



FISCAL YEAR

2024

ANNUAL REPORT



Believe. Achieve. Soar.
EPISCOPAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES

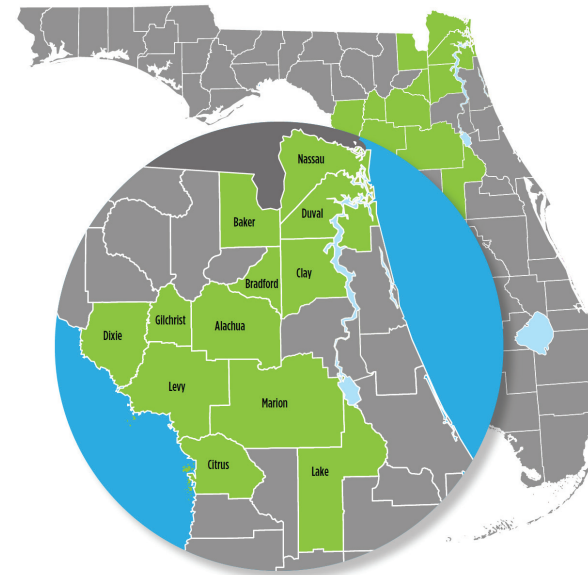


After more than 30 years of service, Connie Stophel announced her retirement. Under Connie's leadership, Episcopal Children's Services has grown to be one of Florida's largest nonprofit organizations. Her career has been guided by her personal faith and commitment to serving others. She is passionate about early childhood education and has dedicated her professional life to bringing the highest quality learning to our community's most vulnerable young children.

Her accomplishments have been phenomenal and here are some of the impacts of Connie's work during her tenure as CEO:

- **Increased our annual funded enrollment in Head Start/Early Head Start, resulting in over 25,000 of our most vulnerable infants, toddlers, preschoolers, pregnant women, and their families receiving the highest quality of early childhood education and parent engagement.**
- **Almost \$300M in budget savings for families of children in School Readiness. These families are the "working poor" – those families with limited incomes of less than 150% of the federal poverty level yet are working hard at their jobs.**
- **Over 80,000 children were better prepared for kindergarten because the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program provided free early education.**
- **Over 400,000 families were provided with free resources to support their childcare needs.**

Connie committed to a growth strategy to bring our expertise to more communities, and we now serve 14 counties in North and Central Florida.



"It is such an honor to follow in the footsteps of a strong and strategic leader. Connie truly created a legacy of growth for ECS4Kids."

- Dr. Natalya Bannister Roby



WE WELCOME OUR NEW PRESIDENT & CEO DR. NATALYA BANNISTER ROBY



Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am honored to lead ECS4Kids as we embark on this exciting new chapter. Building upon Connie Stophel's strong foundation, our commitment to serving the needs of children and families in Florida remains our top priority.

This report reflects the amazing work of the team at ECS4Kids as we make an impact and reach new heights. Throughout my professional journey, I have witnessed the importance of early childhood education and prevention as crucial elements in fostering stronger and healthier communities. Together, we can secure a brighter future for children and families across Florida.

- Dr. Natalya Bannister Roby

ABOUT DR. ROBY

Dr. Natalya Roby brings a wealth of experience, knowledge, and a proven track record of transforming organizations through her purpose-driven culture efforts. Throughout her career, she has successfully navigated challenges while driving growth and innovation.

She holds a Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership, specializing in Executive and Organizational Leadership. Her academic background not only enhances her strategic decision-making but also reflects her commitment to continuous learning and improvement.

"I approach this work with my whole heart. It is a calling," she said. "My leadership philosophy and values are rooted in authentic relationships. I work diligently to promote a culture of connectivity with a deep sense of pride, passion, and engagement, unified in a shared commitment to excellence, innovation, results, and social responsibility."

ECS4Kids Board Chair Thabata Ford welcomes a new beginning. "I have extended a warm welcome to Dr. Bannister Roby on behalf of the Board of Trustees," she said. "Her leadership will undoubtedly guide us to new heights, and we look forward to achieving great success in the years to come."



A NEW LOGO AND A NEW NAME

ECS4Kids is proud to announce our new logo and name. The new logo builds on our existing mission to empower communities to rise above systemic poverty with comprehensive early childhood education and holistic family support, lifting up our children and families to continue to believe, achieve and soar. Along with the new logo, we are now proudly known as ECS4Kids. This new name better reflects the agency's dynamic approach to early childhood education in a succinct way.

Dr. Roby shares her excitement: "We're reinforcing our commitment to our mission to ensure our children and families have the resources, support, and opportunities they need to thrive. This refresh reflects our commitment to creating lasting, positive change for the children and families we serve and the communities we work to impact."



