

ANNUAL REPORT

LVCC 2024 - 2025



Lehigh Valley Children's Centers



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Our Mission

LVCC provides high-quality early education and child care to promote healthy child development, meet the needs of families, and encourage children to discover the joy of learning.





A Message from the CEO

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, we're proud and grateful for the incredible progress we've achieved together. Our mission—to provide high-quality early education and child care that promotes healthy child development, meets the needs of families, and fosters a lifelong love of learning—continues to guide every step we take.

This year, we proudly served more than 1,200 families across four counties, connecting them with vital resources, including access to high-quality early education and child care.

Children enrolled in our PA Pre-K Counts programs demonstrated exceptional kindergarten readiness, positioning them for a smooth and successful transition into their next stage of learning. These accomplishments are a direct reflection of the dedication and passion of our staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters like you.

We are proud of what we've achieved—but this year also brought significant challenges.

A critical shortage of early educators impacted our ability to operate at full capacity. Many families in our community, like thousands across the state, struggled to find child care. Not because space wasn't available, but because of staffing issues.

In Pennsylvania, over 30,000 children remain on child care waitlists—not due to a lack of space, but because staffing shortages limit capacity, highlighting how essential child care providers are to every working family's success.

Despite these challenges, we never wavered in our commitment. We've worked tirelessly to recruit and retain educators. As a result, our team continues to grow. We are emerging stronger, more resilient, and more determined than ever to make a difference in the lives of children.

As we look to the future, we are focused on what matters most; ensuring that every child has access to the care, education, and resources they need to succeed.

Our highest priority is supporting families before school ever begins by laying the foundation for lifelong success.

We remain committed to collaboration, transparency, and quality from training and curriculum to daily interactions in our centers. With your help, we can build a stronger and more equitable future for all families in our communities.

To our Board of Directors, LVCC Team, donors, partners, and volunteers, thank you. Your generosity and dedication are the pillars of support of this organization. Together, we are making a lasting difference in the lives of children and families.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles M Dinofrio".

Charles M Dinofrio
President and CEO
Lehigh Valley Children's Centers Inc.

THIS YEAR AT LVCC

Read across America

Spirit Week and Read Across America is held every March to coincide with the birthday of Dr. Seuss. This nationwide awareness campaign promotes literacy and celebrates the joy of reading — and LVCC celebrates in style.

Five days of fun were featured across our centers including:

- Monday** - Green Eggs and Hats
- Tuesday** - ABC & 123
- Wednesday** - Wacky Wednesday
- Thursday** - If I Ran the Zoo
- Friday** - Fox in Socks

We were joined by community leaders to celebrate the joy of reading. Our teachers made the week even better with events and contests!

Thank you to everyone who made Spirit Week extra special.

SPECIAL GUEST READERS

We were fortunate to have amazing guests and leaders in our community conduct video readings for LVCC children, including authors Marshalin Patel, Coy Bowles, Representative Peter Schwyer, Mayor of Easton, Sal Panto, and Mayor of Allentown, Matt Tuerk. *Thank you to all!*



Children and teachers dressed for the occasion and were visited by special guests like Sam-I-Am and the Cat in the Hat.



Door Contest Winners

Teachers and families made the week extra memorable with our Door Decorating Contest — nearly 1,000 votes were cast in just one week!



Week of the Young Child

The National Association for the Education of Young Children holds this yearly initiative to recognize the essential contributions of early learning professionals and highlights the significance of quality early education programs.

The primary goal of the campaign is to raise public awareness about the importance of childcare and the need for high-quality programming that supports young children's development.

Each year, our educators share their stories on social media, and create unique ways to celebrate each of the themed days. Whether it's marching bands, custom shirts, or classroom festivities, our team goes all out to celebrate.



CREATING HANDS-ON LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Workforce development through our partnership with LCTI focuses on preparing students with practical skills and career readiness from an early age. By introducing technical training and hands-on learning opportunities in high school, students can explore meaningful career pathways in early education and child care.



Family Engagement Events

Our events bring families into the classroom for fun events. Family Engagement Events are a great way for families to connect with their child's educator and to meet other families. Family engagement events are held at our full-time centers where each team puts their own unique spin on activities.



SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM THAT SET CHILDREN UP FOR SUCCESS AT LVCC.

For the 2024-2025 school year, LVCC utilized the *World of Wonders* curriculum by McGraw Hill, designed for early learners ages 3 to 5, aiming to build a strong foundation for early literacy and school readiness.

World of Wonders guides teachers in lesson planning and providing them with a framework to make the most of instructional time. Kindergarten readiness is at the forefront, with a focus on letter recognition, word connection, and listening comprehension,

The curriculum immerses young learners in an engaging, theme-based educational experience that nurtures curiosity, creativity, and foundational academic skills. Through hands-on exploration, storytelling, and play-based learning, it fosters a love of discovery while building essential cognitive, social, and emotional development.

With *World of Wonders*, children are better prepared for kindergarten thanks to their experiences at Lehigh Valley Children's Centers.



Supporting Behavioral Needs

Supporting mental health in early education and child care classrooms is essential for fostering healthy development and lifelong well-being. Young children thrive when they feel safe, understood, and emotionally supported. By integrating social-emotional learning, promoting positive relationships, and creating nurturing environments; our educators help children build resilience, self-regulation, and empathy.

For some children in our care, they may need targeted social/emotional supports. These children are more easily identified in our centers through the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire*. This observational form tracks the mental development of a child among milestone markers. ASQ can help us determine the children who may benefit from intensive intervention for academic success. Early Intervention may reduce the need for specialized instructional support during a child's school years and grants access to the resources they need to succeed in their academic career.

By using the ASQ, educators and caregivers can better understand each child's strengths and challenges, guide conversations with families, and connect them to appropriate resources or interventions early on. This proactive approach supports children's emotional well-being and helps create a foundation for positive mental health as they grow.

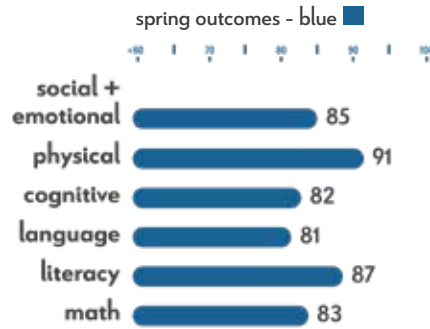


READINESS INDICATORS

LVCC utilizes Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELL) to measure essential pre-literacy and oral language skills needed for kindergarten. The PELL assessment measures alphabet knowledge, vocabulary and oral language, phonological awareness, and listening comprehension.

INFANT & TODDLER DEVELOPMENT:

Learning outcomes based on 148 children ages birth through 36 months old

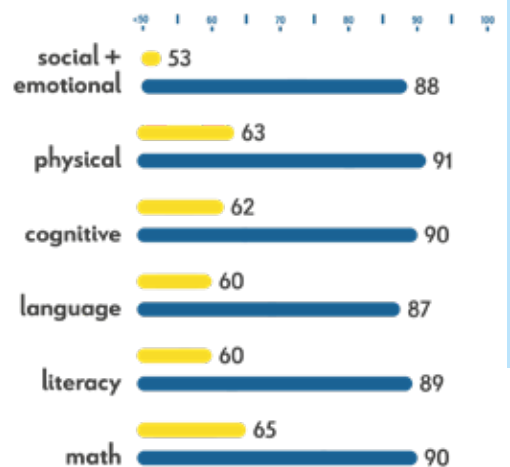


ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE IN ENROLLED 3 & 4 YEAR OLDS

Beginning of Year (6 of 26 letters)	59%
Middle of Year (17 of 26 letters)	69%
End of Year (23 of 26 letters)	77%

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Teaching Strategies GOLD learning outcomes based on 624 children aged 3 through 5 years old



A local leader in Pa Pre-K Counts

LVCC provides Pre-K and Preschool services for *over 700 children annually* within Lehigh, Northampton, Carbon and Schuylkill Counties.

All classrooms operate in accordance with Keystone STARS and DHS regulations. Each Pre-K Counts classroom is staffed with a lead teacher holding a Level 1 or Level 2 certification in Pre-K-4th grade under the Department of Education, and an assistant teacher who possesses a minimum of a Preschool CDA credential.

