



KENNEDY CENTER

CHARLESTOWN, MA



Happy Holidays, Friends of the Center!

This is the season when we feel the dark closing in.

We light our candles and string up sparkles to remind us that even when times are hard, we have the power to create love and joy.

Whenever I feel overwhelmed by the sorrows of today's world, I walk around the Kennedy Center. I peek in at the children busy with their learning, soothe a little one in tears, or stop to chat with a parent. [We may not be able to solve the world's problems all at once, but the Kennedy Center makes a difference right now and right here.](#)

[We make a difference because of you.](#) This Impact Report is dedicated to our partners—the agencies and individuals who provide expertise, volunteers, technical assistance, and financial resources which allow a small center like ours to magnify our impact. A great example is the Charlestown Mothers' Association, whose members join with us in a common mission to strengthen families and increase opportunities for children. The CMA has brought us many volunteers over the years and always raises funds to sponsor families in our Holiday Toy Drive. Our Volunteer of the Year 2023, Emily Hodge, found us through the Toy Drive and stayed on to do more and more. As a new mom, she was sensitive to issues that can affect moms and babies, such as post-partum depression. Through her efforts, the Kennedy Center this year launched programs which promote a sisterhood of moms sharing health information and mutual support.

[Will you help us continue to enhance and sustain our programs through a gift to our Annual Fund?](#) Contributions marked as unrestricted or “for the greatest need” are critical to fill the gaps not covered by grants and contracts, and allow us to be nimble in responding to emerging community needs. Sustaining excellence also requires a strong

foundation in operations, from the maintenance of our 100-year-old historic building to the technology improvements necessary to keep pace with increasingly complex requirements.

Please enjoy our 2023 Impact Report and forward it on! Help us spread the word about the work of the Kennedy Center to others who believe in our mission. As we move into 2024, and the next round of strategic planning, we are looking for companies and organizations to partner with us in capacity-building. The right partners could see tremendous returns on their investment: happy children who read at grade level, stable families, and well-nourished seniors living safely in their own homes. [If you or your company would like to learn more about partnership opportunities, please get in touch!](#)

With warm wishes for a very happy and healthy New Year,

Thara Fuller

Executive Director

Our Programs

100+

**Children Nurtured
Every Day**

- Raising a Reader literacy program
- Visits from dental volunteers and nursing students
- Toddler & preschool classes focused on emotional well-being as well as reading, writing, science, and math
- Home-cooked nutritious breakfast and lunch
- Toddler play groups for fine motor skill-building
- Family Advocates partner with DCF & families in creating stability for foster children in our care



- Home visits from JFK caregivers, nursing students
- Free groceries for those most at risk of hunger
- Wellness workshops like Fall Prevention
- Multicultural holiday gatherings and social events
- Phone check-ins with seniors vulnerable due to health and/or isolation

150

**Seniors Cared For
Each Month**



600+

**Families Touched
by Our Programs
Each Year**

Between our school, our outreach activities for families of young children, and our HUGE holiday Toy Drive, we reach nearly virtually all the families in the public housing project surrounding JFK.

We feed the hungry



We nurture children



We care for elders

Our Impact

Despite the ripple effects of the COVID pandemic, in 2023 the Kennedy Center not only sustained core programs but deepened their impact.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Early Ed: 1) The “Starting Off Strong” project at our school screened 85 children for developmental delays and followed up with special strategies to help kids at risk. Experts from MGH-IHP modeled activities for teachers and shared tools for families to monitor and strengthen children’s development at home.

2) Community Services enhanced education components in activities for young children not enrolled in formal school. e.g. literacy skills, fine motor skills, social-emotional skills

Families: We launched workshops in English and Spanish to review the rights of families to access Special Education resources.

Moms: We added a cluster of new programs supporting the health & well-being of mothers: breastfeeding classes, a new moms’ group, and a neighborhood baby shower.

Seniors: We expanded our partnership with local students training in nursing and public health to provide health screenings and educational workshops such as fall prevention.

IMPACT

- More children are starting kindergarten with a strong foundation of basic skills
- Children who have support for their developmental needs have fewer behavioral challenges and greater success in school.

