

**Committee  
*for Children*<sup>®</sup>**

# **Resilience, Reflection, and Hope**

Report to the Community 2020–2021

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# A Year Unlike Any Other

**Unprecedented. Unparalleled. The new normal. These were a few of the buzz words describing a year unlike any other.**

Yet, amid a pandemic, a growing focus on racial injustice, and a tumultuous election, Committee for Children remained steadfast in providing social-emotional learning (SEL) programs and supports to help the communities we serve build and strengthen the skills needed to cope with rapid and traumatic changes. When SEL was most critical, we expanded our reach with digital curricula and resources to foster the safety and well-being of more than 20.5 million children worldwide.

The COVID-19 pandemic and school closures forced us to adapt to a new way of working and delivering on our mission. It was a challenging time for educators, students, and families. We provided resources to support SEL in remote, classroom, and hybrid settings. We also offered the Second Step® SEL for Adults Resilience During Crisis Module to help K-12 educators strengthen their social-emotional skills, and provided new and adapted resources for families seeking to nurture the social-emotional well-being of their children.

In addition to providing pandemic-specific supports, we made progress toward our North Star Goal of positively transforming the social-emotional well-being of 100 million children by 2028. In July 2020, we launched Second Step® Out-of-School Time, which brings SEL to before- and after-school settings. We also launched a new Second Step® Elementary digital program to better meet students' and teachers' needs with more accessible and culturally relevant curricula, as well as more frequent improvements based on feedback and the latest research.

When SEL was most critical, we expanded our reach with digital curricula and resources to foster the safety and well-being of more than 20.5 million children worldwide.

We are proud of the contributions we made toward our mission during a time when SEL was needed most. Still, there's much work ahead to realize our vision of safe children thriving in a peaceful world. We'll continue our journey to becoming an anti-racist organization and work to ensure our programs are more representative of and impactful for the communities we serve and those we hope to serve. In February 2021, we released an [equity statement](#) that declared our commitment to building an anti-racist, equitable, and inclusive organization and society that support the positive development of children. By helping young people discover and grow competencies that support their resilience and their ability to contribute to more equitable schools and communities, we will create a more just and peaceful world where every child can thrive.

Best regards,



Andrea Lovanhill  
Chief Executive Officer



Jon Reingold  
2019-2022 Board President



# Building a Just, Peaceful World

We've stated our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion—and we're putting it into practice every day.

At Committee for Children, we dream of a just and peaceful world where every child is safe and can thrive. Through our partnerships with our clients and communities across the globe, we seek to co-create a world filled with hope, understanding, and compassion where people embrace and celebrate difference and live without fear of being attacked for their unique qualities. Our organization's commitment to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) will be critical to achieving this vision. In service of our commitment, we launched a [DEI page](#) on the Committee for Children website in February 2021.

## On our DEI page, you'll find:

- Our equity statement
- A timeline and history of the DEI work we've accomplished to date
- The commitments we've made to our programs, our partners, and our communities

We approach these commitments from a place of humility and growth, and look forward to this learning journey.



## A Thought Leader Shaping the Future

Our new VP of Public Relations and Communications, **Shauna McBride**, is inspiring the world with the story of our vision, mission, and impact.

Moved by our origin story and fueled by her passion to make a positive impact on the world, [Shauna McBride](#) joined Committee for Children in 2015. Since her arrival, she has focused on elevating the organization's visibility and influence.

A strategic storyteller and former journalist, McBride oversaw work on Committee for Children's fortieth anniversary campaign. She led the creation of innovative and award-winning public awareness campaigns such as the [Captain Compassion](#)® anti-bullying campaign, the [Hot Chocolate Talk](#)® child safety campaign, and the [Winter Well-Being](#) video series. McBride has secured media placements for the organization in top-tier outlets including *Parents* magazine, the *Washington Post*, and *Education Week*.

Effective January 1, 2021, McBride was promoted to vice president of public relations and communications to continue her exceptional leadership, build out critical communications functions, and develop strategies to elevate Committee for Children's brand.

# Resilience in Times of Crises

When the COVID-19 pandemic brought widespread hardship, we turned to social-emotional learning to provide support for the well-being of children, families, and educators.

Amid widespread school closures, educators and families scrambled to adapt to the challenges of remote and hybrid learning, while also trying to bolster children's social-emotional well-being. The trauma of the pandemic highlighted the critical importance of social-emotional skills such as demonstrating compassion and managing emotions and stress. In response, Committee for Children staff created special resources to support the social-emotional well-being of children, families, and educators.

