

VISIONS
COMMUNITY SERVICES

2009

ANNUAL REPORT



Nurturing Families Today to Create a Better Tomorrow

www.visionscs.org

From the Executive Director and Board Chair

2009 was challenging for our country and our community, including the families we serve. We want to thank our valuable partners, generous donors and dedicated volunteers who continue to believe in our mission. We are able to serve each and every child and family and nurture their vision of empowerment and self-sufficiency because of you. Thank you!

Family struggles with the daily obstacles of poverty increased as a result of the economic downturn. As a result, children and families needed our services more than ever. Many families faced job-layoffs and difficulties enrolling in educational and training programs. Ohio's budget cuts to early childhood education furthered the negative impact as more families lost subsidized assistance for child care. We increased our efforts with our families and provided information, referrals and direct support through services such as direct counseling, intervention, personal development and parenting classes and workshops to assist these struggling families.

Children continued to develop early learning skills to prepare them for kindergarten and beyond. Research shows that the education of the parent as well as their involvement with their children's education combined with a quality early childhood educational experiences improved children's school performance. These experiences also decreased the likelihood of participation in negative behaviors later in life. Children are the ultimate winners, being armed with the social, emotional and cognitive skills for lifelong academic and social success.

Despite the many challenges, we are pleased with our successes and remain steadfast in our commitment to the education, health and self-sufficiency of parents and their children. You have our heartfelt thanks for your continued support and dedication to VISIONS. With your partnership, we will continue to change the outcomes for our families today and our community tomorrow.

Marcia H. Simmons

Marcia H. Simmons
Executive Director

Mary Ellen Cody

Mary Ellen Cody
Board Chair



**INVESTMENTS IN HIGH QUALITY
EARLY CARE AND LEARNING
EXPERIENCES MAKE A
DIFFERENCE IN THEIR FUTURE**

Mission Statement

VISIONS Community Services is a community-based organization committed to breaking the cycle of poverty by providing human services that strengthen families and promote self-sufficiency. Our interactions with the families we serve, our volunteers, funders and community partners will reflect our core values of caring, respect, integrity and a commitment to excellence in all we do.

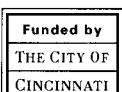
Our key strategies for fulfilling our mission include:

1. Provide nationally accredited star rated early childhood education for children 6 weeks – 5 years that address the educational, physical and behavioral needs of children, enabling them to enter kindergarten ready to learn.
2. Work closely with parents and provide family support services, crisis intervention, and education/support groups that help them achieve their goals.
3. Collaborate with other groups who have a vested interest in the community, including social service agencies, community leaders, and public safety and school officials, to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of our efforts and to identify and meet emerging needs.

Nurturing Families Today to Create a Better Tomorrow!



Community Partner



Funded in part by the generous support of Individual Donors, Foundations and Trusts, Catholics United for the Poor (CUP), the City of Cincinnati, the Dominican Sisters of Hope, and the United Way of Greater Cincinnati.



2009 at a Glance

- ◆ **100%** of families live at our below 150% Federal poverty level.
- ◆ **100%** of children living with a single parent
- ◆ **148** children participated in nationally accredited child care and early childhood education programs.
- ◆ **21** school-age children, ages 6 – 12, participated in safe, enriching summer activities
- ◆ **113** mothers and **19** fathers participated in parent program and are actively involved in their child's learning
- ◆ **25,763** nutritionally balanced meals were served for breakfast and lunch.
- ◆ **12,727** nutritional mid-afternoon snacks were served.
- ◆ **10** preschool children received assistance in making a smooth transition from early education to kindergarten for a successful future in school.
- ◆ **12** ninth grade students from Aiken High School participated in **12** group meetings designed to empower participants to make healthy choices, remain in school, graduate high and pursue post-secondary education. **3** group meeting were held a Aiken High School for parenting teens
- ◆ **34** parent education programs, meetings and workshops were held to provide information and share new ideas and perspectives to assist with personal development and parenting issues. Program participation requires attendance once a month.
- ◆ **78%** children maintain regular attendance.
- ◆ **100%** of children are assessed to determine if age-appropriate milestones have been met at enrollment. Individual Education Plans for achievement are created as a result.
- ◆ **100%** of children have current medical screenings
- ◆ **100%** of children received screening to identify health concerns such as speech, hearing, or vision impairments. 100 % of children with identified delays were linked with treatment services.
- ◆ **100%** of children have up to date immunizations.
- ◆ **98%** children's physical development is assessed to be age-appropriate (fine and gross motor skills) or demonstrate attainment of fine and gross motor goals identified in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) within 12 months.
- ◆ **85%** children's social/emotional development is assessed to be age-appropriate or demonstrate attainment of social/emotional goals identified in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) within 12 months.
- ◆ **88%** children's cognitive and language development is assessed to be age-appropriate or demonstrate attainment of cognitive and language goals identified in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) within 12 months.
- ◆ **90%** of children are regularly read to at home.
- ◆ **150** parent(s) referrals were made for education, housing, health care services, mental health services and employment.
- ◆ **660** newsletters were distributed to parents of enrolled children to provide support and information to improve quality of their families' lives.
- ◆ **374** credit hours of classes, workshops and seminars were attended by VCS staff providing additional knowledge, new techniques and support to maintain and enhance quality early education, making life better for the children in their care



Predictors of School Readiness

- * Participation in Quality Early Childhood Education Programs
- * Length of Attendance and Number of Days in Preschool
- * Preschool Assessments
- * Demographic and Risk Variables; Socio-economic status, Gender, Mobility, etc.

