



LEADING
WITH **PASSION**
TOWARD OUR VISION

Safe Children Thriving
in a Peaceful World

Innovation, Rigor, and Scale: Oh My!

The Committee for Children team did it again! The hallmark of our organization—rigorous, research-based social-emotional learning (SEL) taken to scale—was never more evident than in the past year.

Fiscal year 2016–17 witnessed the launch of our innovative mindfulness tool, Mind Yeti. This thoughtfully designed program, produced as an engaging, accessible app, distills volumes of research on mindfulness to support children’s (and their adults’) self-regulation, compassion, and attention-focusing skills into a simple daily practice. Just a few months after Mind Yeti’s initial launch, our usage forecasts were widely surpassed by a groundswell of demand for this tool among educators, parents, and kids alike. What makes this so exciting is that Mind Yeti works hand in hand with our evidence-based *Second Step* Program in classrooms and in the homes of *Second Step* kids—but it can also be used as a mindfulness tool on its own, in the homes of parents and children everywhere. The launch of Mind Yeti signals Committee for Children’s larger ambition to reach parents and families more directly, in new ways, with engaging, research-based social-emotional tools.

The drive for greater program impact is at the heart of everything we do at Committee for Children. We are committed to the constant evaluation of our programs through independently conducted, randomized controlled trials, which allow us to assess and improve program effectiveness. This past year, a large classroom-based randomized controlled trial compared the *Second Step* Early Learning Program with the most commonly used curricula in Head Start and community preschools. Children receiving the *Second Step* Program had significantly better end-of-preschool executive-function skills than students who did not receive it. This is significant because executive-function skills are critical to learning and school success. A national survey of *Second Step* implementers is giving us great data to focus program user support where it’s needed most, so SEL can be taught with full, spirited engagement of teachers, kids, administrators, and parents.

Finally, we seek to connect with as many children, educators, and families as possible, while maintaining our focus on program quality at the school and classroom levels. We are elated to report that fiscal year 2016–17 brought us our largest program reach ever, changing the lives of more than ten million children in seventy countries around the world.

True to our vision and mission, this past year, Committee for Children stepped into a greater advocacy role at state, national, and international levels. From congressional briefings to Hill meetings, and with national-level presentations from Austin to Mexico and Brazil, we collaborated with field colleagues in addressing key policy issues central to our shared mission to improve children’s lives.

National and international interest in social-emotional learning has never been greater, and the future for our work has never been so bright. Thank you for the part you play in making this possible.

Sincerely,



Joan Cole Duffell
Executive Director



Paige Hamack
Board President 2016–17



Joan Cole Duffell
Executive Director



Paige Hamack
Board President

**Our evidence-based programs are
changing lives**



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.

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KEEPING OUR MISSION GLOBAL

Partners around the world expand our mission reach

Culturally adapted versions of our social-emotional learning program continue to be a preferred choice for schools in over a dozen countries. Our partners, all SEL experts and advocates in their countries, ensure the programs' impact by providing comprehensive teacher training and implementation support. Together we are all working together to help children around the world thrive.



In collaboration with Harvard Graduate School of Education and Fundação Getulio Vargas, our **Brazil** partner launched a large-scale impact evaluation of *Programa Compasso* to understand the program's impact on teachers, student social-emotional well-being, and student academic performance.



Our partners in **Scandinavia** culturally adapted and published versions of the most recent *Second Step* Kindergarten and Grade 1 Programs. In **Australia**, more than 30,000 students now receive *Second Step* lessons, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies identifies the *Second Step* Program as one of its recommended programs. Meanwhile, the **Slovakia** Ministry of Education accredited the training and educational activities of the adapted *Druhy Krok* Program, allowing our partner there to pursue further program distribution.



Our potential for international growth leaps forward with the completion of *Programa Paso Adelante*, a culturally adapted Spanish language version of the *Second Step* Program. Extensive work over the past few years with educators and researchers in **Mexico** made this new program a reality. We also began a collaboration with a foundation in **Colombia** to support their interest in integrating SEL into school initiatives. We look forward to broadening our reach with this new program.



