

Rising High



2020-21 Annual Report
Miami Valley Child Development Centers



Our Purpose

Everyone deserves an opportunity to thrive.

Our Mission

We deliver exceptional early childhood education and develop compassionate partnerships with families to support them in realizing their hopes and dreams.

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Ann Charles Watt, Associate, Dinsmore

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Dayvenia Chesney, Chief Operating Officer

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Exie Johnson, Secretary

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Thank you to this year's exiting board members Tom Huntington, Kathleen Moore and Diane Shannon, who each gave so generously to MVCDC.

Thank you to Lisa Campbell, Tina Caylor, Danielle Kenny, Jennifer Rodgers and Shawn Sturdivant, who helped create this report. We are grateful for their commitment to MVCDC's work and their passion for sharing the powerful stories of our families and staff.

This year has been full of ups and down, starts and stops for all of us – not just for MVCDC.

While our classrooms were open and we were able to support families in-person, we continued to learn how to live with COVID-19 and what that means for how we get children ready for kindergarten and serve their families.

Bringing back staff and finding new routines to keep everyone safe while responding to the learning loss caused by the pandemic has been an immense challenge. The good news is that we've learned a lot, and we're inventing a new play book – improving and improvising all the while.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of the last year, we still have much to celebrate!

In April, the regional Office of Head Start conducted its intensive federal review of our work – an all-important audit of sorts. We were totally compliant – a significant accomplishment that is a testament to our amazing employees. They are competent, resourceful and fiercely dedicated.

It is a privilege to serve our families and children who are immensely grateful for our support. We are in awe of their spirit, resilience and persistence in the face of so many barriers and their profound lack of access to opportunity.

While COVID-19 changed us, our purpose, mission and commitment to equity are steadfast. Thank you for spreading the word about MVCDC's work to break the cycle of poverty. Our work is life-changing for so many!

Gratefully,



Berta Velilla

President, Chief Executive Officer



We
ARE
DIFFERENCE
MAKERS



This look back at our work in 2020-21 would be incomplete without honoring Dayvenia Chesney, MVCDC's Chief Operating Officer, who retired in November 2021. Day, as she is known, has been relentless in her support of MVCDC's families and children for 14 years. She is passionate, infinitely talented and tireless.

Her influence on MVCDC and our community is immeasurable and lasting. We thank her.

/// MVCDC's *commitment*

We supported
2,997
young children
2,542
families



Focus Area 2
federal review
completed
100%
COMPLIANT

54%
of staff
retained
5 YEARS
OR MORE

We delivered
100 Kaplan learning boxes
to kindergarten-bound children

NEVER WAVERED

We served
131,779
breakfasts
137,086
lunches
132,474
snacks



100%
of MVCDC's
self-operated
centers rated
"HIGH QUALITY"
under Ohio's
*Step Up
to Quality*
initiative

20 Donors Choose
projects funded,
including playground upgrades,
light tables and new books



Supporting children, families

For 56 years, MVCDC has been serving families and children experiencing poverty. Focusing on those lacking opportunity, we provide high quality early learning to ensure children start kindergarten on track, and we assist families in escaping poverty and financial insecurity.

MVCDC is part of the national Head Start network, a federally funded initiative that began in 1965 and continues to enjoy bipartisan political support because of its reputation for quality and its documented success in reducing poverty and preparing young children for success in school.

We serve families earning under 100% of the Federal Poverty Level, children in foster and kinship care, children experiencing homelessness and, in some cases, children with disabilities. Generally speaking, a mother of two must have an annual income of under \$22,000 to be eligible for MVCDC services.

Every Head Start family has a Family Support Specialist, Home Visitor or Coach who helps parents and caregivers set goals and access resources and opportunities that will improve their and their children's lives. Some parents may be focused on going back to school or finding a better job. Others may need better housing or more reliable transportation.

Our services for children are comprehensive. We support them in reaching developmental milestones, getting appropriate health care and early intervention services, learning social-emotional skills, eating well and more.

