

# LEADING WITH PASSION *Toward Our Vision*

Safe Children Thriving  
in a Peaceful World



2015–16  
Report to the Community

## It's been a bustling year of vision and momentum at Committee for Children!

We launched exciting, innovative startup ventures and tested new ways to reach parents with social-emotional and child safety skills. We expanded our evidence-based social-emotional learning (SEL) program into an unprecedented number of schools across the U.S. in districts large and small, public and private, urban, rural, and suburban.

Internationally, our Brazilian partners introduced the Portuguese version of the *Second Step* program to schools in São Paulo, where a research study on the program is currently underway. Seeing these young students light up as they learn lessons in empathy, social problem-solving, and self-management is truly inspiring. We're eager to continue sharing a unified set of social-emotional skills to children across the globe.

We introduced the *Second Step* Suite to conceptually bring together our foundational, research-based *Second Step* SEL program with the companion Bullying Prevention Unit and our new Child Protection Unit (launched in English and Spanish). Rebecca L. Bowen, MEd, a school counselor in the Tahoma School District, shared this endorsement: "Consistent language throughout the *Second Step* Suite facilitates understanding and helps to reinforce lessons, which are based on research and best teaching practices...Collectively, the *Second Step* Suite aligns with our schoolwide PBIS efforts and helps us to increase safety and promote academic, social, and emotional success."

The rise in demand for our curricula, coupled with consistently positive feedback, demonstrates that educators understand and support the need for teaching social-emotional skills. In May of 2015, educators from around the nation joined us in Washington, DC, to advocate for the inclusion of social-emotional learning (SEL) in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which became law in December! In our home state of Washington and in Massachusetts, we advanced the inclusion of SEL policies in state legislation, and we supported SEL efforts in Arizona and elsewhere.

To expand child protection efforts, we launched the "Early, Open, Often" campaign—generously funded by the Raynier Institute & Foundation—to raise the public's awareness about child sexual abuse. We created online videos and other resources to provide parents with the skills they need to talk with children before sexual abuse happens. More than 120,000 viewers watched the videos, and more than 14.5 million people watched and listened to news interviews about the importance of talking with children about personal safety.

In summary, we've been hard at work, acting on our conviction that children across the world deserve not only to be safe, but to thrive. By partnering with community organizations, educators, legislators, and parents, we're making great strides.

Sincerely,

Joan Cole Duffell  
Executive Director

Stanton Reed Koch  
Board President 2015–16



*Thank you to our staff,* community partners, and board members whose integrity, dedication, and talent help us foster the safety and well-being of children around the world through social-emotional learning and development.



Joan Cole Duffell  
Executive Director



Stanton Reed Koch  
Board President

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For biographical details, visit: [cfchildren.org/about-us/our-leadership](http://cfchildren.org/about-us/our-leadership).

# STRENGTHENING OUR GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

A growing number of nations have recognized the importance of social-emotional learning (SEL), and many have frameworks in place to teach it in schools. We know from research that developing social-emotional skills can help bridge gaps in learning and social justice, but developing countries often lack the funds, teacher training, and systems needed to implement SEL effectively. To overcome these challenges, our international team has been developing more in-depth training programs and cultivating working relationships with local partners who can help translate, localize, and customize our materials to meet specific cultural needs.



## Brazil

In 2014, we were approached by a foundation that represents a consortium of philanthropic organizations promoting school reform. They were interested in bringing social-emotional learning (SEL) to primary schools and had identified our *Second Step* program as a good fit. In our first year, we piloted the Portuguese version of the *Second Step* program in 30 schools in São Paulo. This year, the State Department of Education

São Paulo is expanding its “Escola Tempo Integral,” or full-day initiative, to other states. The localized *Second Step* program is called “Programa Compasso Socioemocional.” We’ve partnered with Vila Educação to deliver the training and with AFG Editora Educacional Group to adapt the materials. Teachers enthusiastically support the program, and students and parents love it!



## Mexico

In San Luis Potosí, Mexico, we’ve partnered with the Ministry of Education to participate in the Safe and Peaceful Schools initiative. Public schools here are participating in a feasibility study of a Spanish-language *Second Step* program. Public schools and teacher qualifications in Mexico differ from region to region, as does the infrastructure. For example, live, in-person training is often more viable than online training delivery.

Everyone who’s participated in the *Second Step* program so far has shared positive feedback. The children say they like the songs and games, and the teachers appreciate having a structured approach to building a strong foundation of social-emotional skills and values.

