maryland.

LOCATE: Child Care uses a database of regulated child care providers to assist parents in finding care that meets their needs. LOCATE counselors take calls at the twelve regional child care resource centers, and enhanced LOCATE services (described below) operate at MCC. In the three years from 2007 through 2009, LOCATE helped an annual average of 16,284 parents seeking appropriate child care for an average of 22,164 children each year.

LOCATE provides enhanced services to groups that face special challenges in obtaining child care. In 2007, in order to address the needs of the growing Hispanic population in Maryland, LOCATE added a Spanish speaking coordinator to its staff to assist Spanish-speaking families with their child care needs. Additionally, the LOCATE Spanish Coordinator provides these families with guidance identifying needed community resources and services outside of the child care realm. In FY 09, Spanish Enhanced Services assisted 140 families seeking care for 183 children.

In 2006 and 2007, LOCATE participated in a pilot project to assist military families. Funded by the Department of Defense through the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA), this pilot project assisted military families assigned to Fort Meade, Walter Reed Army Hospital, Fort Detrick and Aberdeen/Edgewood. Families were eligible for enhanced service including parent education information, verified vacancy searches, and assistance with completing the required forms for the Military Fee Assistance, if eligible. In 2008, MCC was awarded a contract with NACCRRRA to provide enhanced services to all military families (except Air Force) regardless of where they are assigned in Maryland. In FY 09, the Military Enhanced LOCATE service assisted 589 military families seeking care for 769 children.

LOCATE provides enhanced services to families of children with special needs. The demand for these services has grown significantly in recent years with a ten percent increase in utilization between 2008 and 2009. In FY 2009, this service helped 894 families seeking care for 1,195 children with special needs.

LOCATE staff members at MCC provide consumer information to parents and conduct training and assessment to ensure the quality and consistency of LOCATE counseling throughout the network. In 2008, MCC's monitoring and training helped the Maryland Child Care Resource Network successfully complete NACCRRRA's Quality Assurance Program for Best Practices in the Delivery of Consumer Education and Referral.

In addition to assisting parents seeking child care, LOCATE is the central data collection point for matters related to child care. LOCATE staff members gather, interpret, and disseminate information regarding the supply, demand, and cost of child care in each of Maryland's twenty-four jurisdictions.

LOCATE maintains a database of all regulated child care in Maryland, which is the basis of the child care referral service. In addition, LOCATE collects and analyzes other data related to the strength and functioning of the child care system. In recent years, LOCATE collected data on center staff compensation, turnover rates, and the child care community's perceptions regarding care for children with special needs. Additionally, for the past three years, on behalf of the Maryland State Department of Education, LOCATE conducted a telephone survey of center-based staff to gather data on staff qualifications, educational backgrounds, and future career plans.

LOCATE makes data available through publication of two annual reports, the Child Care Demographic Report and Trends in Child Care; and also periodic publications on other topics such as staff turnover and compensation, profiles of child care providers, and care for children with special needs.

Training & Technical Assistance

Training has long been a central element in MCC's vision for providing all children with quality early education and care. Research shows that specific high quality training for child care providers is one of the main determinants of quality. In addition, professional development has been the key to changing the image from "babysitting" to "early care and education."

MCC's Training & Technical Assistance department (T&TA) has been a leader in working both to expand the supply of child care and to increase its quality by serving the professional development needs of current and potential child care providers as well as the needs of trainers who work in the child care field.



training



Based on the experience of its staff and its statewide perspective, MCC is able to identify training needs and lead collaborative efforts to fill gaps. MCC's efforts often focus on building the infrastructure that will support long-term expansion of training opportunities. A significant portion of training conducted by MCC enrolls child care trainers, not individual providers. Using the "train the trainer" strategy, MCC is able to gain a multiplier effect and ultimately have a much greater impact on the quality of care delivered to children. During the past three years, MCC has conducted Training of Trainers sessions on various aspects of the Maryland Model for School Readiness and on Infant/Toddler Assessment.