MVCDC offers choices

Families can choose to enroll their child at a MVCDC site or a community-based partner site, including center-based or family child care.

Program options include:



Part-day

up to 5 hours/day,
full year



Part-day

3½ hours/day M-Th
AM and PM sessions,
part year



School-day

6 hours/day,
school year



Full-day

up to 10 hours/day,
year-round

School year



Year-round

“All the staff are great. They make us feel like FAMILY.”

— MVCDC Parent

FOR OVER 50 YEARS

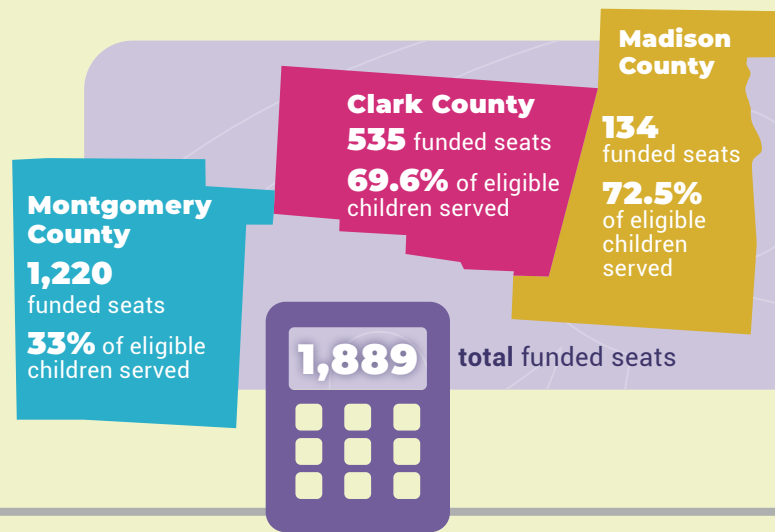
MVCDC isn't funded to reach all eligible children

In the wake of the pandemic, more families are experiencing poverty – especially Black and Brown families. With a child poverty rate of 18.4%, Ohio ranks 15th-highest among the 50 states.

In MVCDC's service area, child poverty rates range from 23.1% in Montgomery County to 14.7% in Butler County. Dayton, the largest city in our service area, has a child poverty rate of 42.6%.

Traditional Head Start

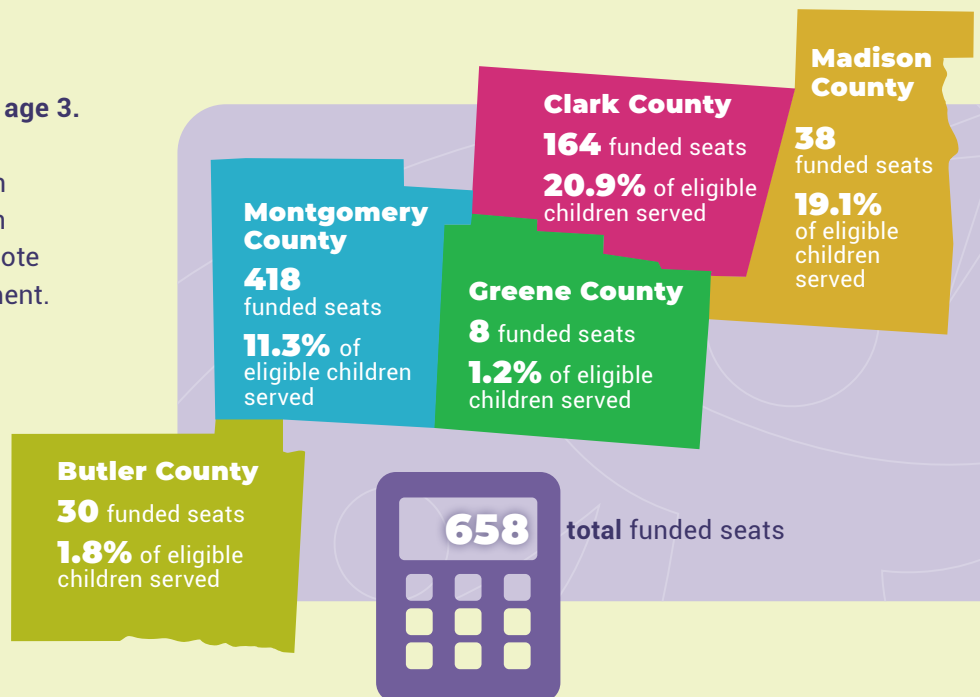
provides early learning for children from age 3 to 5. Our evidence-based curriculum focuses on getting young learners ready for kindergarten. Children also receive developmental screenings and are connected to health care providers, including for dental and vision needs. Families get resources and coaching to teach their children at home.



