



Annual Report 2023

INNOVATE | SCALE | ADVOCATE

Letters From Leadership

Without a doubt, 2023 was a year of incredible growth and impact.

We founded Neighborhood Villages in 2017 to deliver real solutions to our nation's broken child care sector. Our vision is a transformed, equitable early childhood education system that lifts up educators and sets every child and family up to thrive and our commitment is to prove that such a system is possible.

In a few short years, we've achieved real progress toward this goal. This year, we unveiled our first strategic plan, which maps our path forward through 2026. We deepened our partnerships with early childhood education providers to identify and build solutions to their greatest challenges. And we expanded our relationships with government partners, working with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Early Education and Care and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, as well as the City of Boston Office of Early Childhood, to reach as many people as possible.

We also saw the passage of a historic state budget that delivered \$1.5 billion to Massachusetts' early childhood education sector. In the Commonwealth, and across the country, we are working alongside partners, families, providers, and educators to turn this momentum into a movement that amplifies the urgency of finally fixing child care for all families.

With the support of our incredible community of staff, partners, supporters, and advocates, we know we are just getting started. In the year ahead, we will continue to model what Massachusetts' early childhood education system could and should deliver to children, families, providers, and educators, and we will work to advance the transformative policy change we need to realize a future in which every child has access to the education and care they need to thrive. On behalf of our wonderful staff and those we serve, thank you for being a part of our movement!



Lauren Birchfield Kennedy
Co-President and
Chief Strategy Officer



Sarah Siegel Muncey
Co-President and
Chief Innovation Officer

As President of Neighborhood Villages' Board of Directors, I am continually inspired by the progress this organization drives year over year. I am so grateful to the dedicated staff and leadership whose vision and commitment to Neighborhood Villages' work consistently make possible what others say is impossible. There is no challenge too big or too small for this team - they are always ready to jump into action, pull the right people together, and find a solution. From tackling the children's mental health crisis to creating innovative new workforce development pathways for early educators, Neighborhood Villages has the creativity and tenacity to realize our shared vision of an early childhood education system that works for everyone.

I want to thank our staff, my fellow board members, all of our committed partners, and especially our donors who make this work possible. We have a lot more work to do and we know it won't be an easy path. But with Neighborhood Villages, I know we have the roadmap to get there.



Landis Becker Young
President of the
Board of Directors

Our Year in Review

Neighborhood Villages' impact continues to grow, thanks to our many inspiring partners. This year, we launched new pilot programs with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and City of Boston, while deepening partnerships with community organizations and providers and educators in our Neighborhood program. We were particularly proud to see our work recognized by philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, who made a \$2 million investment in our mission to transform our broken early childhood education system in Massachusetts and beyond.

"[This grant from MacKenzie Scott] helps to create a very solid foundation for an organization like ours to give us the freedom and the flexibility to think creatively, to establish new partnerships, and to really make sure that what we're delivering to both our partners in Greater Boston and in Massachusetts," Lauren Kennedy told *The Boston Globe*.



Neighborhood Villages is a true leader in our sector. They are an essential partner in our on-the-ground work to provide high-quality education and care experiences for the children and families we serve. And at the policy level, they are changing the conversation about child care as a public good worthy of urgent, meaningful investment.

Justin Pasquariello,

Executive Director of East Boston Social Services



I am constantly amazed by the scale of the challenges Neighborhood Villages undertakes and its track record of building successful solutions for the child care system. Addressing the child care crisis is going to require the bold vision and can-do attitude of this amazing organization.

Natalie Tejero Serafeim,

Neighborhood Villages Board of Directors



300 partnerships maintained to promote equity in access to early childhood education.



6 programs in partnership with government to expand services for young children, and their families and educators.



334M+ media impressions to amplify the urgency of fixing our broken child care system.



3,000 people reached through direct service programs that model how our child care sector should and could meet the greatest needs of those it serves.

INNOVATE

The Neighborhood

In Massachusetts and across the country, early childhood education is a disconnected sector of independent providers ... unlike K-12, which is a government-funded, interconnected system. Lack of centralized, back-bone infrastructure support puts too many providers in the position of struggling to meet the needs of the children and families they serve and to make investments in their educators.