By April 2020, we created more than 30 recorded lessons with SEL materials that educators and families could use during school closures. By August 2020, we produced [additional resources to support remote and hybrid learning](#), with team efforts such as:

- Our Platform Team digitized portions of our print curricula for online use
- Our Second Step® SEL for Adults Team produced a learning module to support educators' resilience during crisis
- Our cross-departmental COVID-19 pandemic workgroup developed dozens of activities and lessons aligned to students' most pressing needs
- Our Public Relations and Communications Team and our Research Team collaborated on the [Winter Well-Being video series](#) to help parents and caregivers cope with stress

We provided most of these resources free to the public. Over the course of the year:

- More than 400,000 people viewed our recorded lessons
- Nearly 900,000 people visited our COVID-19 resources page
- More than 20,000 people used the Second Step SEL for Adults Resilience During Crisis Module
- More than 9,000 people watched the Winter Well-Being series



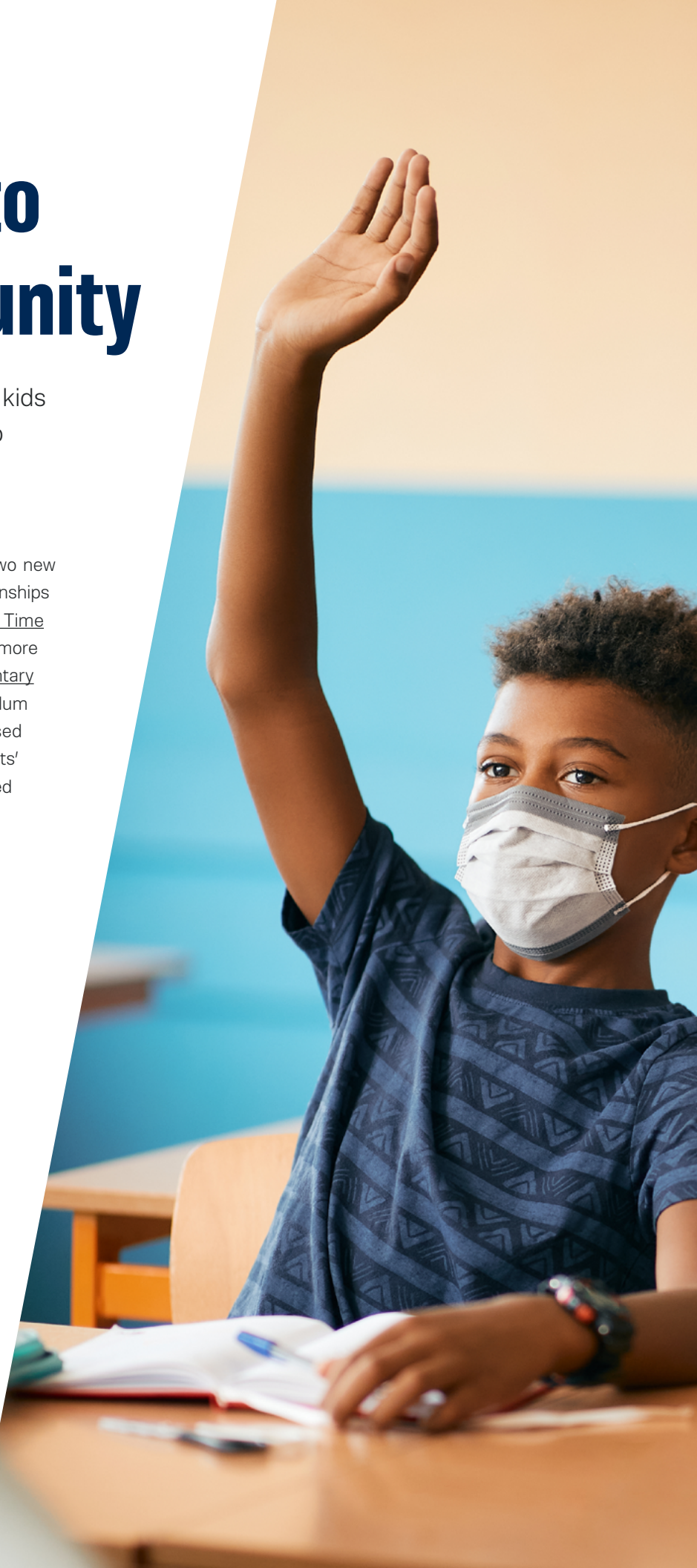
## Programs

# More Ways to Build Community

Our newest programs helped support kids as education moved from in-person to remote and back again.

This past year, Committee for Children released two new programs to help our youngest learners build relationships and stay connected. [Second Step® Out-of-School Time](#) was created to bring social-emotional learning into more parts of children's days. The [Second Step® Elementary digital program](#) is our first fully digital SEL curriculum for Grades K-5. As the COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread school closures, concern grew for students' social-emotional well-being, and our newly expanded family of programs offered more value than ever.

In combination with our existing curricula, our new programs offer a holistic approach to SEL: one that provides SEL in multiple formats throughout children's daily lives. When implemented with a coordinated, community-wide approach, SEL can build stronger communities and support inclusive, equitable learning experiences.