Early Head Start

serves children from 6 weeks to age 3. Children receive developmental screenings and early intervention services if needed. Families learn parenting skills and how to promote their child's early brain development.

Though high quality child care is expensive and difficult to find for young children of all ages, care for infants and toddlers is even harder to access and more costly than for preschoolers. Many families can't work or attend school because they don't have child care for their infants and toddlers.





COVID-19 limited our reach

In normal times, local Head Start agencies must have an average enrollment of 97% of their funded seats. Meeting this mandate is challenging in a typical year, but was particularly difficult during the pandemic.

Many families were reluctant to send their children to in-person learning. At the same time, for part of the year, the Governor reduced the number of children we could serve in classrooms. While in August, we were allowed to return to pre-pandemic teacher-to-child ratios, this was a slow and gradual process.

Head Start agencies nationally struggled to meet the 97% enrollment benchmark for all these same reasons. Enrollment in traditional Head Start averaged 70% of funded seats; 95% for Early Head Start; and 95% at our Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership programs.

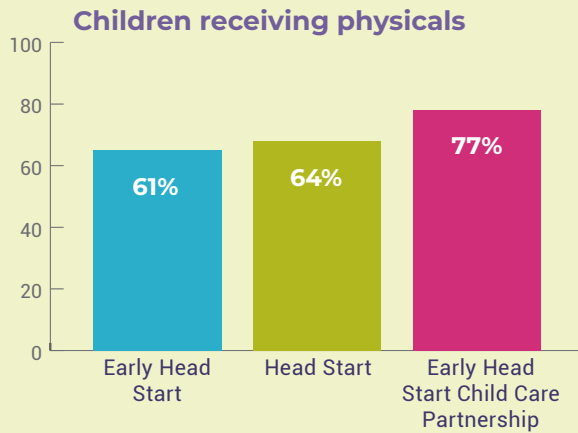
MVDCDC assists families who are eligible for Medicaid to get this health insurance for their children and themselves. We also encourage families to choose a medical “home” for their child to ensure quality continuity of care. Children also are connected to dentists and optometrists.

Not surprisingly, many families delayed routine and well-child care during the pandemic.

- 2,828 children have health insurance
- 2,154 children received immunizations
- 2,467 children have a medical “home”
- 1,942 children received a physical
- 660 children received medical treatment for a chronic condition
- 1,337 received a dental exam
- 1,449 children have a dental “home”
- 15 children received dental treatment

*These numbers in some cases exceed funded seats because new enrollees replace children and families who unenroll.

Our health and wellness statistics are impressive, given families' difficulties in accessing health care during the pandemic and their reluctance to go into environments where their children might be vulnerable to contracting COVID-19.



Children receiving dental exams**



** Because of their young age, children in Early Head Start do not receive dental exams.

EARLY HEAD START	% of enrollees	# of children
% with up to date immunizations	51%	370
% with health insurance	92%	662
% with a medical "home"	79%	569
% with a dental "home"	41%	299

HEAD START	% of enrollees	# of children
% with up to date immunizations	82%	1,586
% with health insurance	95%	1,824
% with a medical "home"	82%	1,585
% with a dental "home"	56%	1,074

EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP	% of enrollees	# of children
% with up to date immunizations	58%	198
% with health insurance	100%	342
% with a medical "home"	92%	313
% with a dental "home"	22%	76

WE'RE COMMITTED TO



All of MVCDC's 26 self-operated centers are rated "high quality" under Ohio's *Step Up to Quality* initiative, meaning they significantly exceed minimum licensing rules and have earned 3-Star to 5-Star distinctions.