To assess children's growth and learning, the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Program's pre- and post- assessments are administered, revealing that 77% of children achieved the proficient level in phonemic awareness skills.

In addition, teachers conduct assessments provided by the Waterford Early Learning Program for reading, math, and science.

Results show that 80% of children were placed at the pre-reading, math, and science levels, while 74% achieved level 2 or higher in those same areas.

Furthermore, 37% of children have established Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or other support services prior to entering kindergarten. An additional 27% have participated in initial intake meetings with Intermediate Units (IUs) and have begun the process of formally establishing an IEP prior to kindergarten.



An Ensemble Cast!

FINDING YOUR WHY?

Nothing at LVCC would be possible without our incredible educators. We talked to our team, and learned how they **“found their why.”** This is their reasoning for showing up, through the good days, and challenging, to help children become eager and successful learners.

“There’s a real connection you build with the families and the great feeling you get when you share their child’s progress.”

“I’ve taught in early education for more than a decade, and I still have parents from when i started keep in touch about how their child is doing in school ... that’s how i know that the work I’m doing really matters.”



Professional Development Days

Each year, the entire Lehigh Valley Children’s Centers team gathers at DeSales University for our Annual Professional Development Days.

This year’s theme was “Progress Over Perfection,” reflecting our commitment to continued education and learning from mistakes and challenges. Each educator met with training providing lessons and ideas to utilized in their classroom.

It is also a time for fun and celebration, as we get together to recognize long tenured employees who have all made a positive impact.

During Professional Development Days, educators split up into learning modules based on the age ranges of children they teach.



EQUITY IN CARE

In Spring 2025, we proudly recognized Ms. Anila from LVCC Fairmont and the entire LVCC South Mountain team for earning Silver Level status in the PA Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion Award. Presented by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), this honor highlights the positive impact that inclusive practices have on children’s education.



A VISIT FROM SONGWRITER, AUTHOR, AND ADVOCATE **COY BOWLES**

Over the last few years in early education, we've seen an increase in challenging behaviors. This complex issue has garnered the attention of Coy Bowles, member of the three time Grammy award winning Zac Brown Band. Bowles made a stop in the Lehigh Valley in November 2024 for a roundtable discussion featuring leading early childhood education providers and advocates to put a spotlight on the issues at large. During his visit to the Lehigh Valley, Bowles donated many of his books to childcare centers and performed live at the LVCC staff appreciation day at the Da Vinci Science Center on November 22.



Bowles' interest in early childhood development and social emotional learning spans several years. In addition to writing several number-one radio hits, Bowles has authored multiple children's books and songs, including "The Clean Up Song," a favorite at LVCC centers, and "Can You Touch a Color?" As an early childhood education advocate, Bowles serves on the board at The Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning, and is involved in the Georgia Governor's office education initiatives.



PHOTO CREDIT: Jenny Roberts
LehighValleyNews.com

STAFF APPRECIATION

On November 22, 2024, we invited staff and their families to the Da Vinci Science Center in downtown Allentown for a private night of family fun. The experience featured undersea adventures, otters, photo opportunities, exploratory learning for all ages, with music and readings from Coy Bowles.



Incredible Volunteers

Our "ensemble cast" also included the amazing volunteers and help we receive throughout the year for special gatherings. LVCC values its longstanding partnerships with our local Kiwanis Club of Allentown and Kiwanis Club of Northeast Allentown. Their support brings winter parties, spring picnics, book giveaways and more to LVCC children. Our annual Kiwanis summer picnic this year featured more than 200 preschool aged children and 150 volunteers.

In the fall 2024, we expanded our outdoor offerings with the Autumn Picnic at LVCC Park Avenue. Thanks you to the Lehigh Career and Technical Institute's Early Childhood Education lab students for creating exciting lawn games for LVCC children from six centers.

STARS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Remembering Cheryl Koze Bohannon

In May 2025, Lehigh Valley Children's Centers (LVCC) mourned the loss of Cheryl Koze Bohannon, a devoted supporter whose compassion left a lasting mark, especially at our South Mountain Center where her son once attended. Alongside Dr. Marvin Charles, her involvement grew from puppet shows and shared lunches to championing LVCC's annual Holiday Wishlist campaign, helping bring joy to families in need through gifts and treats.