ECS4Kids is a nonprofit leader in early childhood education helping underserved children and their families build a strong foundation for success.

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WHAT WE DO

ECS4Kids uses research and best practices to help develop enthusiastic lifelong learners. Talented, dedicated teachers and staff work proactively with children from birth to age five and their families to build a strong educational foundation for success. Our programs include:

- Head Start
- Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten
- School Readiness & Childcare
- CoachJAX

We know the potential for learning is greatest during the early years of a child's life and strive to provide innovative learning opportunities to our young students at the earliest possible age. Through guided experiences and discovery-oriented approaches, our teachers support a continuum of growth and development for each child, promoting reflective problem-solving and lifelong learning.

WHAT SETS US APART

ECS4Kids serves the most vulnerable children – those in poverty, experiencing homelessness, single parent families, and children with diagnosed disabilities. Without intervention, these children would struggle to succeed.

We make a difference. Young children make tremendous learning gains so that they enter school ready to learn. Parents engage in their child's education so that they become effective advocates. Families improve their financial stability because without our support, childcare costs can consume over 20% of a working family's budget.

We do this work because we know that every child deserves a strong start in life.



6,544 Children Served by School Readiness

We help low-income working families pay for high-quality childcare so they can earn income while their children are learning and thriving.



2,802 Children Served in Head Start

These children and their 2,471 families are provided with comprehensive services to impact two generations at the same time.



98% Average Monthly Enrollment for Head Start

Because our services are in high demand, we strive to enroll an eligible child as soon as an opening occurs.

100%

Standards Met in our Most Recent Head Start Federal Reviews

Our review showcased our strong performance in Program Management and Quality Improvement, Quality Education and Child Development Services, Quality Health Services, Quality Family and Community Engagement Services, Fiscal Infrastructure, and Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance.



6,495 Children Served in Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten

This free program provides 4-year-olds with high-quality learning experiences.



100% Enrolled Children Met Head Start Eligibility Criteria

We recruit the most vulnerable families – those in poverty, experiencing homelessness, foster care, and dual language learners.



Our Learning Gains were impressive.
46% to 83% in Literacy and from 56% to 91% in Math,
showcasing how our children are learning needed skills for kindergarten.

11,492 Families Received Free Childcare Referrals and Resources

Parents and Caregivers are provided with free information on local childcare providers and resources to support their family's specific needs.

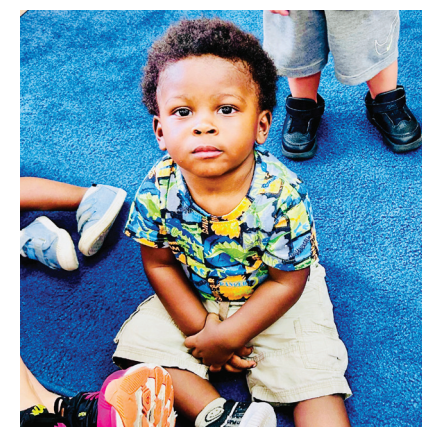


13% Head Start Children with a Diagnosed Disability

We prioritize 10% of our enrollment to serve children with differing abilities and are proud that we have exceeded our goal.

1,514 Children Received a Dental Exam

Early checkups prevent cavities and tooth decay, which can lead to pain, and trouble concentrating.



98% Children with a Medical Home

Children must be healthy to learn so we help families obtain insurance and access quality healthcare.





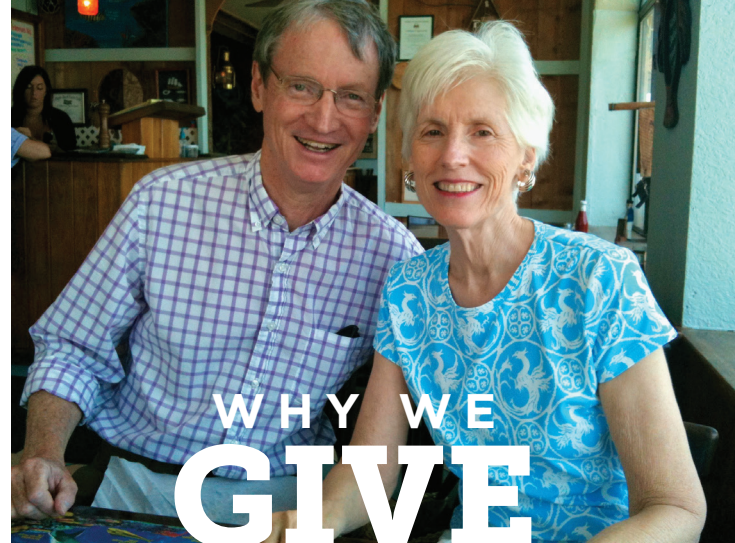
WHY MY SON THRIVES AT ECS4KIDS

“WHEN I FIRST ENROLLED ARMANDO IN HEAD START at ECS4Kids, he was just two years old. As the mother of a toddler diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), I had so many concerns about his future. Would he be able to communicate effectively? Would he develop the social skills he needed to interact with others? How would he cope with the challenges he was facing?