VCS Continues Partnership with Winning Beginnings

VCS has two classrooms of preschool children participating in the second year of the Winning Beginnings project sponsored by United Way's Success by Six. The goal is to provide a high quality early childhood education as an effective strategy to improve kindergarten readiness. This is achieved by improving program quality, staff quality and child outcomes. Participation provides VCS staff with additional training and educational opportunities to enhance their lesson planning and learning in their classroom. Directors are able to develop action plans, discuss topics that help improve classroom curriculums and share strategies. All children participating in the project are assessed with the Bracken Basic Concept Scale, a comprehensive assessment of children's language, math and social awareness skills, to track the progress of children and identify performance measures.

Research shows that a quality early learning experience increases school success, graduation rates, adult earnings and productivity, overall health and well being and community engagement. A quality early learning experience also decreases crime rates, welfare dependency, teen pregnancy, special education costs, employee training expense, grade repetition and teen drop out rates. Quality preschool makes a positive difference especially for at-risk children in urban core communities.



VCS Launches Initiative Matching Young Moms with Local Female Attorneys

A group of nine local women attorneys has agreed to serve as mentors for young mothers of VISIONS. The intent of the program is to help mentees discover and realize their personal potential and establish clear attainable goals that assist them in overcoming personal and behavioral barriers that prevent their success and self-sufficiency. The mentors will act as an advisor, friend, tutor, confidant, encourager, listener, motivator and coach.

An initial meeting has been held and applications received from the attorneys. The next step will be getting acquainted sessions for the mentors and mentees to develop a level of comfort with one another prior to individual pairings.

Barbara Ellen McElroy Memorial Scholarship Recipients

Sykena – has been accepted into the Pre-Technology Nursing program at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College.

Dalana – attends University of Cincinnati's Raymond Walters campus. Her major is Nursing Technology and she is completing her third year and will be starting clinical classes in Fall 2010.

Kadaysha - attends University of Cincinnati's Raymond Walters campus. Her major is Psychology and she is a second year student. Kadaysha hopes to become a Psychiatrist or a Clinical Psychologist to work with children who have had tragic experiences.

Additional Accomplishments:

Daphney attended Miami Jacobs Career College studying paralegal studies. She completed her 2 year degree in Applied Business in July 2009

Toccaro; a Brown Mackie graduate who completed the LPN program. She is enrolled the Pre-Technology Nursing program at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College.

Andrea graduated from Virtual High School in August 2009 and would like to become a medical masseuse.

Ms. Rochelle, Honeybees teacher, graduated from Cincinnati State in June 2009. She was invited to join Phi Beta Kappa, a national college honor society.

Ms. Toni, Assistant teacher in Sunshine Room, completed her first year as a T.E.A.C.H. Ohio Scholar is working on her associate degree at Cincinnati State.

Each recipient was
awarded a \$1,000
scholarship



Parent income & educational attainment are
important factors for children's achievement
levels in school.



Raising of the Green 2009

presented by 

Raising of the Green was held March 21, 2009. Honorary Chairs were Tom and Linda Mueller. Event chairs were Megan Driehaus, Pat Hank, & Jan Kennedy. \$74,000 was raised.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to such a successful event!!

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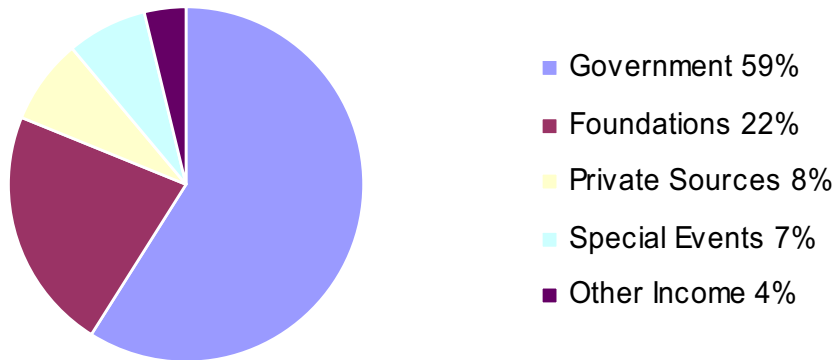
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VISIONS COMMUNITY SERVICES RESULTS FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009

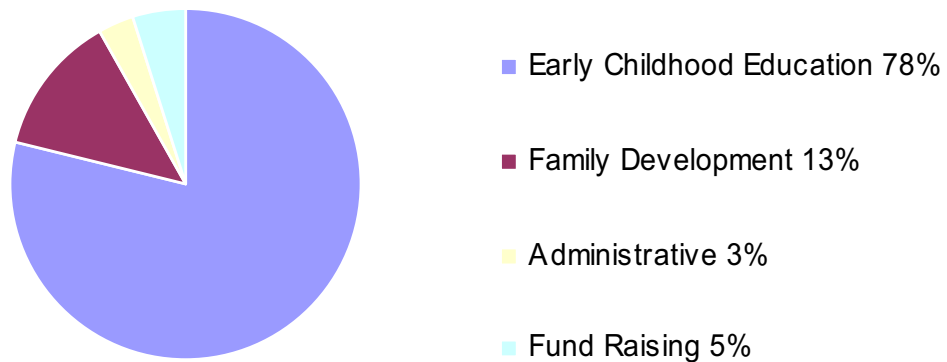
SOURCES OF FUNDS

Total Revenue: \$1,212,121



USES OF FUNDS

Total Expenditures: \$1,209,970



NET ASSETS

Total: \$758,572

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SUCCESS BY SIX, WINNING BEGINNINGS

PROGRAM FOR RESILIENT CHILDREN

HEALTHY MOMS & BABES

CINCINNATI PUBLIC SCHOOLS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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