Their most transformative contribution came in 2023, when Marvin and Cheryl funded a large-scale art project at the Da Vinci Science Center to spark children's interest in STEAM education. Over 300 LVCC children helped inspire the mural, which features their artwork. Thanks to their enduring generosity, the children we serve continue to experience brighter holidays and opportunities for creative exploration. Their legacy lives on in every smile and spark of imagination.



Two Rivers Health and Wellness Foundation

Since 2004, the Two Rivers Health and Wellness Foundation has supported LVCC. For the last few years, we've channeled their support into our equity-inclusion and belonging initiatives. Two Rivers helps fund invaluable mental health resources, allowing us to provide access to early intervention to children in need before they begin kindergarten. This invaluable resource eases the transition for families, children, and the school district, creating a great opportunity for success for all involved.





LVCC Palmerton Fire Training

In the Spring of 2025, LVCC Palmerton participated in a fire evacuation training involving the cooperation of our local fire crew, a regional alarm company, the county's 9-1-1 call center, neighboring businesses, Penn State Better Kid Care, and our teachers and children.



Helen and R.K Laros Foundation

In 2024, we honored the long standing support from the Helen and R.K Laros Foundation with a tree dedication ceremony at LVCC at St. Luke's. The beautiful new playground was made possible thanks to the generosity of the foundation, which can now be enjoyed by the children of St. Luke's employees for years to come.



Michael and Jean Grabarits

We thank the Michael and Jean Grabarits Charitable Fund and St. Luke's University Health Network for donating a custom book to all Preschool and Pre-K Counts children. Characters in the book were named after the children and their teachers. Proficient early literacy skills are among the most important factors when it comes to academic success. Children are more encouraged to read when reading is made fun.





Childcare is one of the most important pillars of our community, both academically and economically. Affordable access to high quality childcare puts all children on the same playing field.

But we can't do it alone. Due to low wages sector wide, there are currently over 3,000 unfilled childcare jobs in Pennsylvania. This equates to more than 25,000 children who are not receiving care. Long wait lists and frequent staff turnover often force families to forgo work opportunities in order to care for their children.

In 2024-2025, the LVCC team met with other childcare providers and state representatives to advocate at the state level for an investment in workforce retention, recruitment, and higher wages. In addition, LVCC President and CEO, Charles Dinofrio and other leading Early Childhood Education professionals attended a listening session, hosted by Pennsylvania First Lady Lori Shapiro, to express the challenges currently felt by early educators.

With a state budget that puts significant investment in childcare, centers would fill more positions, enroll more children, and give families the opportunity to pursue long-term and successful careers.



FINANCIALS

Over 65% of LVCC revenue stems from contributions, grants, and government subsidies. Your support helps us continue providing the highest level of early education in the Greater Lehigh Valley.

REVENUE | \$15,496,185

Contributions and Grants	\$7,093,289
Subsidized Child Care	\$3,082,341
Tuition	\$2,228,733
Child Care Food Program	\$2,580,453
Investment Income	\$393,463
Other Income	\$117,906

EXPENSES | \$14,972,827

Child Care	\$12,992,131
Administration	\$1,872,813
Fund Raising	\$107,883



CURRENT ATTRACTIONS

Every year, Lehigh Valley Children's Centers looks to improve the educational experience of children, families, and educators within our centers. Between 2024-2025, we made great upgrades to two of our full service centers.

LVCC Park Avenue

The interior remodeling of LVCC Park Avenue completes our restoration project, which began in 2023 with the reconstruction of its playground. The new playground offers different play spaces for the various age groups and a similar approach was taken to the interior space.

The previous open-concept layout has been redesigned to be more sensory-friendly and provides each age group with its own dedicated space. The new design replaced all carpets with antimicrobial flooring, new bathrooms, improved lighting, and gave each new classroom and office a fresh coat of paint.



LVCC Fowler

LVCC recognizes the need for high-quality outdoor learning environments and we envision our playgrounds as extensions of the classroom. In 2021, we remodeled our playground at LVCC Fowler. In 2024, we saw a need to expand indoors to meet the growing need for childcare in downtown Bethlehem.