From the very beginning, the staff embraced Armando with the care, patience, love and understanding he needed. Over the next few years, we saw remarkable progress. The skills that once seemed insurmountable for Armando started to come together. He began recognizing letters and numbers, he learned how to express his thoughts more clearly, and he started to make friends. Social skills that once felt so difficult for him to navigate became more natural. It was as if Head Start had unlocked a new potential in Armando—a potential I wasn’t sure he would ever realize on his own.

Today, Armando is thriving. He’s ready for kindergarten, and I couldn’t be prouder of the progress he’s made. He excels in the areas that once required so much support, and he’s excited about the next chapter of his educational journey. The staff at ECS4Kids didn’t just teach Armando—they believed in him.”

KEILYN ALMODOVAR, ARMANDO’S MOM



WHY WE GIVE TO ECS4KIDS

“One of the true pleasures for us this year was really getting to know ECS4Kids and witnessing firsthand the INCREDIBLE HARD WORK that goes into uplifting the community where we live. John and I plan to continue to be vocal advocates for the organization as we help to spread the word and support ECS4Kids in various ways. We feel honored to be a part of the ECS4Kids family.”

JULIA (JUJU) AND JOHN TAYLOR
2020 CHILDREN’S CHAMPION



WHY I VOLUNTEER WITH ECS4KIDS



WHY I MAKE MY CAREER ECS4KIDS

“MY PARENTS MOVED TO MASSACHUSETTS FROM PUERTO RICO, but with a limited education, they worked at low paying jobs just to make ends meet. They knew the importance of education and enrolled my sister, brother, and I into the local Head Start program. There was never a doubt that I would go to college and graduate. I worked for many years, got married, had two wonderful children, and became a stay-at-home mom.

When they were in preschool, I decided to pursue a career in Early Childhood Education so I could teach at the same center where my daughter was attending. When we moved to Ocala, I had the opportunity to work in the Head Start program. ECS4Kids has provided me with professional development and I have risen to the position of Regional Director of Center Operations, overseeing 12 centers in Marion and Lake counties.

My life has come full circle as I can support our current families just as my family was supported when I was young. ECS4Kids Head Start program provides benefits that last a lifetime.”

MARITZA ALEJANDRO

“I LEAD THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM with 27 members of Christ Church in Ponte Vedra Beach serving every month. We have the hands-on volunteers who read to the children, and those who provide food for events or like to give items off our wish list such as diapers or pull-ups. When asked, they do.

I’m in the center at least once a week, leading a craft in the classroom, or pitching in wherever I’m needed – even washing dishes! The most important aspect is every volunteer feels a connection to ECS4Kids and every interaction here is meaningful.”

JOY HARDAKER



WHY I AM GRATEFUL FOR ECS4KIDS

“GRACEY’S MOTHER COULDN’T MEET her basic needs and lost custody. As Gracey is my brother-in-law’s niece, she is part of our family, and I was determined to provide her with a loving home. As part of the protective services program, I was able to receive School Readiness services from ECS4Kids in partnership with the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida, giving me the needed financial support to enroll her in a quality childcare program where she benefits from an environment rich in early learning activities that foster motor, cognitive, social, and emotional development.

I’m now married to Joel and this year we were able to officially adopt Gracey so that she has a forever home with us.