Partner Countries

Australia • Brazil • Denmark • Estonia • Finland • Germany • Japan • Lithuania • Norway • Slovakia • Sweden • Turkey

ADVOCATING NATIONWIDE FOR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The goals of our federal and state policy and advocacy work are to promote SEL, protect children from violence and abuse, and promote equitable learning opportunities for all children.

Nationwide Leadership in Our Priority Areas

In September 2016, we co-sponsored a US congressional briefing with our colleagues at the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning on SEL and employability skills. Over 60 congressional staff and leaders attended the briefing. Representatives Tim Ryan (OH) and Susan Davis (CA), Senator Tammy Baldwin (WI), moderator Dr. Tim Shriver, and panelists Stan Litow (IBM), Chief Education Officer Dr. Janice Jackson of Chicago Public Schools, and R. Keeth Matheny of Austin Independent School District spoke on the importance of teaching children and youth social-emotional skills so they can be successful in school and bring needed employability skills to the twenty-first-century workplace.

We produced two policy papers that provide current research and policy recommendations for federal policymakers. “Why SEL and Employability Skills Should Be Prioritized in Education” was used as a policy roadmap for the September 2016 congressional briefing. “Protecting Our Children from Sexual Abuse” was used to brief incoming staff during the presidential transition.

Committee for Children joined national, state, and local organizations to advocate for federal legislation and appropriations, especially in the area of SEL. In particular, Committee for Children was instrumental in getting SEL and employability language in the reauthorization of the Career and Technical Education Act passed by a wide majority of the House of Representatives in 2016.

Overall, Committee for Children leadership and staff played key roles in various coalitions focusing on the prevention of child sexual abuse and bullying and the promotion of SEL.

Washington State Leadership

In January 2016, Committee for Children presented an SEL lesson in our home capital of Olympia, Washington, so legislators could experience firsthand how SEL is taught in schools. Baionne Coleman, then student life director and SEL coordinator at St. Luke School in Shoreline, conducted the lesson.

The Committee for Children Advocacy Day was held in February 2016. We brought together teachers, board members, staff, and for the first time, youth, to speak in support of social-emotional learning. The group met with 34 legislators during the day.

Committee for Children advocated for legislation that required school districts to include child sexual abuse in their trauma plans. This bill passed both the House and the Senate unanimously and was signed into law by Governor Inslee in June 2016.

Committee for Children convened several meetings of a Washington State SEL leadership group (composed of individuals in SEL leadership positions at school and district offices across the state) to share best practices, challenges, and successes across various school districts. This group also provided comments that are critical to refining the draft SEL benchmarks developed by the statewide SEL Benchmarks Workgroup.



Congressional briefing on SEL and Employability Skills, Sept. 2016



SEL lesson for WA State legislators, Jan. 2016



2016 CFC Advocacy Day, Olympia, WA

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* implementation, led by Dr. Tia Kim, director of Programs, Partnerships, and Research, and her dedicated team of experts.

Cultivate Leaders

There are two key factors that influence the implementation of SEL programs:

- Creating a solid plan can help ensure a smooth rollout.
- Strong leadership can boost the success of SEL program implementation.

Committee for Children reaches out to school and district leaders to support their *Second Step* implementation. We've also enriched and grown our year-long *Second Step* Leadership Institute, currently in its sixth 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.



“The Second Step Leadership Institute is phenomenal. It is a group of energized, passionate, knowledgeable people. And I am learning from others, learning from our presenters. It is a hugely helpful institute. Very glad that I was able to come.”

—Judy Blanchard,
District Health Coordinator
Newtown, CT

2017 *Second Step* Leadership Institute Participants and Staff



SHINE A LIGHT ON BEST PRACTICES

PEDALS: HEAD START SUCCESS WITH SEL

Preparing children for kindergarten goes beyond academics. Through the Positive Emotional Development and Learning Skills (PEDALS) project in Western New York, educators learn how to use evidence-based social-emotional learning curricula, and children learn social-emotional skills with the goal of improving school readiness.

- When the project originally launched, centers affiliated with PEDALS were given the choice between two evidence-based social-emotional learning programs, and six out of eight chose to implement the *Second Step* Program.
- With a strong support system of coaches, teachers who used the *Second Step* Program received assistance with the curriculum, problem behaviors, and the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) data collection.
- When it comes to results, the numbers are clear. Educators saw a 57 percent decrease in the number of children who had social-emotional needs, a 31 percent drop in the number of children with self-control issues, and an increase in school readiness.

