



Where children, families & communities learn together

2022-2023

Annual Report

65 years of empowering children with special needs to learn, grow, and develop their abilities

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

Our Values

4

Letter from Our
Executive Director

5

Who We Serve

6

What We Do

7

Family Support
Programming

8

What Makes KCC Unique

10

2022-23 At A Glance

11

Leadership & Staff

12

Financials

13

Support Our Work

OUR MISSION

To provide high quality special education services and training that enables children, families, and professionals to uncover their full potential

OUR VISION

A world where all children have access to certified and licensed early childhood professionals

OUR VALUES



TEAMWORK

Working together, everyone achieves more



JOY

Love of learning brightens our days



KINDNESS

We treat each other the way we want to be treated



CREATIVITY

We can find solutions for any challenge



A Letter from Our Executive Director

Jeanne Alter

Growth and change are hallmarks of KCC's mission.

Our work is centered on the belief that a quality education allows all children to develop and grow into the best possible version of themselves. Everything we do with staff and families communicates our respect for that journey, and our hope for the future. Our Board of Directors provides guidance that allows growth and change to happen with integrity and purpose. Change provides the energy for new ideas to emerge and growth to continue.

[Click here to continue reading](#)

As a publicly funded nonprofit organization, KCC serves public school children who are placed in our program by their local New York City Department of Education school districts. KCC is:

- Approved by New York State Education Department as a Special Education Preschool.
- Approved by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene as a Day Care provider.
- Incorporated in New York State and registered as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.
- Certified by the Better Business Bureau and Guidestar (Gold Star Rating)
- An affiliated agency of Catholic Charities of New York.



Who We Serve

KCC serves **100% public school children** who are referred to our program by the New York City Department of Education's Committee on Preschool Special Education.

We serve **more than 350 students** between our two school sites.

Our Students:

100% exhibit delays in two or more areas of early childhood development

60% exhibit characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

70% identify as Latinx

40% come from ESL households

75% are male **25%** are female

100% are adorable!

What We Do

Special Education Preschool

We serve more than 350 public school children between 3-5 years old annually. Children are grouped into classes of 6, 8, or 12 depending on each child's individual needs. Classes are led by one certified special education teacher and two teacher assistants. Our year-round program runs Monday to Friday, 9AM-2:30PM.

Our curriculum focuses on purposeful play and learning experiences that invite participation, encourage social and emotional relationships, and engage the senses. Curriculum goals are aligned with the NYS Pre-Kindergarten Foundation for the Common Core.

Related Therapy Services

KCC provides comprehensive related therapy services in all areas of development, including individual and group speech, occupational, and physical therapy, and behavioral counseling. Related Services are part of each child's mandated Individual Education Plan (IEP), and services are recommended as part of the overall approach to assisting each child to reach and retain skills in all areas of development.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Services

Our teachers are trained in the latest ASD techniques, such as TEACCH and PECS, and address the specific intellectual, social, and emotional needs of our students through the use of visual learning aids and other methods shown to improve behavior and outcomes in school and at home.



Family Support Programming

Our Family Services Department provides support and training for parents and caregivers to help them meet the unique demands of raising a child with special needs. We provide parents with opportunities to participate in their child's education, help them understand their child's needs, and support them through their parenting journey.

Family Support Coordinators (FSC's):

Our FSC's are an integral part of family services, helping parents with individual needs, referrals to community resources, and an array of special disability services and benefits. Our FSC's helped more than 200 of our Turning Five parents apply for kindergarten this past year.

KCC Family Success Story

Zenaida had been told that her son Justin would never learn to walk or talk. But after a year with KCC's highly-trained teachers and therapists, "Justin is a whole new boy!" she said. He has learned to chew and eat solid food; he is walking on his own. In addition to their work in the classrooms, Justin's teacher and therapists "take their time to teach you step by step so you can keep the teaching going at home," said Zenaida.

Zenaida regularly attends free bilingual workshops on topics like Addressing Challenging Behaviors and Autism. "They give you a lot of information that you wouldn't even think about," she said, which has made a real difference in how she cares for her son.

“My child was non-verbal, not walking,” said Zanaida. “Now he's walking, he talks! Sometimes I'm still amazed when he talks to me. I think, is it really him? Is it really Justin?”

Parent Zenaida of son Justin

“The most important thing is to work with the child, not just the diagnosis.”



Bora, Justin's physical therapist.

In 2022-2023, KCC's Family Services Department...

- Led remote workshops in English and Spanish
- Provided cash assistance to over 40 families facing in crisis
- Provided 40 Thanksgiving baskets to families with partner Foodtown of East Harlem
- Referred 53 families to community partner CUCS for help accessing public assistance, rental assistance, SNAP, SSI and more

What Makes KCC Unique...

We are committed to serving the most vulnerable students in our public school system.

- New York City relies on more than 100 contracted agencies like KCC to provide critical early childhood special education services to public school students.
- KCC is one of the largest and oldest providers in the City. In addition, the students who we accept have some of the most significant challenges of all NYC's public school students.
- More than 60% of our students will be diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The majority of these students are nonverbal or minimally verbal.
- Our students cannot be accommodated by their local public schools. Private schools with the necessary services are prohibitively expensive, often requiring families to sue the New York City Department of Education for tuition reimbursement.
- Due to a severe shortage of ECSE programming, more than 1,200 young children between 3-5 years old are sitting at home right now, waiting for a seat in a program like ours.
- For hundreds of children and families each year, KCC is a life-changing resource; and their chance to receive the education they deserve.



What Makes KCC Unique...