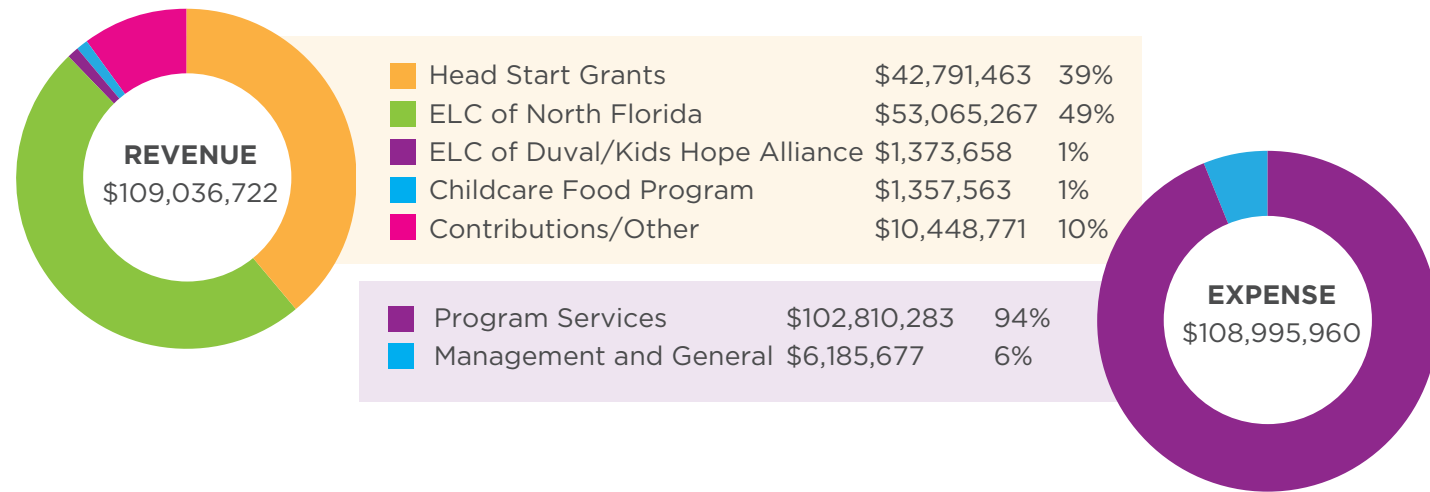
Joel continues to work full-time and the support from ECS4Kids has given me the ability to work part-time while pursuing my nursing career. It is truly a blessing to get her into the best care possible and to have help paying for it.”



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

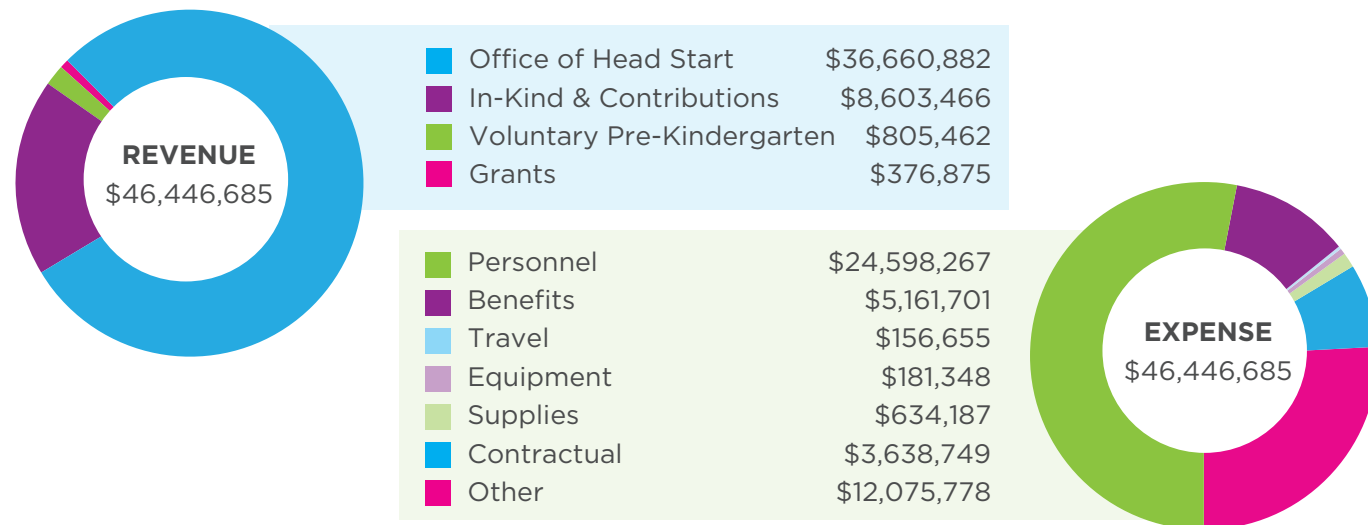
With the hard work of a dedicated team, we continue to utilize our revenues to pay for desperately needed programming. We need the support of every sector – corporations, foundations, government, service organizations, and individuals – to prepare our youngest citizens to enter school ready to learn. Because when children succeed in school, they enter the workforce prepared to compete in the global economy.

ECS4Kids 2024 Fiscal Year Performance



To ensure compliance with the Office of Head Start, this report provides additional detail on this important program. Most notably, we must show that we raise at least 20% of the cost of our program operations from the local community as well as identify expenses by category. Please note that these revenues and expenses are for the program year which does not coincide with ECS4Kids fiscal year.

Head Start 2023 – 2024 Performance



Our 2024 – 2025 Head Start budget is \$42,163,573 in federal funds, which will be matched by \$10,290,893, for a total program budget of \$51,454,466.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023-2024 DONORS AND SPONSORS

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