PEDALS

“Because ‘Second Step’ provides the curriculum connections and practice opportunities, often, by the end of the year, we’re seeing students use the language and implement strategies on their own.”

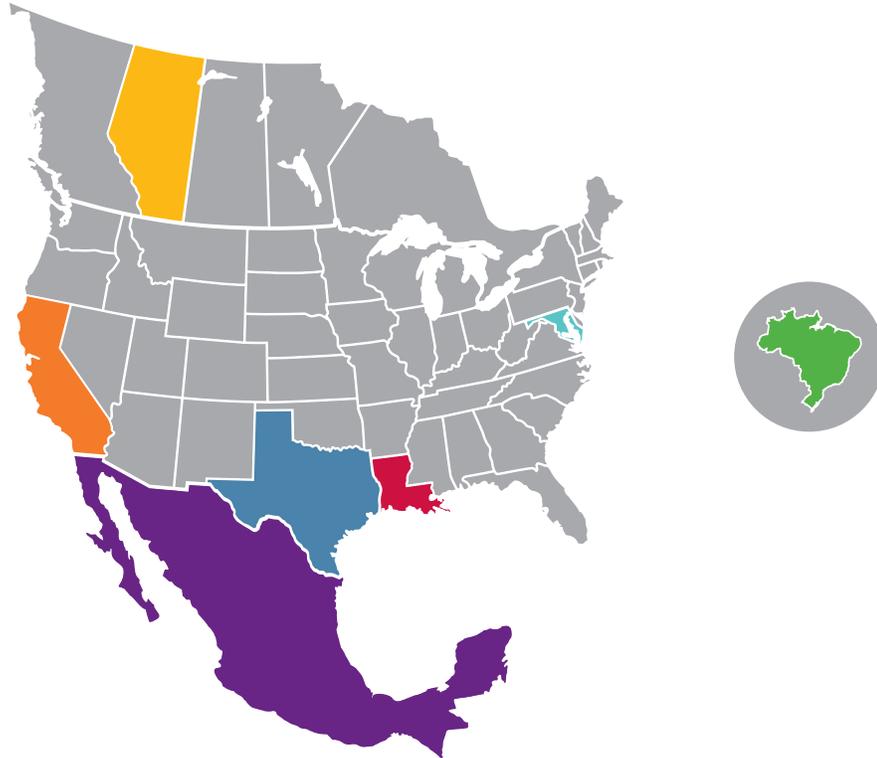
—Jaimee Ferraro,
PEDALS Coach

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.



PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS



- **School-Based Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Intervention**

International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

August 2016 | Calgary, Canada

Tonje Molyneux

Co-presenters: David Finkelhor (University of New Hampshire) and Charol Shakeshaft (Virginia Commonwealth University)

- **Challenging Behavior in Challenging Times: Understanding, Preventing, and Responding Effectively**

National Association for the Education of Young Children

November 2016 | Los Angeles, CA

Joan Cole Duffell

Co-presenter: Barbara Kaiser

- **Panel Discussion: “Aprende con el Corazón” (Learning with the Heart)**

CLASE: Cumbre de Líderes en Acción por la Educación 2016 (Summit of Leaders in Action for Education)

October 2016 | Mexico City, Mexico

Joan Cole Duffell

Co-presenters: Silvia Conde (Albanta), Leticia Landeros, and Janet Zadina (Tulane University)

- **Can Digital Tools Boost Social-Emotional Learning?**

SXSWedu

March 2017 | Austin, TX

Mia Doces

Co-presenters: Fred Dillon, Steve Arnold, and Anne Collier

- **What’s Empathy Got to Do with It?**

International Bullying Prevention Association

November 2016 | New Orleans, LA

Brian Smith

- **Using a Social-Ecological Model to Inform School-Based Bullying Prevention in Adolescence**

Society for Research on Adolescence

April 2016 | Baltimore, MD

Tia Kim and Lyscha Marcynyszyn

Co-presenters: Dorothy Espelage (University of Illinois), Susan Swearer (University of Nebraska–Lincoln), and Shelley Hymel (University of British Columbia)

- **Keeping Kids Safe: Integrating SEL and Child Protection Programs**

Association of American Schools in South America

March 2017 | Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Carolyn Hubbard



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 controlled trials, or RCTs. Currently, one RCT is being conducted on our *Second Step* Program.