The Neighborhood is our innovation lab, where we are modeling a school district for early childhood education. It's where we partner with philanthropy to pilot innovative, systems-change solutions that can be scaled in partnership with government. The Neighborhood is proof that, together, we can build a system that works. For everyone.

In 2023, we worked with our incredible partners to pilot new initiatives to expand access to high-quality early childhood education in Boston, across the Commonwealth, and beyond.



On our own, we don't have the resources to hire someone to coach our teachers. We don't have people who can find creative solutions to really significant problems for our families. Neighborhood Villages is like this amazing little entrepreneurial community of people that are trying to lift the bar for all early educators. And they've done a remarkable job.

Kate Barrand

President and CEO of Horizons for Homeless Children



5 early childhood education providers



19 program sites



350 educators



750 families



900 children



INNOVATE

Supporting Families

Core to our theory of change is that early childhood education centers are ideal sites to locate social services and wraparound supports to address the full-scope needs of children and families. Parents and caregivers visit their child care provider twice daily and develop trust-based relationships with staff. Educators, too, come to deeply understand the social, emotional, and health needs of the children in their care.

Quality early childhood education reaches beyond the classroom to address the most pressing needs of the whole family. That's why, in our Neighborhood program, Neighborhood Villages is piloting innovative ways to connect families with the wraparound supports they need to thrive.



The MassMutual Foundation is proud to partner with Neighborhood Villages to support their Family Navigation work and Neighborhood program. Their two-gen model shows in real-time how we can leverage child care as an opportunity to address family health, well-being, and economic prosperity.

Dennis Duquette

President, MassMutual Foundation

Family Navigation

In 2023, we worked to model how early childhood education centers can be transformed into ecosystems of support for children and families. To Neighborhood partners, we provided direct-to-provider grants to increase internal staffing capacity for family navigation, case management, and on-site family access to social services. We also provided flexible program funds to enable providers to quickly address emergency family needs. And, we implemented centralized services to address food security, economic mobility, and mental health.

Mental Health

The early childhood education system currently lacks the funding and infrastructure required to meet the mental health needs of children, families, and educators. While the K-12 system has mental health support built into its funding model, early childhood education providers serving children ages 0-5 are often left on their own to navigate how to access - and pay for - mental health services for children and their caregivers. In 2023, we began a groundbreaking new Neighborhood program pilot to increase and streamline access to mental health supports in early childhood education settings.

Supporting Providers

Over the past year, we collaborated with Neighborhood program partners to provide capacity-building services, coordinate the bulk delivery of needed material goods, and fund essential staffing positions in operations management. To promote connectivity across the Neighborhood, we brought partners together in Communities of Practice to discuss shared challenges, efficiencies, and opportunities. With The Neighborhood, we're making the case that when we invest in capacity building and connect providers to each other, big things happen.



As an Operations Manager, it's not just about education and curriculum, we are looking at the whole child and the whole family. The work that I do is a lot of the behind-the-scenes support to our educators in the classroom and our administrators in the office.

Angela Haglund

Operations Manager at Epiphany Early Learning Center





One of the beautiful things about Neighborhood Villages is, it is a very solution-driven organization that helps centers provide the services that are critically needed by the families.

Michelle Sanchez

Principal, Epiphany School

Supporting Educators

We have a serious workforce crisis in early childhood education in Massachusetts and across the country. According to the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), one-third of licensed ECE programs are operating below capacity with 20% having a closed classroom, mostly due to a lack of qualified teachers.

At the root of this crisis is our failure to invest in early educators. Despite painful parent tuition fees for families that far exceed what many can afford, early education is one of the lowest paying professions in our state and across the country.

At Neighborhood Villages, we know that in order to stabilize the workforce and increase access to high-quality education and care for children and families, we need to do better. This means not only raising educator wages, but also supporting and investing in early education teachers as the professionals they are.

Last year, across our Neighborhood program, we piloted a suite of new teaching and learning resources for early educators, including monthly workshops for new educators and regular in-classroom coaching and mentoring support. We also held our first-ever Neighborhood Professional Development Day and introduced groundbreaking new curricular resources for teachers.