MCC's Training & Technical Assistance Department develops the curriculum for training programs, tests and pilots the curricula, and, when appropriate, makes it available to a cadre of trainers statewide. In the past three years, MCC's staff developed curricula for After School Training, Infant & Toddler Training, child care teacher pre-service and communications modules, Maryland Model for School Readiness domain training and train-the-trainer training, and Infant Toddler Assessment train-the-trainer. MCC has begun a series of regular "trainer retreats" as a means of gaining timely feedback from trainers implementing these and other curricula in the field.

While training helps providers enrich and improve the quality of care they provide, technical assistance helps them with issues including licensing compliance, managing challenging behaviors, special needs assistance, program expansion and new program start-up. MCC working with MSDE was able to get limited Technical Assistance funds reinstated for statewide service provision (lost in the budget cuts during the summer of 2003).

During the period FY 2007 through FY 2009, MCC and the network provided training for an annual average of 23,757 child care providers and trainers. In FY 2009, MCC and the network worked with 1,812 technical assistance cases. Data from the two earlier years is not available because the tracking system was "under construction" by MCC and MSDE.

Based on findings from the most recent results-based accountability survey (FY 2008), the Training and Technical Assistance goals of MCC and resource center network are being met:

- 84% of recipients of network services were satisfied with their resource center newsletter and the information it provided; and
- 94% of training participants were satisfied with training.

**Maryland Child Care
Resource Network**



network

The Maryland Child Care Resource Network (MCCRN) is a core component of the state's child care system. Each of the twelve regional child care resource centers (CCRCs) provides a home for all matters related to child care in the communities they serve. CCRC services include helping parents find and evaluate child care, assisting child care providers who want to expand or enhance services, and guiding businesses and local government in their quest to help families meet their child care needs. Maryland Committee for Children is the statewide coordinating entity for the network of CCRCs.

During the period 2007 through 2009, the MCCRN continued to operate with less than full funding, as it had since FY 2004, though through persistent efforts was able to secure limited funding for technical assistance services. Throughout this period, the network gave priority to direct service to parents through LOCATE: Child Care, which helps families locate and evaluate child care. Services for child care providers, namely training and technical assistance, continued to be provided as funds were available.

Despite reduced funding levels during these three years, the MCCRN helped an annual average of 16,284 parents seeking appropriate child care for an average of 22,164 children each year. In addition, MCCRN provided training for an annual average of 23,757 child care providers and others.

In addition, the overall quality of the work performed in each program area remained high. Parents learned about quality child care, were assisted in finding care, and were pleased with the services received. Child care providers improved their skills, were pleased with the training received, and made use of the materials and equipment in the CCRC resource rooms (laminators, copiers, die cut machines, etc.).

MCCRN monitors its performance by using a results-based accountability system that measures outcomes based on its services. Given the high level of satisfaction and positive program outcomes reported by those using the MCCRN services, we can document the fact that the CCRCs are doing a good job of supporting families, providers, and their local communities. For FY 2008 (the most recent year for which RBA data are available), the MCCRN achieved these outcomes:

- After counseling by LOCATE staff, the parents of 97% of the children indicated that they had an understanding of quality child care.
- The parents of 85% of the children found the educational materials or referrals received from the LOCATE Community Resources Database to be helpful. The Database is a computerized collection of non-child care related resources, which contains information on topics such as adoptions, emergency services, temporary housing, and developmental disabilities.
- During FY 2008, 29% of the children whose parents received benefit screening through LOCATE service were potentiality eligible for benefits such as child care subsidies, Food Stamps, etc; and of those parents, 56% followed up on this information.
- Of the individuals participating in training, 94% were satisfied with the training.

Public Policy



policy

The Public Policy Department provides a strong voice for young children and their families in the Maryland General Assembly and in State agencies. Each year, the Public Policy Department conducts advocacy related to the State budget and to legislation on issues related to early care and education.