Dr. Amanda Nickerson (University of Buffalo) is assessing the impact of the EL-5 *Second Step* Child Protection Unit (CPU) in a randomized controlled trial involving eight schools in New York. In particular, the study will be assessing whether the CPU lessons improve student knowledge to recognize, report, and refuse unsafe situations. In addition, the study will examine whether the staff training also improves the knowledge and motivation of staff.

CAN DIGITAL TOOLS BOOST SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING?

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 connect schools, parents, and communities. By presenting at conferences and creating new tools and campaigns, we're starting conversations that get everyone working together to help young people stay safe and reach their potential.



Our team joined a group of thought leaders and panelists at SXSWedu to discuss the use of digital tools to support social-emotional learning. More and more organizations are developing digital tools to support SEL—but do they work? This expert panel—which included an innovation director, an entrepreneur, and an investor—discussed the challenges and opportunities that come with a digital SEL program.



Mia Doces
Committee for Children
Director, New Mission Ventures



Fred Dillon
HopeLab
Director of Strategy and Innovation



Steve Arnold
Polaris Partners
Venture Capitalist



Anne Collier
The Net Safety Collaborative
Executive Director

INNOVATING FOR IMPACT

Tech Solutions Enable SEL to Have an Impact at Scale



In its third year of operation, Committee for Children's innovation team, New Mission Ventures, has established its place within the organization as a unique research and development lab that's helping incubate new projects for expanding our mission. In 2016–17, New Mission Ventures launched Mind Yeti, a mindfulness app for children and their adults that offers kid-friendly media and teaches research-based skills to get calm, focused, and connected. Mind Yeti has reached an estimated 500,000 children since its launch in May 2016.



“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



New Mission Ventures also launched the beta version of an app for parents called Parachute. The Parachute Project aims to build a support system to equip parents with practices that benefit parent-child interactions and support children's long-term behavioral health.

Another promising innovation project percolating is the Playing Minecraft After School project. Through a partnership with Los Angeles-based Connected Camps, we aim to change the way SEL programs are designed and delivered. Situated within the social space of a Minecraft server, this peer-mediation program explores ways in which kids can develop problem-solving capacities in the face of authentic and naturally arising conflict.

Additionally, we conducted research to lay the groundwork for developing smart fidget toys that give feedback, facilitate self-regulation, and prompt

children to employ strategies for calming down and focusing attention. Prototyping began in fall 2017.

New Mission Ventures continues to strive to add value to existing programs and introduce new offerings to new and different audiences, using technology to maximize effectiveness, scale, and sustainability.

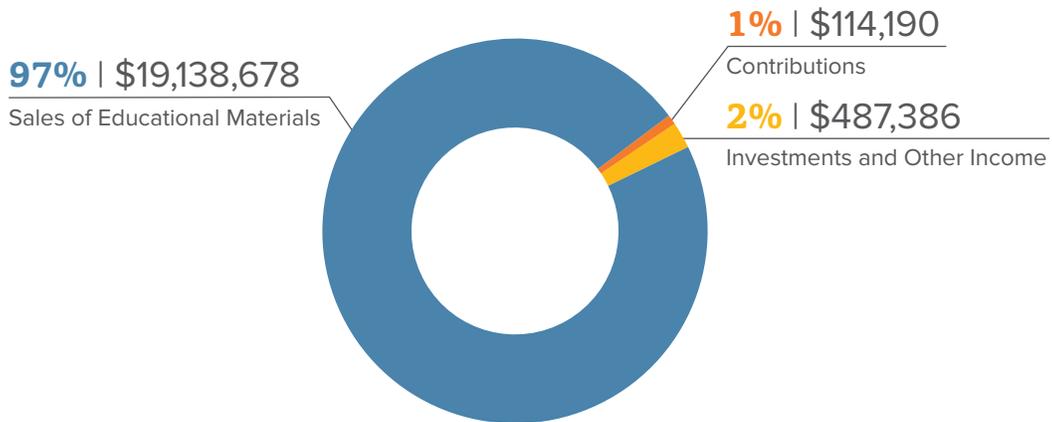


Learn more about New Mission Ventures' experimentation and unique collaborations that promote children's safety and well-being at cfchildren.org/team/new-mission-ventures.