Children's growth is evolving and the way that we teach them is evolving, so I feel that [professional development] days are needed to refresh us and teach us new ideas and techniques.

Doris Yepez

Quality Specialist, Nurtury Family Child Care



We know that high-quality, child-centered early childhood education requires a diverse educator pipeline that reflects the backgrounds of our youngest learners. Neighborhood Villages has become a national leader in both advocating for the policies we need to make long overdue investments in this essential workforce, and showing what these investments should look like through their innovative on-the-ground programs and supports.

The Spring Point Partners Team

A Groundbreaking New Curriculum

Last year, we announced a new partnership with the LEGO Foundation and Boston Public Schools (BPS) Department of Early Childhood to develop a groundbreaking, play-based curriculum for toddlers that aligns with BPS' acclaimed *Focus* curriculum for children ages 3-8. We've spent the last year developing and piloting Neighborhood Villages' toddler curriculum in classrooms across the Neighborhood, and in the year to come will begin work on an infant curriculum.

When complete, this curriculum will be the first-of-its-kind, serving children ages 0-8 and available free of charge for early childhood education providers across Boston, the Commonwealth, and nationwide.



Young children develop and learn through play. With this partnership with Neighborhood Villages, we are excited to see an evidence-based playful curriculum from age 1-8, which supports early educators and advances our mission to support the most vulnerable communities around the world.

Bo Stjerne Thomsen

Vice-President & Chair of Learning through Play at LEGO Foundation



What makes this curriculum especially unique is the process by which we are co-constructing it with a very diverse group of toddler teachers, family partners, and early childhood leaders who work in classrooms with toddlers every day.

Sarah Muncey

Co-President of Neighborhood Villages



Professional Pathways for Early Educators

What proves successful in The Neighborhood, we work to scale in partnership with government. In 2023, Neighborhood Villages worked to invest in the accessibility of effective interventions, partnering with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and City of Boston to broadly expand professional development and career advancement opportunities for educators.

Originating as a Neighborhood program pilot, Professional Pathways is a partnership between Neighborhood Villages and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. The program supports early educators with enrollment in free, credit-bearing college courses and pursuit of advanced credentials and postsecondary degrees.





I'm already registered and I start next month. I am very excited to be able to continue increasing my knowledge and above all to continue advancing in [the early childhood education] area. Thank you very much.

Educator

Educator Supported by Professional Pathways



900 +

individuals seeking access to credit-bearing courses

96%

of provider inquiries were resolved

34%

increase in inquiries over last year

Launching Early Childhood Education Apprenticeships

In 2023, we officially launched our Early Childhood Education (ECE) Apprenticeship program, an alternative pathway for early educators seeking to begin or advance their career. The Apprenticeship program offers on-the-job training, wage bumps, and credentials to participants.

Neighborhood Villages' Registered Apprenticeship program demonstrates our model of partnering with philanthropy to innovate systems solutions that can then be scaled in partnership with government. Our Apprenticeship program began as a pilot supported by philanthropy, serving 70 early educators. Within months, we received support from the City of Boston's Office of Early Childhood and then the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development to register, expand, and sustain the program.

Our Registered Apprenticeship program for early childhood educators is now the largest in the Commonwealth. And we are the second in the nation to launch and implement a Registered Apprenticeship program that offers a pathway to Director qualifications.



Stepping back to assess what skills are really required, finding new ways to credential work experience, engaging with partners to support those already working in the field all help to broaden the pool of qualified caregivers and teachers.

Karen Pfefferle

Executive Director of the Wellington Management Foundation, to Early Learning Nation



As we address Massachusetts' workforce crisis in the early childhood education sector, we must build accessible pathways for opportunities including career advancement and increased compensation for teachers. The **Healey-Driscoll Administration** appreciates our partnership with Neighborhood Villages, delivering an innovative tool and serving as the largest Registered Apprenticeship program of its kind in the Commonwealth. Through this initiative and more collaborative efforts like this, we will meet the moment to prepare the workers we need today and for the future.