*“Adapting ‘Second Step’ was the best decision we made. Not only is it the top social and emotional learning program out there, but also Committee for Children has provided us with all the support we need to successfully implement our pilot version in Brazil.”*

–**Instituto Vila Educação,**  
Partner in São Paulo, Brazil

## Australia

In Australia, we’ve partnered with Positive Pieces, which provides schools and other institutions with evidence-based educational training materials focused on social-emotional learning. The national director of Positive Pieces, Jenny Williams, says she is “absolutely delighted to present this comprehensive yet simple-to-use classroom-based program that aligns perfectly with the Australian curriculum.”

Our *Second Step* program has been a natural fit for Australian schools, which view social-emotional skills as essential to a twenty-first century education. Teacher Alison Kerimofski says, “It is easy to use and covers areas of learning that are imperative to promoting positive self-esteem, positive learning environments, and positive interactions between students.”





**“What you guys are doing is really what this world needs.”**

*—Damaris Conner, Head Start Education Manager, Brooksville, FL*

## NATIONWIDE SUCCESS FOR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING!

- In 2014, we partnered with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to sponsor and host a briefing in the U.S. Capitol. Several leading SEL advocates spoke, including our colleagues Tim Shriver, Maurice Elias, Congresswoman Susan Davis of California, and Congressman Tim Ryan of Ohio. Committee for Children continued to provide SEL guidance and support for SEL at the federal level throughout 2014–15.
- Committee for Children and CASEL responded immediately when the U.S. Senate first introduced a bill to reauthorize ESEA, providing concrete examples and ideas demonstrating how SEL could be incorporated into the legislation.
- In May of 2015, we organized a “Hill Day” in Washington, DC, bringing together SEL education leaders from Florida, Maine, Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Wisconsin to advocate for SEL’s inclusion in ESSA, which sets federal policy related to K–12 education.
- Executive Director Joan Cole Duffell met with several members of Washington State’s U.S. Congressional delegation to provide key information and guidance about the need for SEL.
- After ESSA passed into law on December 15, 2015, we helped communicate to stakeholders the significance of important new SEL provisions, such as new flexible funding that allows SEL to be used as a strategy to support positive learning environments.
- We worked closely with CASEL to convene stakeholders and added our name to a list of 75 organizations supporting full funding for Title IV, Part A, of ESSA, which affects SEL.

### Putting SEL into Practice at the State Level

- In our home state of Washington, we worked with advocates at SEL for Washington to secure broad bipartisan sponsorship for a bill to develop and define evidence-based SEL standards for K–12 students. We commissioned and publicized a survey showing 94 percent of Washington State teachers support the development of social-emotional skills in school.
- On our State Lobby Day in 2015, we united teachers and counselors from across the state to advocate on behalf of SEL. Our hard work paid off when the legislature funded a work group to define the benchmarks and competencies K–12 students should achieve across all SEL competencies.
- We also supported other states’ efforts to boost SEL. In May 2015, we sponsored and supported Massachusetts’s annual conference for its SEL4MA Alliance, sharing recent SEL research and success stories from our own lobbying efforts.



Educators from around the nation joined us in Washington, DC, to advocate for full SEL support in the new federal education law.

**2015**  
The bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaces No Child Left Behind (NCLB) with important new provisions that allow for social-emotional learning!

**2010**  
The Obama administration joins a call from educators and families to improve the federal education law to better prepare all students for success in college and careers.

**2002**  
ESEA is reauthorized several times over the next few decades, and in 2002, it’s renamed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

**1965**  
The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) becomes the first national education law.

*Learn more about our efforts to support SEL legislation nationally and at state and local levels at [cfchildren.org/advocacy](http://cfchildren.org/advocacy).*

# ADVANCING THE FIELD

What’s the best way to ensure that children get the most benefit from our programs?

That’s the driving question that shapes the development, evaluation, and support of *Second Step* implementations, led by Dr. Tia Kim, Director of Programs, Partnerships, and Research, and her dedicated team of experts.

## Cultivate Leaders

We know there are two key factors influencing implementation of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs:

- Children do best when adults have the support they need to deliver SEL programs effectively.
- Strong leadership can boost the success of SEL implementations.

Committee for Children focuses intentionally on reaching out to school and district leaders to better support *Second Step* implementation. We’ve enriched and grown our year-long *Second Step* Leadership Institute, currently in its fifth cohort year. The Institute kicks off each June with a two-day live workshop and continues throughout the school year with ongoing, top-quality implementation support and webinars. Feedback from school district SEL leaders has been overwhelmingly positive.