64% of Head Start teachers have a bachelor's degree

100% of teachers in our programs have earned a minimum of a Child Development Associate credential

73% of teachers at Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships have earned a Child Development Associate credential or are in the process of doing so



6 MVCDC programs earned highly demanding accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. This coveted distinction is a high honor and takes immense effort on the part of teachers and staff.

MVCDC Twin Towers
MVCDC Miami View
MVCDC East Dayton
Early Learning Center

MVCDC Moraine Meadows
MVCDC Springfield Children's Center
MVCDC London

exceptional early learning



Eager to help children catch up from pandemic learning loss, MVCDC for the second summer offered a 5-week, 5-hour/day summer program for young learners heading off to kindergarten.

Thirteen early educators who normally would have been off over the summer volunteered to open six classrooms, serving 77 children in the 5-day/week program.

Rhonda Liff worked at The London Center in Madison County. An Assistant Teacher who has been with MVCDC 13 years, Rhonda says, "The students really improved their social-emotional skills, and they liked that we were able to take a lot of the learning outdoors."

Her class of 15 took a field trip to the sheriff's office; a local police officer from the canine unit came to visit; and firefighters also met with children. "We wanted the children to know that community helpers in uniform aren't scary."

Rhonda, who joined MVCDC after her two children attended an MVCDC program, also led efforts to get all of her summer students a free bicycle helmet. That accomplishment, Rhonda says, was a reminder of how many ways MVCDC supports families and children.

Families are immensely satisfied with MVCDC

Over 95% of families strongly agree or agree that they are connected to and supported by the staff at their child's program.

98% of families strongly agree or agree they would recommend MVCDC to other parents.

97% of families strongly agree or agree that staff use positive guidance to encourage their child's self-control and ability to cooperate.

95% of families strongly agree or agree that their child's teacher and Family Support Specialist helped them set goals for their child and family.

95% of families strongly agree or agree that the medical and dental services they received from MVCDC were high quality.

99% of families strongly agree or agree MVCDC staff are respectful of their cultural beliefs.

96% of families strongly agree or agree that MVCDC's at-home activities, food boxes and supplies provided during the pandemic were helpful.

93% of families strongly agree or agree MVCDC helped strengthen their relationship with their child.

Learning starts at birth



MVDC is proud to be **Ohio's largest Early Head Start program**, serving **658** pregnant mothers and their infants and toddlers up to age 3 in Montgomery, Greene, Clark, Madison and Butler counties.

Research shows that Early Head Start has a statistically significant impact on babies' and toddlers' healthy development, including their language, cognitive and social-emotional growth. Early Head Start children also have higher immunization rates and are less likely to be hospitalized than children experiencing poverty who are not enrolled.

The program also supports new parents, sharing information about important developmental milestones, early brain development and the importance of talking and reading to children in the earliest years. Studies have found that Early Head Start families are more self-sufficient and more likely to be employed.



Early Head Start sets children up for success!

Children who enroll with us starting in Early Head Start score significantly higher than their preschool peers on Ohio's Early Learning and Development standards.

— SO DOES TEACHING



Kim Wright knows what Head Start does for families.

She participated in Head Start as a child. All four of her children have attended MVCDC programs. And, for 18 years, she's worked at MVCDC.

Now a Lead Teacher in the Early Head Start program at Dayton's Miami View center, Kim, who was born with hearing loss, says MVCDC "taught me responsibility and independence" and helped her overcome difficulties associated with her disability.

