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## *Arlington Area Childcare, Inc.*

### Annual Report | Year in Review

Arlington Area Childcare, Inc. (AACI), I am proud to share this annual report highlighting a year of growth, collaboration, and deepened community impact. This past year reflects not only the strength of our program but also the power of strategic grant writing, leadership development, and meaningful partnerships that support children and families across our region.

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### Who We Serve

During the past year, 88 children from Arlington, Sunderland, Sandgate, and neighboring towns were enrolled in AACI programs either part-time or full-time. We serve children from six weeks through twelve years of age through our Early Education Program, Afterschool Program, and Summer Camp, supporting working families while nurturing children during their most critical developmental years.

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### Program Quality & Organizational Strength

- Maintained our 4 STARS designation with the State of Vermont.
  - Maintained our SEED and SEW accreditation, strengthening internal systems and sustainability.
  - Successfully implemented Frog Street Curriculum, providing a research-based foundation while allowing teachers to scaffold learning through play-based and emergent curriculum practices.
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## Staff Development & Workforce Investment

Investing in educators remains a cornerstone of AACI's success.

- 11 staff members enrolled at CCV in college coursework or the Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals.
  - All teaching staff are qualified and working within their credentialed roles.
  - AACI provides 30 hours of professional development annually through in-house training, conferences, and workshops, including the VTAEYC annual conference.
  - Increased wages, benefits, and time off, supporting retention and educator well-being.
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## Family Support & Advocacy

AACI continues to serve as a trusted support hub for families:

- Operated a diaper and wipes bank.
  - Maintained connection with food shelves and worked with them to help families.
  - Supported families through our Christmas Wish Program, assisting three local families with essential holiday needs
  - Prioritized inclusive access, dignity, and partnership with families
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## Grant Writing & Fund Development

Strategic grant writing played a critical role in strengthening AACI programs this year.

- Awarded \$90,000 in grants to enhance our programs, completed by our own administration.
- Continued successful annual fundraisers supported by staff, families, and board members

- Engaged in sustainability planning with First Children’s Finance and other statewide partners

These efforts allowed AACI to expand programming, invest in staff, and maintain access for families.

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## Community Connections & Enrichment

### Summer Camp & Enrichment

Our Summer Camp served approximately 20 campers per day and remains the only local summer camp with a consistent waiting list, underscoring its importance to working families. Campers participated in enrichment experiences such as an interactive animal program with the Utica Zoo, expanding learning beyond the classroom.

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## Deepening Community Roots & Leadership Engagement

### Farm to School Institute – Shelburne Farms

This year, AACI participated in the Farm to School Institute at Shelburne Farms, with administration, board members, and teaching staff learning together. This shared experience strengthened our collective vision for integrating local food systems, nutrition education, and hands-on learning into classrooms and community programming.

By bringing this learning back to AACI, we are deepening connections with local food systems, enhancing curriculum, and strengthening family and community engagement around health, sustainability, and food access.

### Board Growth & Governance

AACI intentionally focused on growing our Board of Directors, increasing membership, and strengthening governance capacity. A larger, engaged board brings diverse perspectives and plays an active role in strategic planning, advocacy, fundraising, and long-term sustainability.

## Community Giving & Partnerships

Giving back remains central to AACI's mission. This year, AACI:

- Volunteered at local church dinners
- Supported other nonprofits through donation drives and transportation support
- Assisted organizations such as Second Chance Animal Shelter by helping deliver supplies and resources

These efforts reflect AACI's belief that strong early childhood programs are rooted in strong, connected communities.

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## Facilities & Ongoing Needs

Despite these outstanding achievements, the cost of living and operating expenses continue to rise, impacting utilities, insurance, maintenance, and staffing. Like many community-based nonprofits, AACI must carefully balance these increasing costs while working to keep tuition as accessible as possible for families in the communities we serve.

For the upcoming year, Arlington Area Childcare is requesting the same town appropriation from Sandgate that we have typically received in prior years. This continued level of support remains important as operating costs rise, including utilities, insurance, facility maintenance, and staffing, while we work to keep tuition affordable for families.

An ongoing partnership with the towns we serve, even at existing funding levels, is essential to sustaining high-quality early childhood services, supporting a stable and professional workforce, and maintaining a safe, welcoming environment for Sandgate children and families.

We are deeply grateful for the continued support of the towns we serve and for the opportunity to be part of a community that values children, families, and early childhood education. Arlington Area Childcare remains committed to transparency, collaboration, and thoughtful stewardship of the resources entrusted to us.

If additional information would be helpful, or if a representative from Arlington Area Childcare could join a meeting or discussion, we welcome the opportunity to connect. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions or to learn more about our programs, partnerships, and ongoing needs.

With appreciation,

Ginelle Hunter  
Executive Director / Co-Director

Kayla Croft  
Assistant Director / Co-Director

Arlington Area Childcare, Inc.