*“We came to the Leadership Institute for the wealth of tips and tools available, to make sure our implementation goes smoothly. We’re learning how to best support our counselors and teachers to use ‘Second Step’ in the best way possible.”*

—Monya Crow,  
Director of Guidance and Counseling  
Lewisville Independent School District, TX

2015 Leadership Institute Participants and Staff



### Key Finding

Children who have the greatest social-emotional needs and pose the greatest behavioral challenges in class also stand to benefit the most from the *Second Step* program, according to a study\* using a randomized controlled trial over a one-year period, with 7,300 K–2 students and 321 teachers in 61 schools across six school districts.

\*Low, S., Cook, C. R., Smolkowski, K., & Buntain-Ricklefs, J. (2015). Promoting social-emotional competence: An evaluation of the elementary version of *Second Step*®. *Journal of School Psychology*, 53, 463–477.

## Invest in Research

Research has always been at the core of our program design. All of our curricula are independently evaluated for effectiveness through randomized control trials, or RCTs. Currently, three RCTs are being conducted on our *Second Step* program.



**Dr. Carole Upshur** (University of Massachusetts Medical School) with funding from the Institute of Education Sciences is evaluating the effect of the *Second Step* Early Learning curriculum on end-of-preschool social-emotional skills and its impact on kindergarten-readiness and performance.



**Dr. Clay Cook** (University of Washington) and **Dr. Sabina Low** (Arizona State University) are evaluating the *Second Step* program’s effect on academic outcomes, problem behavior, and social-emotional skills for K–5 students. Initial results have shown that children who have the greatest social-emotional needs and pose the greatest behavioral challenges also benefit the most from the *Second Step* program.



**Dr. Dorothy Espelage** (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) and Dr. Todd Little (Texas Tech University) are assessing the impact of the K–5 *Second Step* Bullying Prevention Unit on bullying and peer victimization. Dr. Espelage also wrapped up a three-year *Second Step* Middle School study in 2015, which showed a 20 percent reduction in bullying by students with disabilities who participated in the *Second Step* program. (Committee for Children also completed an internal evaluation of the online training for our Bullying Prevention Unit, specifically to learn about implementation barriers in order to improve practice in schools.)



Find more information about these studies and more at: [www.cfchildren.org/second-step/research](http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step/research).

# ADVANCING THE FIELD (continued)

## Shine a Light on Best Practices

We visited *Second Step* schools across the nation to see what they were doing right to improve student outcomes.

- The Austin Independent School District in Texas showcases high-quality, districtwide SEL implementation. Devoted educators teach the *Second Step* program in every early learning through grade 8 classroom throughout the district.
- Lakewood School in Carpentersville, Illinois, sets aside time every day to team-teach the *Second Step* program. Everyone shares a common social-emotional language, which has transformed the culture.
- Schools sometimes struggle to fund social-emotional learning programs, so it's exciting when community partners step in to help. The Suncoast Credit Union Foundation generously awarded a grant to schools in Lee County, Florida, so they could teach the *Second Step* program.

Watch videos and read about these success stories and more on our website: [cfchildren.org/success](http://cfchildren.org/success).



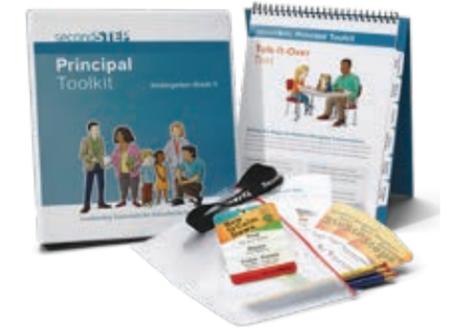
*“The workforce needs to have these skills available to them so they know how to work together, how to problem-solve, how to show their coworkers empathy. It’s not a short-term fix. It’s a long-term fix. It’s definitely going to help our community.”*

—Cindy Helton,  
Executive Director,  
Suncoast Credit Union Foundation



## Strengthen Daily Practice

Because strong leadership is so essential to successful implementation, we released the *Second Step* K–5 Principal Toolkit in 2015. Tools for school leaders include morning announcements, staff meeting activities, student assembly scripts, parent and staff communications tools, and more to reinforce *Second Step* skills and encourage SEL practice everywhere—in the classroom, on the playground, in the cafeteria, and at home.