A strong, independent mother, Kim has her Child Development Associate credential and, in 2022, will graduate with an associate's degree in early childhood education from Sinclair Community College.

Though she also has a license in cosmetology, Kim is dedicated to her babies and toddlers. A fluent lip-reader, she says the parents of her young learners thank her for teaching their children sign language as they're starting to talk.

Kim, who is able to talk, says families are accepting of her disability. They know she relies on a closed-caption telephone in her classroom, while MVCDC provides an interpreter for trainings and important meetings.

Recalling her own time as a Head Start parent, Kim says her MVCDC Family Support Specialist "taught me the responsibilities of being a mom."

She loves her work because the children are like her own.



Meet these

MV CDC



In the wake of COVID-19, **Natalie Dunford** says Family Support Specialists are communicating with families differently and more frequently.

When in-person home visits weren't possible, FSSs turned to texting and video chats to keep in touch and offer support. Families shared that they liked the ease of that contact.

"We're talking with families by phone two or three times more often than pre-COVID 19," says Natalie, who is the Family and Community Partnerships Supervisor for Montgomery County FSSs.

A single mom whose daughter attended The MET, Natalie says she is a Head Start "poster child." Eighteen years ago when she graduated from college, she applied to MV CDC at the urging of her FSS.

Has she ever thought about leaving?

"There's never anything else that I've thought about that would be as fulfilling. I like to help adults learn," she says. "This is like no other job."



When Dayton Public Schools closed and went to all online learning in Fall 2020, MV CDC had to temporarily close six classrooms at DPS' Rosa Parks Early Learning Center. Teachers there, and in classrooms elsewhere that closed, quickly found ways to begin serving children and families virtually.

In time, 15 teachers and seven home visitors were exclusively working virtually.

"Even though we had never done anything like this, the staff embraced the challenge," says **Lynne Storar**, Assistant Director of Early Childhood Education.

Some teachers set up areas in their home to look like a classroom, even arranging virtual group family get-togethers with a fun learning activity. Most of the families also received meals and various learning supplies.

This outreach was over and above contacting families and children individually at least once every week to make sure they had what they needed. At any one time, 375-400 families were in our virtual program.

When teachers were called back for in-person teaching in February and March 2021, families who wanted to continue connecting virtually still had that option.

"We did whatever needed to be done to support families while encouraging them to create learning experiences for their children," says Lynne.

DIFFERENCE MAKERS



Coretta Tengesdahl is MVCDC's Chief People Officer and leads MVCDC's Human Resources Team. Like employers everywhere, MVCDC has had to find new ways to attract and keep talent. On occasion last year, we had as many as 70 open positions in a workforce of 500.

To meet this challenge, we're re-doubling our commitment to training and promoting from within. We're excited, for example, to be helping Assistant Teachers become Lead Teachers.

"We're dedicated to investing in our employees and helping them grow professionally," says Coretta.

To make getting degrees and credentials affordable, we've expanded our tuition assistance program. We've also increased our starting pay and our salary tiers, and we're offering "stay" bonuses, signing bonuses and new employee referral bonuses.

To support our community's employers with their recruiting challenges, our HR team was proud to partner with the Miami Valley Human Resources Association to share how we can help especially their entry-level prospects and employees afford child care.

We also joined an employer education effort by Ohio's two associations that represent long-term health care facilities about how Head Start can support their in-demand workforce.

"Creating these relationships is critical to supporting employers – and our families, too," says Coretta.

"Everyone wins when parents and caregivers can take jobs because they have access to quality early childhood education and child care."

MVCDC's CAREER LADDER

Congratulations to these and all our employees who are moving up on the job.



Carolyn Junius
From *Operation Manager* to *Director of HS/EHS Partnerships*



Cyrena Adkins
From *Education Supervisor* to *Education Coordinator*



Deena Plamondon
From *HR Intern* to *HR Training & Support Specialist*



Lisa Halley
From *Education Supervisor* to *Education Coordinator*



Taylor Hart
From *Assistant Teacher* to *Family Support Specialist*

MVDCDC FATHERS ARE



Sean L. Walton Sr. has served on MVDCDC's Board of Directors and on Policy Council, and his son – now a civil-rights attorney – attended a MVDCDC program.