Secretary Lauren Jones

Massachusetts Labor and Workforce Development

Connecting Early Educators with Business Management Training

Over the past year, we continued to expand our free, statewide Business Management Training program - offered in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), Urban College, and United Way Shared Services - to Family Child Care providers and center-based and afterschool program administrators.

As the child care workforce crisis continues, many educators are being thrust into administrative roles and responsibilities without access to the training and support they need. Through this program, participants receive instruction in business management as well as coaching and technical assistance. In 2023, we expanded language offerings from English and Spanish to include Portuguese and Mandarin.





399 educators from across the state participated in Business Management Training



100% of participants reported that the course helped them learn useful strategies for their programs



The course gave me tools I need to keep my business open. I am going to implement the financial information we talked about to know if my business is profitable.

Family Child Care provider and participant in Neighborhood Villages' Business Management Training program

Policy & Advocacy

Lasting change requires policy reform. That's why an important part of our work is to advocate for meaningful public investment in the field of early childhood education.

At Neighborhood Villages, we believe that good data drives good policy. That's why we put in the work to ensure that policy makers and advocates are armed with the information and analysis they need to realize lasting change.

We're pleased to report that Massachusetts is taking important steps towards building a stronger early education and care system for the Commonwealth.

Advocacy Events

This year, we hosted a series of a public events and Community Action Calls and Advocacy Workshops to prepare advocates to fight for child care change and equipped them with white papers, fact sheets, and advocacy tools.



Historic Policy Wins

This year's 2024 state budget commits a historic \$1.5 billion to early education and care. In coalition with our partners, Neighborhood Villages was proud to play a role in achieving this accomplishment.

In particular, we celebrate the inclusion of \$475 million for the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Stabilization Grant program. These direct-to-provider operations grants have proven indispensable to sustaining the early education and child care sector.

Podcast: "No One is Coming to Save Us"

SEASON 3

In addition to our policy, research, and advocacy work, in 2023, we continued to drive narrative change through public education and storytelling initiatives. Our hit podcast, *No One is Coming to Save Us*, took the show on the road for our third season, visiting cities and towns across the country and hosting our first-ever live episode. Throughout the series, Neighborhood Villages' Senior Director of Advocacy, Latoya Gayle, joined veteran reporter and podcast host Gloria Riviera to talk with advocates on the ground who are fighting to make child care more affordable and accessible.

Episodes dive into topics such as the unique child care system in Tulsa, where the Cherokee Nation pays relatives of children to care for their littlest learners. In Alabama, we spoke to changemakers in Birmingham, where voters pushed lawmakers to provide more support for child care—driving home that children are not a red issue or a blue issue. They are everyone's.





usahozierfan2019, 07/26/2023

Fan from day 1

I am excited to hear Gloria and everyone touring and I need this podcast to keep coming. Things are getting worse, not better. How do we fix it. Mom in MA



mselliott21, 06/27/2023

So glad this podcast exists!

Thank you for lifting up this critically important issue!! So excited to keep listening.



Winter Wonder Fest

At Neighborhood Villages, we believe that social change starts with community.

Our inaugural Winter Wonder Fest event was an incredible success, with over 500 attendees, including families, children, and educators served through our Neighborhood program.

Amidst giant snowmen, steel drum bands, and face painting, we were able to distribute thousands of diapers, children's books, holiday gifts, personal hygiene products, winter hats and gloves, fresh produce, and even vaccines.

We are grateful to MFS Investment Management, Rafanelli Events, Baby2Baby, and all of the amazing partners who made this event possible.









In The News

The child care crisis has increasingly become front page news, as families and child care providers struggle under a broken system.

In 2023, Neighborhood Villages, a recognized innovator and leading advocacy voice in the field, continued to make headlines and to draw attention to the key challenges – and opportunities – the field is facing.

In FY23, Neighborhood Villages had 103+ total media placements, that amount to 333,930,000+ UVM (unique monthly visitors).

The Boston Blobe

Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott donates \$2 million to Neighborhood Villages for quality affordable child care

CommonWealth

Why the C3 grants are so important for children



OPINION: Want a High-Quality Education for Your Kids? Then Protect Equity in the Classroom.