Our nationally-recognized educator training program: Grow Your Own at the Kennedy Children's Center

Grow Your Own is a pipeline program that recruits and trains un- and under-employed adults, primarily women of color, to become certified early childhood special education teacher assistants and teachers.

Grow Your Own (GYO) combats the national teacher shortage on the local level by training teachers from the community, for the community.

GYO brings economic development into underserved communities by providing a pathway out of poverty and into a lifelong career in education.

GYO cultivates diverse female role models for children and families.

And by ensuring that educators get the high-quality training they need, **GYO can improve educational outcomes for young children with disabilities** for years to come.

GYO is the **only training program in New York City** focused on early childhood special education. It is privately funded and independent from KCC's state-licensed preschool program. **GYO has a proven record of success and is poised for major growth in the year ahead.**

The GYO Pipeline

GYO 1.0

6-week program enables trainees to pass the NYS teacher assistant certification exam and begin their new career in education with skill and confidence.

GYO 2.0

College support program launched in 2021. Enables certified teacher assistants to earn a degree in early childhood education from CUNY.

“ I am glad I found this program because I love going to work every day. You guys helped me find that opportunity during a time when everything in the world felt so uncertain! Now I'm paying back that gratitude by being in the classroom...We are [our students] advocates just like GYO has been our advocate! ”

- Jeisis Ayala, GYO 1.0 graduate and GYO 2.0 participant, currently enrolled in her second year at CUNY

A Growing Record of Success:

- 217 trainees have completed GYO 1.0 to date*
- **91%** program completion rate
 - **87%** were placed in a job in education
 - **79%** have earned their NYS teacher assistant certification to date

We increased participation in our GYO 2.0 College Support Program to 15 women, all enrolled in the CUNY school system in pursuit of their teaching degrees.

*as of January 2023

This year, KCC was invited to join the New America Grow Your Own Educators Network. Staff attended a 2-day conference in Washington, DC in June 2023 where we exchanged ideas and resources with GYO programs from across the country

2022-23 At A Glance



Special Education Preschool

398 preschool seats between two school sites

Parent Support Programming

28 workshops held at KCC, including **14** Spanish and bilingual workshops
Nearly **200** families advised on the transition to Kindergarten
More than **40** families received financial assistance through the Cardinal's Fund
More than **70** families referred for Public Assistance benefits and Disability Services including medical, support, education, and advocacy

Grow Your Own (GYO)

Workforce Development Program

86 low-income adults completed our 6-week training
79% gained their teacher assistant certification
87% graduates secured a job in education

45 children were provided with winter coats

75 students received clothing and Toys from the Kennedy Holiday Toy Drive

40 families received gift cards from a local supermarket



Leadership & Staff

Board Of Directors

Joseph Gannon
John Gibbons
Adam Goldstein
Vijay Jesrani
Andrew Kraus
Edward Linden
Cindy Machles
Preeti Mone

Shruti Patel
Matthew Raimondi
Melissa Salerno
Laura Shanley
Rev.Msgr.Kevin
Sullivan
Brett Tremain
Stacey Wolf



Senior staff

Jeanne Alter, Executive Director
Mary McKillop, Associate Executive Director
Carolyn Cleveland, Chief Operating Officer
Bhupendra Shah, Finance Director

Kristy Chau, Education Director (Manhattan)
Geraldo Feliciano, Education Director (Bronx)
Nancy Hirsch, Director of Family Services
Bridget McCrory, Curriculum Director
Victorio Milian, Human Resources Consultant
Joseph Spanberger, IT Director
Tristan Dulangon, Director of Physical Therapy
Julie Morris, Director of Speech Therapy
Chaimaa Regragui, Director of Occupational Therapy



Financials

Fiscal Year 2022-2023

(July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023)

THANK YOU!

While our preschool program is publicly-funded, private funding makes other vital programming possible.

We want to thank the following Foundation and Corporate Donors for their support in 2023:

Amazon
 Brown & Brown of Garden City
 Catholic Charities
 Corporate Synergies, Inc.
 Costco
 Inter Audi Bank
 May Foundation Trust
 New York Community Trust
 NFP
 Paycom
 The Pinkerton Foundation
 The Stella and Charles Guttman
 Foundation
 The TD Charitable Foundation
 Warren Equity Partners

Agency Revenue

Service Fees from Government Contracts	\$19,485,474
Government Grants (IDEA)	\$487,717
Contributions	\$937,875
Corporate Donors	\$73,792
Foundation Grants	\$227,522
Individual Donors	\$126,140
Investment Income	\$4,156
Total Revenue	\$20,915,222

Agency Expenses

Salaries	\$13,091,210
Employee Benefits	\$2,704,318
Contracted Health Services	\$521,747
Rent, Utilities, Program & Other Supplies	\$1,509,635
Fundraising Expenses	\$95,632
Other Expenses	\$3,099,335
Total Expenses	\$21,021,877
Surplus (Deficit)	(-\$106,655)

NOTE: At the close of FY23, KCC was owed approximately \$850,000 in retroactive payments from the New York State Education Department.



Kennedy
Children's Center

Support Our Work

We rely on donations to help our students and teachers reach new heights. Here are four ways to support us in 2024:

1. **Donate online**

2. **Mail us a check**

Kennedy Children's Center
c/o Carolyn Cleveland
2212 Third Ave, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10035

3. **Connect with us on social media**

@kennedychildrenscenter

4. **Spread the word**

Encourage your friends and family to get involved and support KCC!



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Kennedy

Children's Center

Where children, families & communities learn together

KCC Manhattan

2212 Third Avenue, 2nd Floor
New York, New York 10035

KCC Bronx

1028 East 179th Street
Bronx, New York 10460



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Kennedy Children's Center is a proud affiliate of
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York