His focus today is leading MVDCDC's Male Engagement Coalition and enlisting Fatherhood Champions. The goal is to bring dads or other men in children's lives together to support each other and to be role models at home and in MVDCDC classrooms.

Though the pandemic stymied this work, Sean is back at enlisting Champions throughout MVDCDC's service area and bringing men together.

One group of Champions organized a visit with their children to the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force and, in May, a group held a "Car, Bike and Trike Maintenance and Safety Day" where Champions who are mechanics demonstrated car maintenance and fixed children's bikes. There was also a bike wash, where the men learned about developing children's fine and gross motor skills.

Sinclair Community College and Miami Valley Career Technology Center representatives shared information about education opportunities.

Sean is a persistent recruiter of Champions.

"I tell dads, 'Please don't make me stalk you.' Then I give a quick elevator speech, and I do what I call a 'walk and talk' as they're picking up or dropping off their children for school."



CHAMPIONS FOR KIDS



Christopher Powell drives 30 minutes one-way to take his 4-year-old daughter Rylee to MVDCD's Early Childhood Education Center in Springfield. It's a commitment he's willing to make because he likes the education and care she's receiving.

Christopher's daughter Thea, now in kindergarten, also attended ECEC.

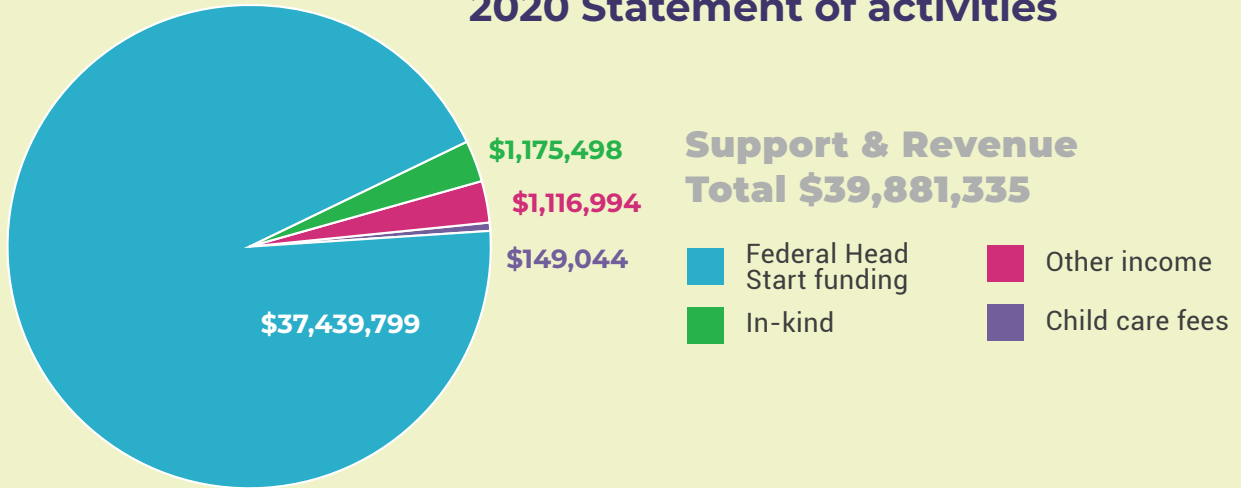
A self-employed construction contractor who wants to become a Fatherhood Champion, Christopher is a single father of four daughters. He was recognized this year by the Urban Light Ministries as their Father of the Year.

"I would recommend MVDCD to anybody," says Christopher. "Thea is doing very well in kindergarten," thanks to her experience in Head Start.