The Boston Blobe

Long overlooked, child care industry may finally get a permanent lifeline from Beacon Hill



It's really not a system at all. It's a private market," said Lauren Birchfield Kennedy, cofounder of Neighborhood Villages, an organization that advocates for child care reform. "The way it operates right now is too expensive for parents to afford, and too expensive for providers to provide.

The Boston Globe



There's a certain "Hold my beer" quality to NV's approach. Someone says it can't be done; NV starts asking providers what they need and builds those missing pieces of infrastructure.

Early Learning Nation Magazine

Financials

Statement of Financial Position	2023	2022
Current Assets		
Cash & Equivalents	\$4,031,049	\$932,764
Accounts Receivable	\$69,482	\$4,916
Contributions & Grants Receivable	\$1,597,275	\$854,170
Investments	\$14	\$108,487
Prepaid Expenses	\$27,427	\$21,428
Total Current Assets	\$5,725,247	\$1,921,765
Property and Equipment, Net	\$25,396	\$33,778
Other Assets		
Contributions & Grants Receivable, less discount	\$337,761	\$1,558,433
Intangible Assets, net	\$319,089	\$508,991
Total Other Assets	\$656,850	\$2,067,424
Total Assets	\$6,407,493	\$4,022,967
Liabilities & Net Assets		
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$203,544	\$261,558
Accrued Expenses	\$55,602	\$87,582
Refundable Grant Liability	\$ 251,365	_
Total Current Liabilities	\$510,511	\$349,13
Net Assets		
Without Donor Restrictions	\$4,335,531	\$1,812,270
With Donor Restrictions	\$1,561,451	\$1,861,560
Total Net Assets	\$5,896,982	\$3,673,830
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$6,407,493	\$4,022,967

Years Ended June 30, 2023 & 2022



Financials Cont.

Year Ended June 30, 2023

Statement of Activities	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Revenues			
Contributions & Grants	\$2,966,856	\$5,034,799	\$8,001,655
Collaborative Arrangement Revenue	\$200,000	_	\$200,000
In-Kind Contributions	\$161,478	_	\$161,478
Progam Service Fees	\$38,197	_	\$38,197
Net Investment Return	\$16,794	_	\$16,794
Other Income	_	_	_
Net Assets Released From Restrictions	\$5,334,908	(\$5,334,908)	_
Total Revenues	\$8,718,233	(\$300,109)	\$8,418,124
Expenses			
Program Services	\$4,886,549	_	\$4,886,549
Management & General	\$1,066,894	_	\$1,066,894
Fundraising	\$241,529	_	\$241,529
Total Expenses	\$6,194,972		\$6,194,972
Change in Net Assets	\$2,523,261	(\$300,109)	\$2,223,152
Net Assets: Beginning of Year	\$1,812,270	\$1,861,560	\$3,673,830





Thank You!

We are grateful to the following individuals and institutions for their generous support of our mission and programs July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

A. L. Mailman Family Foundation

Reiko Akukwe

Anonymous (4)

Arcadia Charitable Trust

Baby2Baby

Bain Capital Community Partnership

The Baupost Group, LLC.

Landis Becker Young and Brace Young

Elizabeth Bernardi and Shane Dunn

Marta and Jim Birchfield

Blue Cross Blue Shield of

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Boston Children's Collaboration for

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Jessica Lee

LEGO Foundation

Sally Sharp Lehman and Michael L.

Lehman

Liberty Mutual Foundation

Little Family Charitable Fund

Ann Hargrave Loos

Kimberly Lucas

Anna Lyman

The Lynch Foundation

Mabel Louise Rilev Foundation

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Mad River Foundation

Sally Madsen and Adam Rothschild

Jaime Mason

MassMutual Foundation

Sara Mattes

Katie Mayshak

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Jennifer Shook

Judith and Mark Siegel

Liesel & Ian Simmons

Linda Smith

Someone Else's Child Foundation

Brian and Stephanie Spector

Spring Point Partners

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Wellington Management Foundation

Wellsprings Family Foundation

Jamie Van Horne Robinson and Jaison

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