Thanks to RSM and the Boston Family Engagement Program!

- More families, especially Latinx parents, will advocate for their children to receive needed Special Education services
- More children will enter kindergarten with an education plan already in place

Thank you, Charlestown

Community Impact Fund!

- More happy, healthy moms
- More happy, healthy babies

Thank you, Emily and the CMA!

- Fewer seniors will need hospitalizations with support to manage chronic conditions
- More seniors will stay in their own homes safely

Thank you, MGH-IHP and the City of Boston Age Strong Commission!

Community Basic Needs Drop-In Services



Both our school and our community outreach offices serve as drop-in centers. After 60 years, people know and trust us. Their stories often begin “Someone told me you could help...”

One day an elderly gentleman appeared at the school looking a bit lost. We learned that he had lost access to his food benefits because he could not figure out how to reactivate a new card from the benefits office. There was a number to call but his hearing aid broke and he was helpless on the phone. First, we called about his new card. Then, for assistance with the hearing aid repair, we connected him with Kim in our senior services program. He asked “If I go see Kim, will she speak real close to me so I can hear? Will she be patient about my hearing?” “Absolutely,” we said.

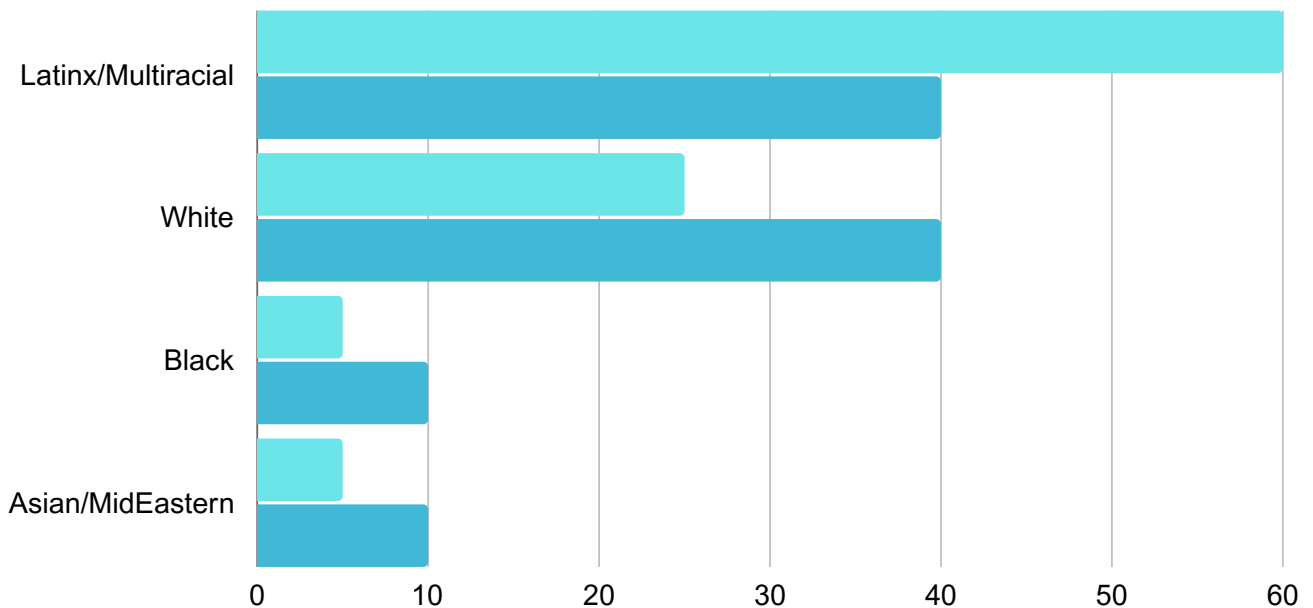
Thank you, DCBeane for support targeting the highest needs!

Our People

99% of our Clients are Our Neighbors (and Staff too!)

At the Kennedy Center, we draw both our clients and our staff from the local community, fostering appreciation for the rich diversity in family histories, languages, and cultures.

