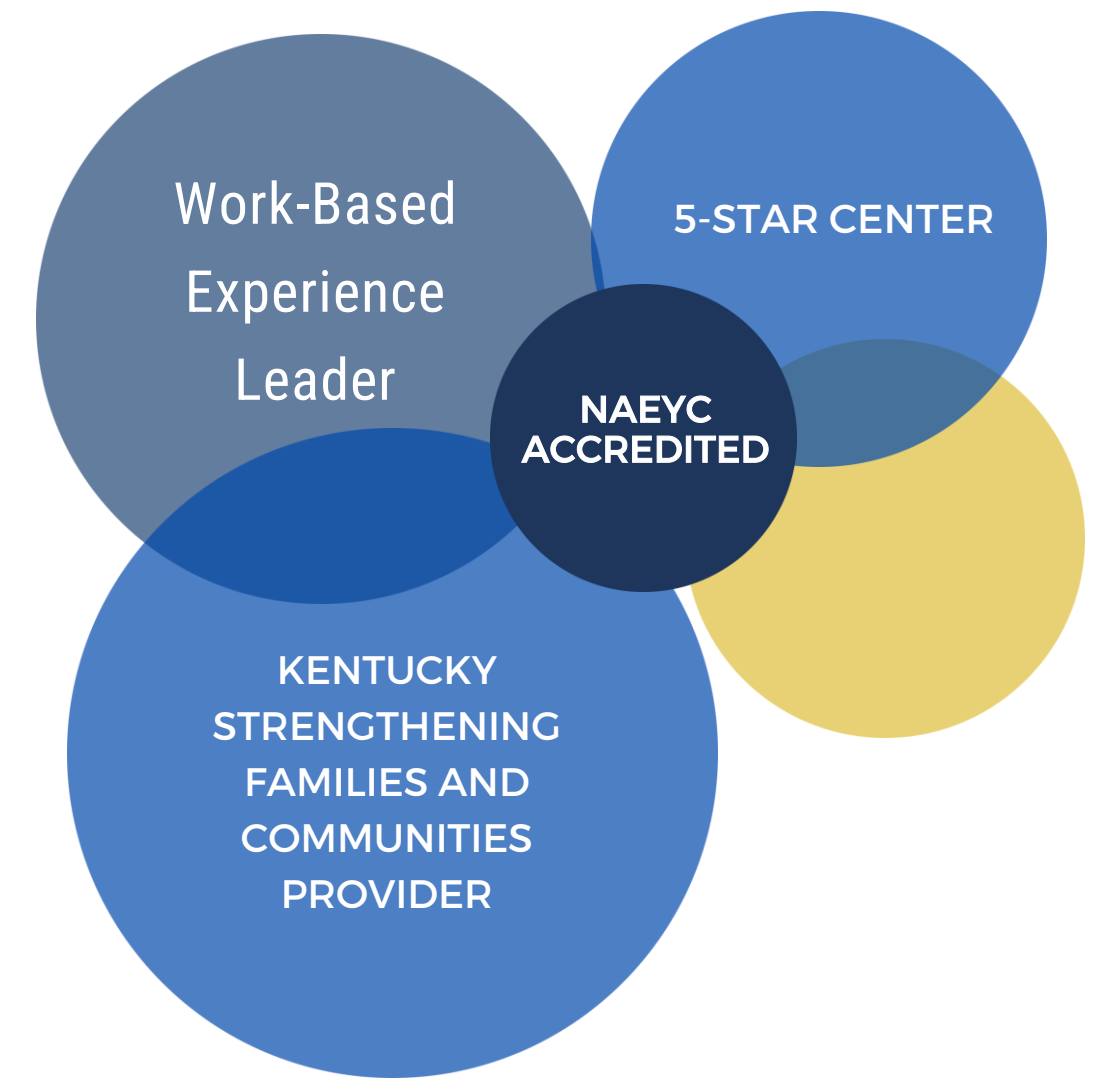




Report to the Early Childhood Education Task Force

Presented by Jennifer Washburn
Executive Director, iKids Inc.



Who am I?

Jennifer Washburn

I am the owner of a small business in Benton, KY, that serves the early care and preschool needs of our community. I have a bachelor's degree from Murray State University, master's degree in counseling from the University of Louisville, completing a PhD in Developmental Psychology from Capella University and a Certificate in Early Education Leadership from Harvard. I have owned and operated my small business for 21 years.



Who are We?

iKids Childhood Enrichment Center

- iKids is an early childhood center located in Benton, KY
- We are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children – NAEYC
- We are rated 5 STARS by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Education
- We are licensed for 97 children, however, because we choose to have lower teacher-to-child ratios, our enrollment is 89 daily
- We have been in operation for 21 years as of May this year



How We Contribute to the Field

Marshall County High School - 4 co-op placements annually for seniors to earn their Child Development Associate Credential and 5 placements annually for juniors in the Child Development Program to earn the Commonwealth Child Care Credential.

Murray State University – Annual practicum placements for Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education bachelor's and master's degree students.

Western Kentucky Community and Technical College System - 4 practicum placements annually for Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education associate's degree students.