*“As a huge advocate for restorative justice and someone who has brought this paradigm of discipline to our district, I think this resource is a godsend!”*

—April Thompson,  
Prevention Specialist, Fort Meyer, FL

## Contact Us for a *Second Step* Site Visit!

For those who want to see *Second Step* best practices in person, we’ve developed partnerships with six Seattle-area schools and early learning centers that welcome visitors. This year, we’re proud to have added Childhaven as our newest demonstration site. Childhaven has been providing top-quality healing care for high-needs, abused children since 1909. The social-emotional skills taught in our *Second Step* program help preschoolers affected by trauma find positive ways to deal with their feelings, calm down, and solve problems with peers.



# FROM CLASSROOM TO COMMUNITY

We have a long history of working with schools and educators to ensure that children are taught social-emotional skills, but it takes a whole community to truly prepare children to succeed in life. This past year, we expanded our efforts to better connect schools, parents, and communities by presenting at conferences and creating new tools and campaigns to start conversations and get everyone working together to help young people stay safe and reach their potential.



Specifically, the panelists covered key components of Spark, a school-to-community SEL initiative being implemented in Newtown, CT, where 20 children and 6 educators were fatally shot at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012. The group shared how the *Second Step* program's SEL lessons, game-based assessment, community and parent training, and brain-health education work together to create a far-reaching and effective SEL approach across the community.



**Joan Duffell**  
*Committee for Children*  
Executive Director



**Jeremy Richman**  
*The Avielle Foundation*  
CEO



**Joseph Erardi**  
*Newtown School District*  
Superintendent of Schools



**Jessica Berlinski**  
*Personalized Learning Games*  
Chief Impact Officer

## We launched a public awareness campaign

called "Early, Open, Often" to encourage parents to talk openly about sexual abuse from an early age, and to do so routinely. Because child sexual abuse can be a hard topic for some to discuss, we created videos and resources to help normalize these important conversations.

[www.earlyopenoften.org](http://www.earlyopenoften.org)



## We introduced ParkPals,

our first digital game, to reinforce social skills that promote kindness and prevent bullying. It's a great accompaniment to our *Second Step* program and Bullying Prevention Unit.



# INNOVATING FOR IMPACT

## Tech Solutions Enable SEL to Have an Impact at Scale

New Mission Ventures (NMV), a unique innovation lab within Committee for Children, was launched in 2013 to broaden our reach and impact through development of tech-enabled products, new partnerships, and sustainable business models. Director Mia Doces has spent the past two years leading her department at start-up speed through eight conceptual projects, advancing and pilot-testing prototypes that showed the greatest promise for developing social-emotional competence at large scale.

The team zoomed in on digital product development in 2014–15, exploring digital gaming as a way to boost resiliency skills. One pilot program tested the effectiveness of digital activities for teaching mindfulness to students in Seattle and Los Angeles schools. Positive results led to the development of Mind Yeti, a new product that provides online mindfulness sessions for children, teachers, and parents. It's currently in beta testing and scheduled to launch in Fall 2016.



NMV also spent 2015–16 establishing new channels to reach families with SEL skill development. The team explored options for reaching parents through their workplaces and children's medical providers. NMV cultivated intentional relationships with pediatricians, clinics, social workers, and leaders in the American Academy of Pediatrics. The department also partnered with a Seattle-based startup, Mazlo, which uses a platform to deliver personalized coaching in targeted two-week programs. Together we piloted a mobile-friendly parent coaching program called Calm and

Connected Parenting to help parents support children's social-emotional development at home.

As the department matures, NMV's contributions are increasingly clear: to add value to existing programs and introduce new offerings to new and different audiences, using technology to maximize effectiveness, scale, and sustainability.

Learn more about NMV's experimentation and unique collaborations that promote children's safety and well-being at: [cfchildren.org/about-us/new-mission-ventures](http://cfchildren.org/about-us/new-mission-ventures).