While critical events occur year round, the main action takes place during Legislative Session. During this intense three-month period, the Public Policy staff leads a coalition of allies focused on advancing the interests of young children and their families. Each year, one highlight of the Session is Child Care Day in Annapolis which brings child care providers, advocates, and parents to learn about current issues and to lobby their representatives. In 2009, in anticipation of their upcoming merger, MCC and Friends of the Family held a joint Day in Annapolis.

Budget advocacy is always paramount on the Public Policy agenda, followed closely by other legislative initiatives. During 2007, the major budgetary events included a "win" – an increase of \$4 million to the Child Care Subsidy program for a total of \$111 million. However, there was a loss on the budget front in that MCC did not win full restoration of funding for the Maryland Child Care Resource Network or for the Family Support Centers to their 2003 levels.

The most controversial issue faced by MCC was legislation proposed by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which sought to create the framework for the unionization of family child care providers who participate in the Child Care Subsidy Program. While upholding the right of providers to join a union if they choose, and while championing the goal of increasing provider compensation, MCC pointed out that the Child Care Subsidy Program had come under the supervision of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) only six months earlier. Moreover, MSDE had explicitly endorsed raising reimbursement rates. In addition, it appeared that some providers would see a net loss in income under the SEIU fee structures imposed in other states. Based on these concerns, MCC decided to oppose the SEIU legislation; and, with strong partnership from virtually the entire early care and education community, the legislation died – at least for the 2007 Session.

The Public Policy staff got a bonus prize – of sorts – in 2007. The Governor called for a Special Session in November to address the State's fiscal crisis. This gave MCC and its allies the opportunity to score a major victory. Making the argument that revenue enhancements should not further exacerbate the financial difficulties of low-income families, MCC led a coalition that won a 25% increase in the State's refundable Earned Income Credit.

During the 2008 Session, MCC accepted flat funding of key programs, including our own Maryland Child Care Resource Network, as a victory given the State's fiscal situation. However, one program – the Maryland Infant & Toddler program (early intervention services) – was so underfunded that advocates felt compelled to press for an increase. Several rounds of urgent lobbying in the last weeks of the Session resulted in a funding increase of \$4.6 million for a program that was slated to receive only \$5.8 million.

MCC's other major priority in 2008 was a bill to expand eligibility for public pre-kindergarten programs (pre-K) to include children of active-duty military families. MCC believes in the value of providing this service to children experiencing frequent relocations and family transitions. In addition, MCC saw this as a vehicle to inform legislators about the value of public pre-K for all four-year olds. Despite a strong lobbying effort with compelling testimony from parents in military families, the bill died on the last day of Session.

In 2009, the fiscal situation in Maryland and the nation was so dismal that advocates approached the Legislative Session with great apprehension. And, in fact, devastating cuts were proposed to the Maryland Child Care Resource Network (MCCRN). However, MCC's Public Policy staff worked strategically to contact key leaders and make the case for the importance of MCCRN services. In the end, with only a week left in Session, a supplemental budget restored the MCCRN funding.

The budget drama extended to Head Start, whose State funding was zeroed out and then partially restored – thanks to quick action by MCC and other Head Start champions. Similarly, a cut to the Child Care Subsidy Program was reversed due to effective advocacy. Nonetheless, with State revenue estimates reflecting a faltering economy, MCC will keep a watchful eye on the threat of mid-year cuts by the Board of Public Works.

Public Policy

In other legislation, MCC spearheaded a successful campaign for legislation to advance the cause of public pre-kindergarten. The 2009 effort built on the awareness established in 2008 with the legislation to provide pre-K for children of military families. The 2009 bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education to finalize the draft "Preschool for All Business Plan" by consulting with local school systems, evaluating factors related to pre-K participation and demand; providing a concrete cost estimate; and reporting back to the Governor and General Assembly by December 2009.

Looking forward, the Public Policy staff anticipates new strength and energy to result from the merger with Friends of the Family but also new challenges as the continuing decline in revenues increase the challenge of maintaining current funding levels and promoting expansion in early care and education services.

In addition to the work in Annapolis, several other initiatives continued under the auspices of the Public Policy Department.