The interior improvements have maintained the historic appearance of the site while offering more for families. The renovations include a new Pre-K Counts Classroom, a remodeled kitchen, new school age classroom layouts, new flooring and paint applications, and various infrastructure improvements.

The improvements to LVCC Park Avenue and LVCC Fowler will improve the experiences at our centers for years to come.



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

JULY 2024-JUNE 2025

DISCOVERY CLUB \$10,000 +

Anonymous Foundation
Capital Blue Cross
The Donald B. and Dorothy L. Stabler Foundation
Harry C. Trexler Trust
Helmtrud Young
Dr. Marvin Charles
PPL
Thomas F Staley Foundation
Two Rivers Health & Wellness Foundation

CURIOSITY CLUB \$3,000 +

Carbon County Community Foundation
The Dexter F. & Dorothy H. Baker Foundation
Highmark Blue Shield
Just Born Quality Confections
PA Partners for Education, LLC
Sandra Richard
UGI Utilities, Inc.
Weis Markets, Inc.

IMAGINATION CLUB \$1,000 +

Catherine Kane
Debbie and Bill Matz
Ellen Millard-Kern
Fred J. Jandl Foundation
George and Judith Arangio Family Foundation
Daniel Cohen
James Coker
Julia Messina
Kathryn Stagl
Lehigh County Office of Community & Economic Development
Lehigh Valley Institute for Learning in Retirement
Terrence and Penny Kennedy
Warren Gericke & M. Blair Couch

ADVENTURER CLUB - UP TO \$1,000

Anna L. Kershner
Anthony and Sara Muir
Audrey Cherney
Bill Allison
Carol B. Watters

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Robert Ashcraft
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Thomas and Fay Fenstermacher
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William Derhammer





Lehigh Valley Children's Centers

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

1501 Lehigh St, Suite 208 | Allentown, PA 1810

www.lvcconline.org | 610-820-5333

*With more than thirty centers across four counties,
families are never far from an LVCC center.*

ALLENTOWN

LVCC at Allen High School • 106 N. 17th St

LVCC at Hays Elementary • 1223 W. Gordon St.

LVCC's Judith Chase Early Learning Center • 540 Chew St.

LVCC at Muhlenberg School • 21st & Washington St.

LVCC at Salisbury Elementary School • 1400 Gaskill Ave.

LVCC at South Mountain • 2002 S. Albert St.

LVCC on Union Boulevard • 555 Union Boulevard

LVCC on Walnut Street • 1145 Walnut St.

BETHLEHEM

LVCC's Campus Center • 410 E. 5th St.

LVCC's Fowler Center • 938 Main St.

LVCC at St. Luke's • 729 Delaware Ave.

COALDALE

LVCC at Coaldale • 150 W. Phillips St.

EASTON

LVCC at Avona School • 2317 Front St.

LVCC at Forks School • 1709 Richmond Rd.

LVCC at March School • 429 Reeder St.

LVCC at Palmer School • 3050 Green Pond Rd.

LVCC at Shawnee School • 1315 Echo Trail

LVCC at Spring Garden ELC • 401 W. Berwick St. #103

LVCC at Tracy School • 1243 Tatamy Rd.

LVCC at Wilson School • 301 S. 21st St.

EMMAUS

LVCC at Lincoln School • 233 Seem St.

LVCC at Seven Generations • 33 E. Minor St.

JIM THORPE

LVCC at St. Joseph's Academy • 25 W. 6th St.

NAZARETH

LVCC at Lower Nazareth School • 4422 Newburg Rd.

LVCC at Nazareth Intermediate School • 355 Tatamy Rd.

LVCC at Shafer School • 49 S. Liberty St.

SCHNECKSVILLE

LVCC on Park Avenue • 3880 Park Avenue

PALMERTON

LVCC Palmerton • 480 Delaware Ave.

LVCC at Parkside • 680 Fourth Street

LVCC at Towamensing • 7920 Interchange Rd.

WHITEHALL

LVCC on Fairmont • 1325 Fairmont St.





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Allentown, PA. 18103 - 3892

THANK YOU!