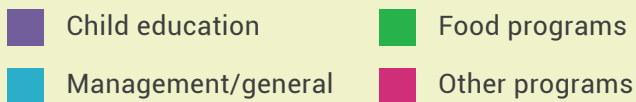
"The kids always talk about their teachers – that speaks volumes. They've learned colors, the alphabet, how to interact with other kids and how to find a happy place when they're angry. I really like the communication and how the teachers are so understanding."

MVCDC *invests in children*

2020 Statement of activities



Expenses Total \$39,235,131



Unrestricted net assets as of 12/31/20 \$6,762,340

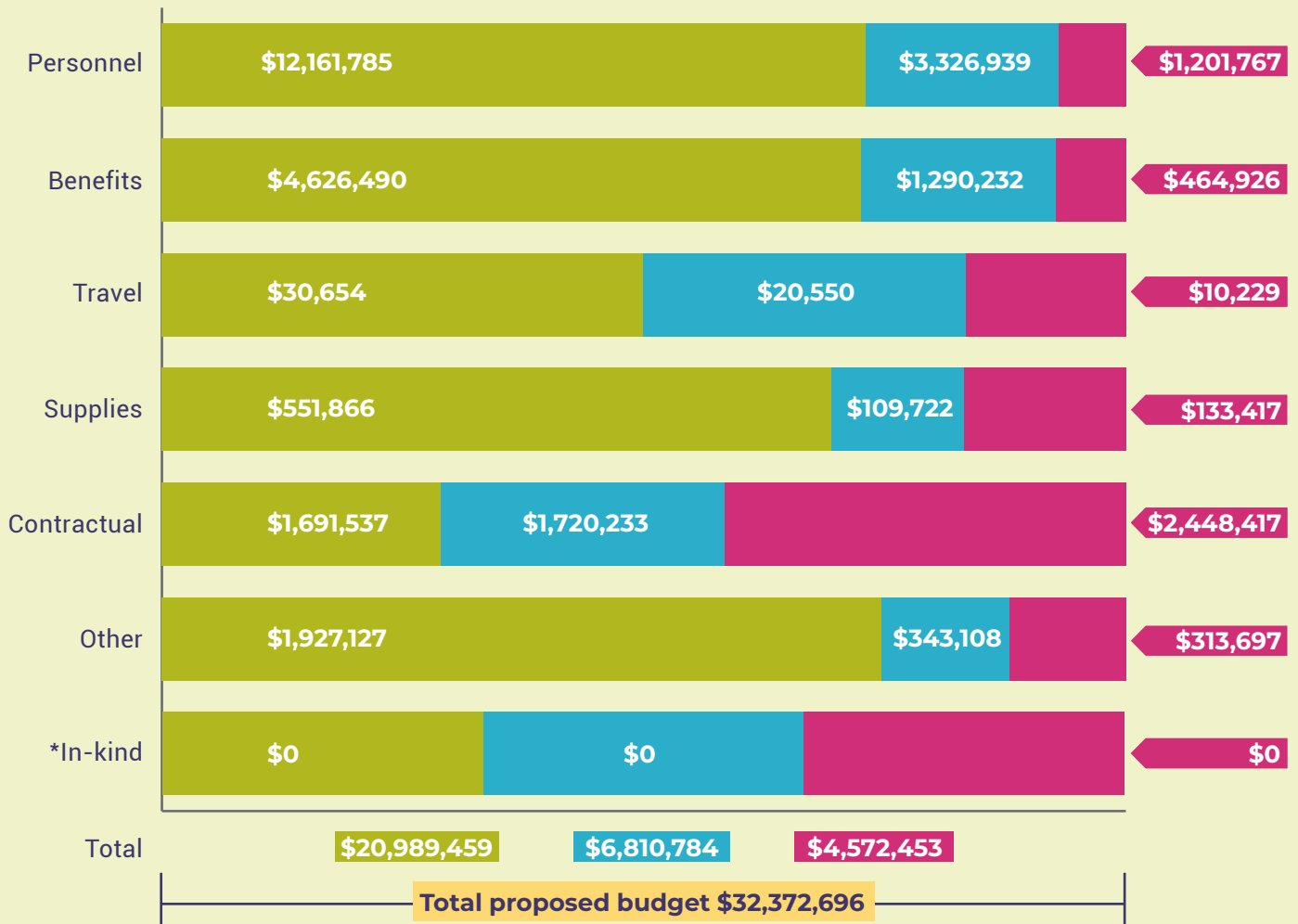
The latitude and financial flexibility first extended by the national Head Start office in January 2020 has continued throughout 2021.