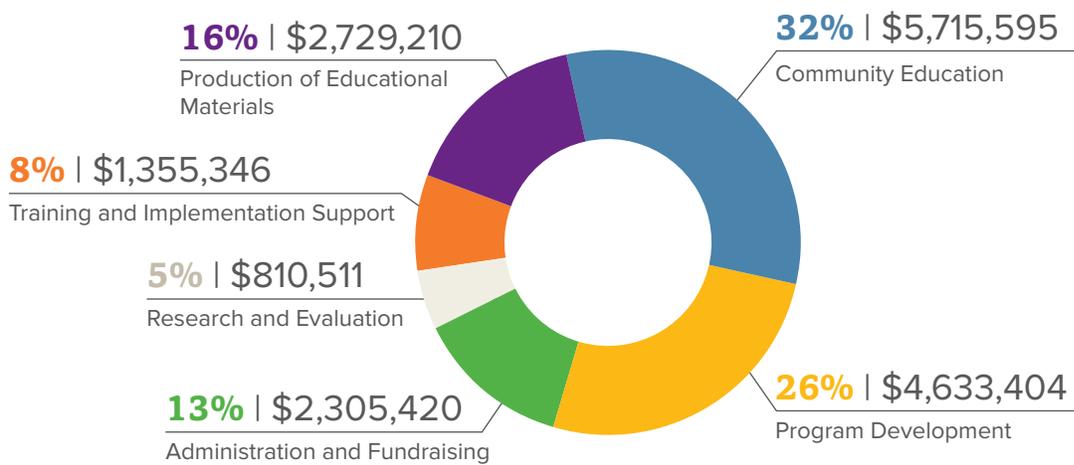


FINANCIALS FOR 2016–17

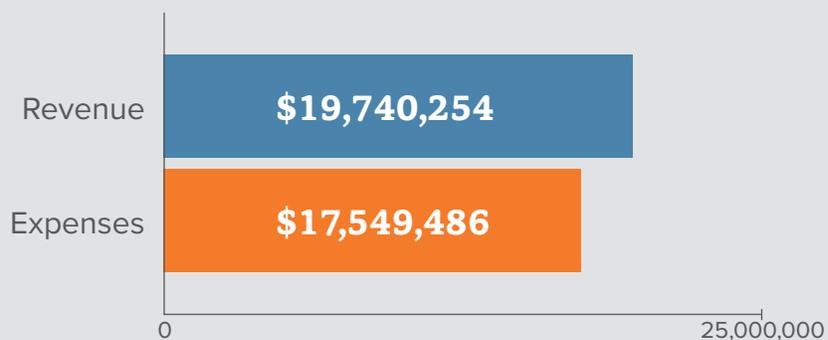
Support and Revenue



Program and Supporting Expenses



Snapshot of Financial Health 2016–17



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who give time and money to advance the safety and
well-being of children everywhere.

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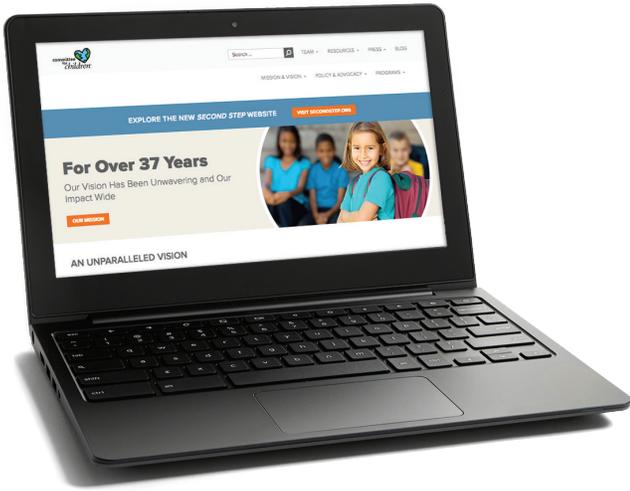
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Connect with us to learn more about social-emotional learning and how to take action that matters.

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create a safer, more
peaceful world*

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