We have 6 employees who are part of the Apprenticeship Program



Division of Early
Childhood

Early Child Care
Development
Program

Early Childhood
Adoption & Foster
Care Supports

HANDS
Program

Healthy Start
Program

Early Childhood
Mental Health

Early Childhood
Oral Health

Substance Abuse
Treatment Program



Because of PARTNERSHIPS with these programs, iKids has been able to maintain national accreditation standards for over 13 years.

Your investment in these programs has enabled us the ability to provide a rich, HIGH-QUALITY early care and education program to the children and families in our community.

SUBSIDY...IF YOU CAN AFFORD IT

KY Child Care Subsidy pays \$34/day (toddlers) for qualifying families. This is a HUGE improvement over the \$80/week shortfall families had to cover prior to July, 1, 2022. Thanks to the changes to CCAP, iKids is now serving 18 children who qualify for CCAP - up from 5 only four months ago.

MEETING UNIQUE NEEDS

In addition to neurotypical children, we serve children with developmental delays, children with unique dietary needs, children born addicted to heroin, children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum disorders, foster children and children expelled from other programs due to behavioral challenges.

WE ARE QUALITY BUT...



My teachers make **\$13/hour**
(thanks to ARPA stipends)

I can **NOT** offer health care.

I **CAN offer** partnerships for scholarships, no-cost child care to staff and mentorship.



THE COST OF QUALITY



State Ratio	MY Ratio	Classes	The COST
6:1 ones	5:1 ones	2	-2 (-\$360)
10:1 twos	7:1 twos	2	-6 (-\$1080)
12:1 threes	10:1 threes	2	-4 (-\$688)
14:1 fours	10:1 fours	3	-12 (-\$2064)
			-\$4192/week
			-\$217,984 annually

WHEN ARPA IS GONE IN 2023



What happens when ARPA funding dries up in 2023...

- 1.) We can reduce employee pay rates back to \$10/hour = we will likely **see our workforce retreat** (that's understandable)
- 2.) We can pass along additional tuition increases to cover the employee pay increase = 30-40% tuition increase to families (**we will lose families**)
- 3.) We can **decrease our quality** by increasing our ratios = **NO, I REFUSE TO SACRIFICE QUALITY**



Payroll is UP +52%

We raised tuition in 2021 to cover the raise to teachers at \$10/hour. To meet the highest tier for ARPA funding, staff are required to receive a starting wage of \$13/hour.

Rates were raised to families in August of 2021 by 9.8%

Inflation is up 8.6%

(my food costs are SOARING)

ARPA money is covering the shortfall.



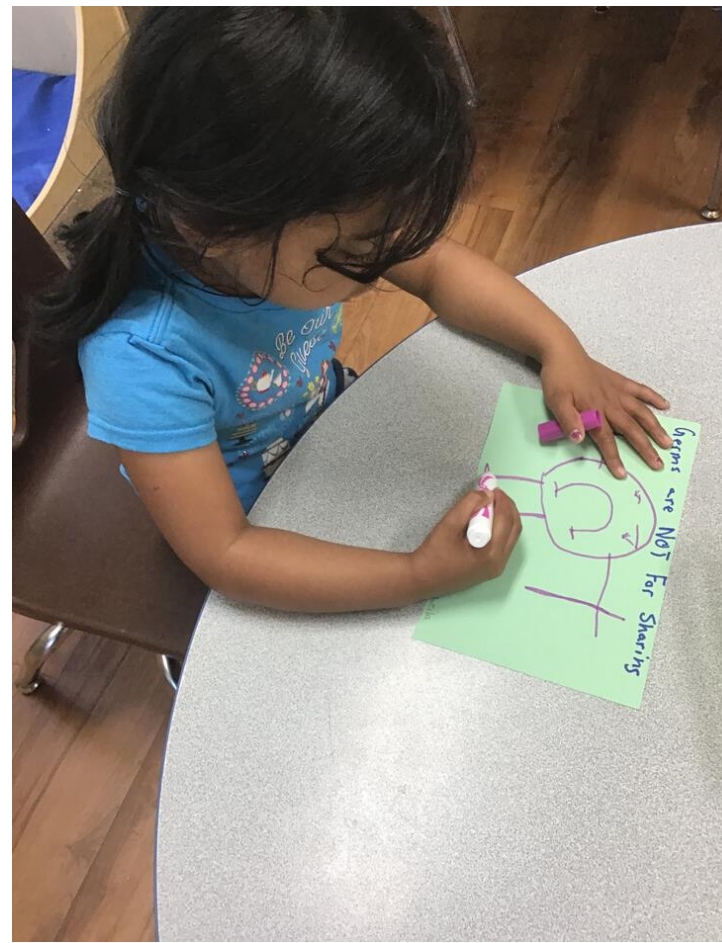
SO, WHAT ARE WE LEFT TO DO?

That is where we need your help and continued investment

- **Invest in and expand HB 499 to include school systems and local governments**
 - in our rural communities, those are our largest employers.
- **SUSTAIN the investment in CCAPP reimbursement rates and eligibility**
- **Support competitive wages, BENEFITS, and educational opportunities.**

We REQUIRE your ongoing investment if we are to survive. Our FAMILIES, our CHILDREN our COMMONWEALTH is at stake.





**WE MUST
CONTINUE THIS
CONVERSATION**



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