Countdown To Kindergarten: Learning Begins at Birth (CTK) is the State's public engagement campaign on early childhood. CTK continued to partner with many local and statewide service providers – from child care providers to pre-K teachers to WIC staff – to increase awareness about the importance of early learning and to give parents actionable information through the booklet "Tips for Turning Everyday Activities into Learning Activities." By mid 2009, CTK had distributed more than 450,000 "Tips" booklets, reaching extensively into every jurisdiction. In addition, CTK staff seized many opportunities to gain free media coverage for early learning and school readiness.

MCC continued to convene the Maryland Earned Income Credit Campaign, a statewide outreach effort designed to ensure that all Marylanders who are eligible for the Earned Income Credit (EIC) know about it and know how to claim it. This low-cost campaign engages many statewide and local partners (nonprofits, public agencies, and businesses) in the task of distributing EIC information to their clients, employees, etc. MCC undertakes this campaign because the EIC is the nation's biggest income support program for low- and moderate-income families. For tax year 2007, Maryland families received more than \$693 million from the federal EIC and another \$157 million from the Maryland EIC. As part of the EIC Campaign work, MCC staff spearheads advocacy related to the EIC, including the successful effort during the 2007 Special Session of the General Assembly to increase the value of the Maryland refundable EIC by approximately \$40 million.

Statements of Financial Position

	11 months ended		
Assets	5/31/09	FY 2008	FY 2007
Cash & cash equivalents	\$1,301,390	\$770,152	\$624,654
Investments	228,287	49,985	51,523
Accounts receivable	46,758	2,188	8,083
Grants and contracts receivable	937,517	2,374,352	2,079,096
Prepaid expenses		5,776	27,816
Total current assets	2,513,952	3,202,453	2,791,172
Deposits	6,564	6,517	6,517
Property & equipment, net	51,654	62,499	75,144
Total assets	\$2,572,170	\$3,271,469	\$2,872,833
Liabilities and Net Assets			
Accounts payable	\$1,029,681	\$1,403,675	\$1,479,803
Accrued expenses	252,553	272,519	225,578
Deferred revenue	255,121	292,324	176,091
Total current liabilities	1,537,355	1,968,518	1,881,472
Net Assets			
Unrestricted	720,160	991,542	859,727
Temporarily restricted	300,952	297,706	117,931
Permanently restricted	13,703	13,703	13,703
Total net assets	1,034,815	1,302,951	991,361
Total liabilities and net assets	\$2,572,170	\$3,271,469	\$2,872,833

Statements of Activities

Revenues, Grants and Other Support	5/31/09	FY 2008	FY 2007
Grants and contracts	\$8,078,769	\$9,995,794	\$8,048,367
Contributions	45,197	84,957	97,931
Program income	314,744	248,017	234,821
Membership dues	9,429	10,005	10,063
Sales to the public	2,164	300	70
Investment Income	3,175	17,224	16,672
Miscellaneous	(457)	31,603	1,227
Total revenue, gains and other support	\$8,453,021	\$10,387,900	\$8,409,151
Expenses			
Program services	\$7,987,851	\$9,754,577	\$8,051,445
Management and general	722,532	298,898	299,856
Fundraising	10,774	22,835	18,895
Total expenses	8,721,157	10,076,310	8,370,196
Change in Net Assets	(268,136)	311,590	38,955
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	1,302,951	991,361	952,406
Net Assets, End of Year	\$1,034,815	\$1,302,951	\$991,361

Senior Staff

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Finance Director, 2008-2009

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Finance Director, 2007-2008

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Maryland Committee for Children has been the recipient of the Standards of Excellence Award since 2003.



Maryland Child Care Resource Network was the first state-wide network of child care resource centers in the nation to receive the "Quality Assurance" designation of excellence from the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies.

Maryland Committee for Children, Inc. (MCC), a private, non-profit organization founded in 1945, is an advocate and catalyst for the development of a strong system of quality child care, early education and family support on a local, state, and national level.