The table below shows the racial & cultural mix of families served (dark blue) and the Kennedy Center staff (light blue)



Volunteer Power



Emily Hodge

**Kennedy Center
Volunteer &
2023 ABCD Hero**

"The Kennedy Center is structured to provide support to individuals and families in need, from childcare to eldercare, checking in on people...I wanted to get involved. I have focused on prenatal and postpartum care because I feel there is a real lack of support...in this time of major transition. It is fulfilling to make a difference when people are struggling."



Healthy Food & Healthy Kids

Not only do we provide hot meals Mon-Fri for children in our school, but Kennedy Center staff and volunteers make sure Charlestown kids have plenty of food when schools close for February and April breaks. We pack up tote bags full of enough kid-friendly food to provide 2 meals a day for a week.

Thanks, Bunker Hill Associates!

Partnership Power

We could not have sustained and grown our programs without the power of our partners who believe in our mission. We proudly collaborate with both the public and private sectors to leverage resources for those we serve. We are grateful to our elected officials in the city and state who advocate tirelessly for children and elders. Special thanks to Senator Sal DiDomenico, Representative Dan Ryan, Mayor Michelle Wu, City Councilor Gabriela Coletta, and their hard-working staff.

Special thanks also to the local businesses and organizations featured below who have partnered with us again and again to improve the well-being of our community.



CITY of BOSTON

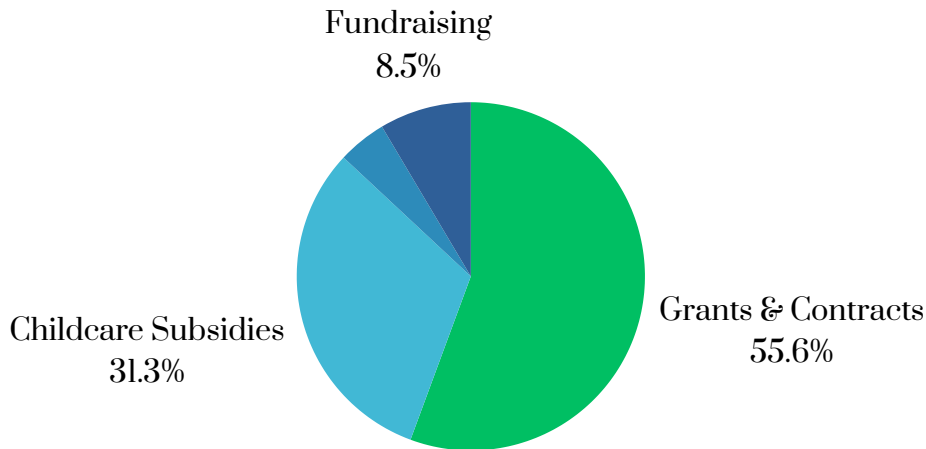


Capacity>>Excellence>>Impact

What does it take to make a visible, far-reaching impact on lives?

YOU!

The sustainability of excellent programs depends on a strong foundation. We have been fortunate in the number of contracts and grants awarded for the high quality of our services. Our goal now is to build a Capacity fund of unrestricted resources. The Capacity Fund will provide critical resources for areas of highest need, such as continuing our food security programs between grants. The Capacity Fund will also help us secure matching grants to fix our elevator and make other repairs in our 100-year-old historic building. Our target is to raise \$200,000 in the next year.



Ways to Give

Your contributions fuel our impact! We are grateful for your support and appreciate donations of all kinds and levels.

Easy online giving on our website

- One-time and recurring donations
- Gifts in memory of a loved one
- Gifts directed to specific programs and
- Unrestricted gifts to support areas of greatest need

<https://www.kennedycenter.org/give/donate-now/>

2024 Kennedy Center Partnerships for Companies

Partners who invest in the Kennedy Center find value in:

- Making a direct, immediate difference in the lives of families and elders
- Alignment with DEI initiatives in corporate giving
- Employee retention benefits through volunteer programs
- Opportunities to showcase the company's commitment to the community in social media, event sponsorships