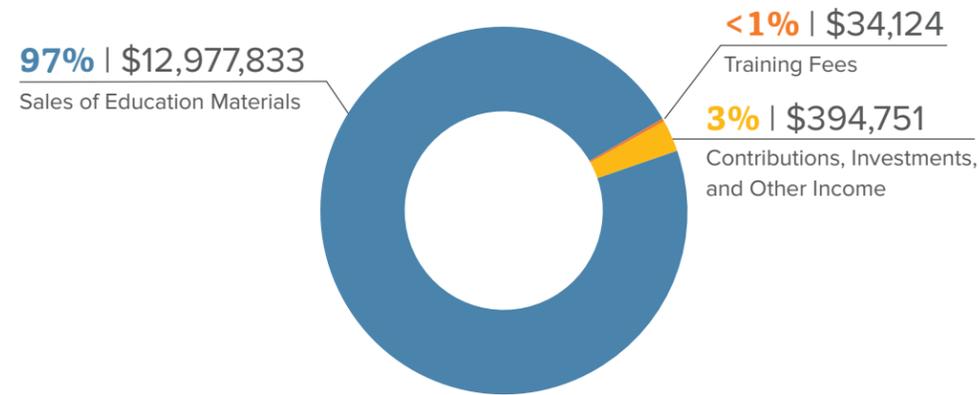
*"Mind Yeti makes it easy to teach our students the mindfulness skills they need in order to be their best selves in the classroom."*