We also received \$3.81 million for additional expenses from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), money we're using to support families and children and keep children and our staff safe.

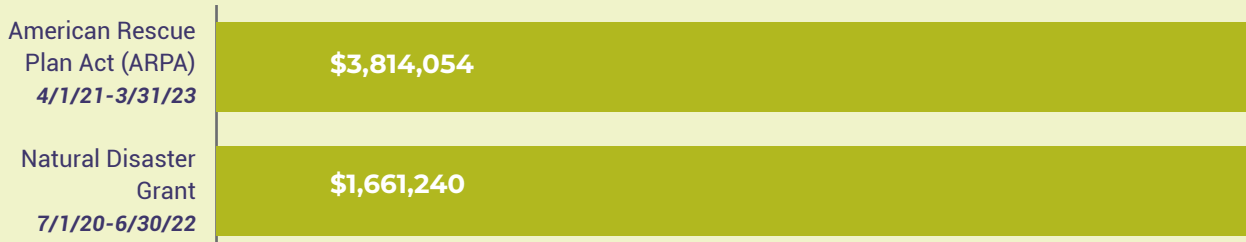
MVCDC's independent audit resulted in an unmodified opinion with no findings.



Proposed budget 2021



*In-kind requirement waived due to COVID



■ Head Start
 ■ Early Head Start
 ■ Early Head Start Child Care Partnership



All MVCDC centers and partners participate in Ohio's *Step Up to Quality* initiative. Programs go above and beyond minimum licensing standards and earn 1-Star to 5-Stars ratings.

MVCDC MONTGOMERY COUNTY



Aullwood
Blairwood
Brookville
Dayton View
Dixie
East Dayton ELC
Kings Highway
Marilyn E Thomas Center (MET)
Miamisburg
Miami View
Moraine Meadows
Stuart Patterson
Twin Towers
Valley View
★★★★★
Rosa Parks
★★★
Findlay EHS

Child Care Partnership Programs (HS & EHS)



Creative World/Huber Heights
Creative World/Kettering
Creative World/Union
Dayton Christian
Stepping Stones
United Rehabilitation Services
★★★★★
Wenzler Learning Center
★★★★
Smart Start Academy West
YMCA Grace

MONTGOMERY COUNTY Family Child Care Providers



Cynthia Douglas
Angela Reeves
Jameka Parker
Jayne Bey
Kisha Tyree
Lisa Fletcher
Nekeesha Foreman
Patricia Bechstein
★★★★
Debra Clark
Peggy Miller
Donna Patterson
MeKeea Hanson Pierce
★★★
Andrea Wilkerson
Aron Cole
★
Rosalind Barnes
Peggy Miller

BUTLER COUNTY Family Child Care Providers



Christi Reddix
Sherri Miller
Teyaunna Calhoun
★★★★★
Michelle Parish
Rebecca Taylor
★★★★
Amanda Gushurst
★
Deeyah Hill
Latasha Jones
Rita Beaudoin

MVCDC CLARK COUNTY



Clark
Fulton
Medway
Springfield Children's Center
St. Joseph
Town and Country
★★★★
Clark ECEC

Child Care Partnership Programs (HS & EHS)



Creative World/Springfield
★★★★
Smart Start East
★
Precious Gifts

MVCDC MADISON COUNTY



London
Madison Plains

School-based Partners



Monroe
Plain City

GREENE COUNTY

Child Care Partnership Programs (HS & EHS)



Creative World/Fairborn