—Rachel C.  
School Counselor

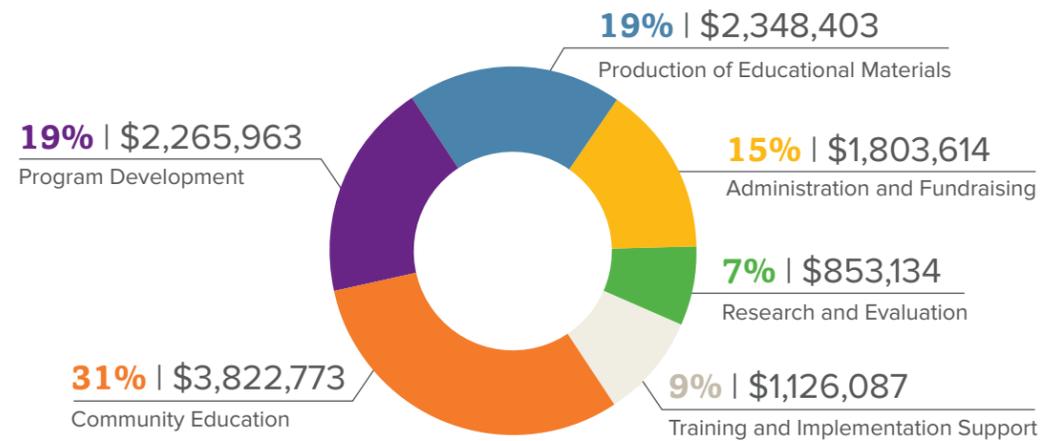


# FINANCIALS FOR 2014-15

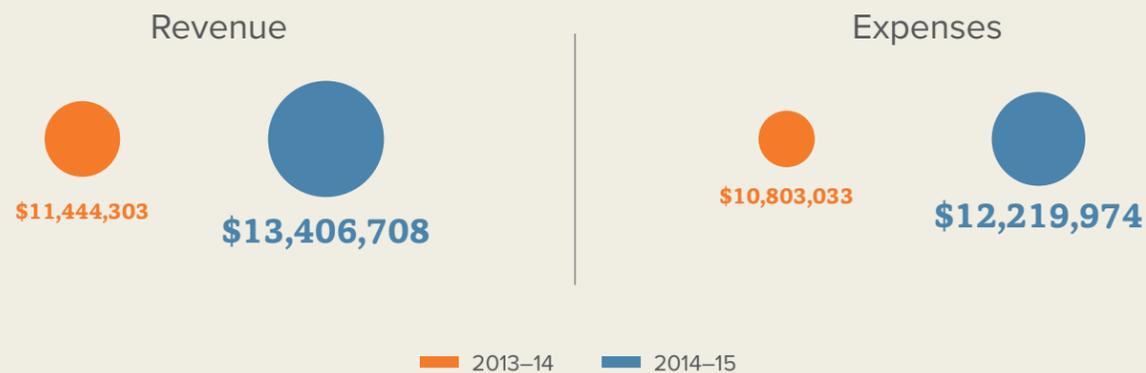
## Support and Revenue



## Program and Supporting Expenses

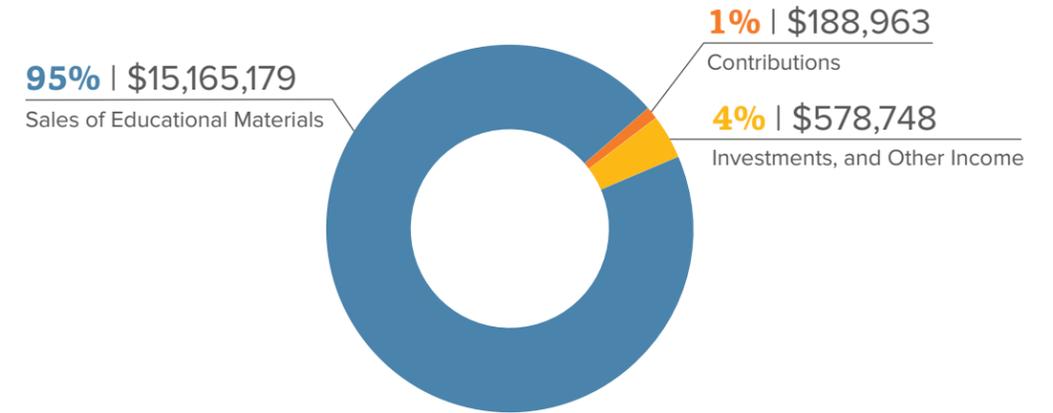


## Snapshot of Financial Health

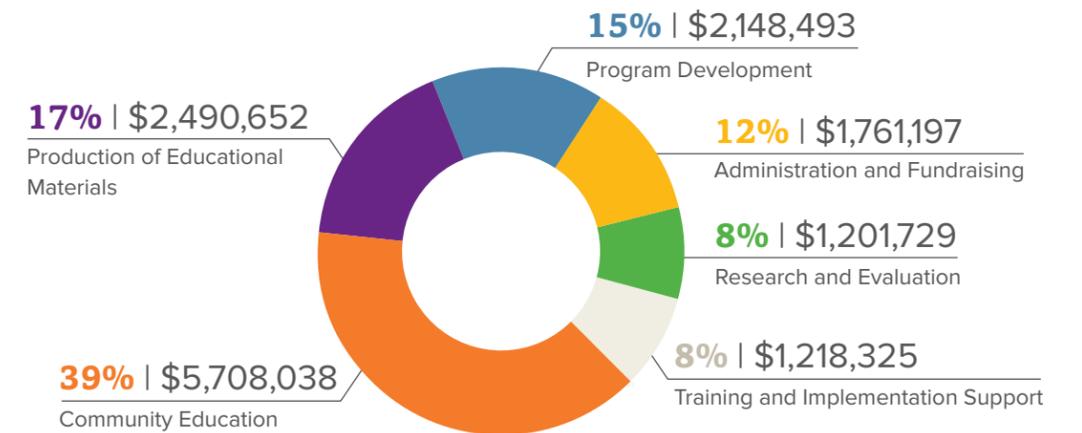


# FINANCIALS FOR 2015-16

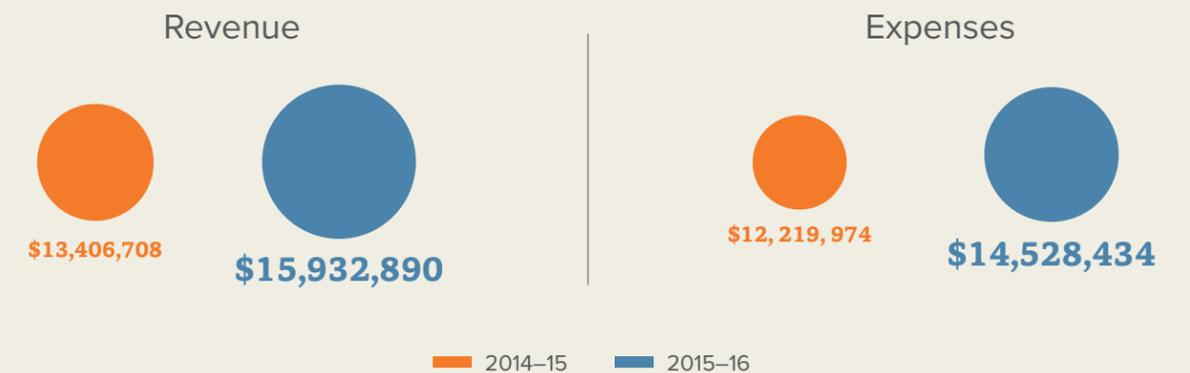
## Support and Revenue



## Program and Supporting Expenses



## Snapshot of Financial Health



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*Together we can create a safer,  
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**Connect with us to learn more  
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