## Programs



### Second Step® Out-of-School Time

In June 2020, with support from The Wallace Foundation, Committee for Children introduced the organization's first K-5 SEL program designed for before- and after-school environments. Second Step Out-of-School Time was built on the foundation of our trusted SEL programs. It helps children build social-emotional skills like empathy, kindness, and growth mindset.

### Second Step® Elementary Digital Program

In March 2021, Committee for Children released the Second Step Elementary digital program. The program's development involved extensive field research and input from educators, students, principals, and parents. The result is a fully web-based curriculum that's easy to implement, developmentally appropriate for students, engaging, culturally relevant, and comprehensive. It includes supports for teachers and students during and beyond the classroom lessons, and its digital format allows for continuous improvement. Students learn social-emotional skills like goal-setting, empathy, problem-solving, and emotion management.





## Innovation

# Expanding Social-Emotional Supports

This past year, the Committee for Children Innovation Team debuted new programs and products—then quickly adapted those offerings to support children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Nurture<sup>®</sup> Seattle

This peer-mentoring program, modeled on the evidence-based approach from NurturePA, served more than 350 new parents with more than 35 trained volunteer mentor parents in its pilot year. The program focuses on supporting members through their social and emotional transition to parenthood, with a special emphasis on recognizing and preventing perinatal mood and anxiety disorders.

When the pandemic began, the Nurture Seattle team pivoted to meet the needs of new parents by switching to an online recruiting and training process. The team also expanded its scope of support to include parents in their third trimester through the first year of their children's lives.

The Nurture Seattle team secured a pilot partnership with Community Health Plan of Washington, the state's second-largest provider for Medicaid patients. The intent of the partnership was to expand the program and identify ways in which digital peer mentoring programs can help participants achieve better outcomes. Additionally, the University of Washington issued a grant to Dr. Amritha Bhat to conduct a randomized control trial evaluating the Nurture Seattle program's effectiveness.



## THE IMAGINE NEIGHBORHOOD™

The Imagine Neighborhood podcast was in the works before the COVID-19 pandemic and launched just as schools were closing. It offered families and educators much-needed digital, at-home content that supported children's social-emotional learning. The podcast was featured in school resource lists and parenting magazines and topped the charts on Apple Podcasts and other aggregators, reaching more than 400,000 downloads in its first year. The podcast was awarded the American Library Association's Excellence in Early Learning Digital Media Award, as well as grants of \$220,000 to fund three major initiatives:

- The Imagine Equity series of six episodes focused on racial and cultural identity, equity, and activism
- The Teen Force! fellowship program that elevates teen voices to create story content for young children, with a focus on perspective-taking
- Radio Free Imagine Neighborhood, an interactive activity book that complements the podcast's content



## Purrble®

Purrble is an interactive plush toy designed to help kids manage their emotions and feel calm. It was created by Committee for Children in partnership with Sproutel. Initial Purrble sales pilots were promising, with all available Purrble toys selling out on Amazon over the holiday season. In addition, the Sproutel team secured a deal with QVC to participate in a sales pilot through the QVC network. Ongoing research and feedback from clients are helping us determine the benefits that Purrble toys provide to children.



# Guiding Transformation

Our 2020–2021 policy and advocacy work responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and the nation's reckoning with racial injustice. We focused on addressing longstanding and emergent needs for social-emotional learning, taking action at both the federal and state levels.



## Federal

**Working with Congress**, we succeeded in getting SEL explicitly included in both COVID-19 relief legislation and the regular budget appropriations cycle. This resulted in historic dedicated investments in SEL as well as increases in traditional budget coffers that help support SEL, like Title IV-A and Title I in the Every Student Succeeds Act. The funds are intended to prioritize spending for young people in communities hardest hit by the pandemic, which has disproportionately affected Black and Indigenous communities.

**Working with the US Department of Education**, we contributed to a reopening handbook provided by the federal government to schools and school systems. The handbook guides schools on how to implement SEL in remote-learning environments as well as how to best use SEL when students return to school with more complex mental health needs. We also made evidence-based recommendations to the Department of Education for how SEL could advance equity in schools, such as using it as part of a strategy to replace exclusionary discipline with more equitable practices. We led congressional briefings, joined myriad coalition campaigns, met with multiple congressional offices, and collaborated with field allies—all in service to young people during these unprecedented times.



## State

**At the state level**, our advocacy efforts focused on Florida, Indiana, and Washington State. We protected SEL in Florida's mental health allocation and laid groundwork for a campaign to prevent mental health crises and school violence in the next legislative session. In Indiana, we championed state legislation that requires evidence-based SEL to be included in teacher-prep programs, as aligned to the Indiana Department of Education's SEL standards. And in Washington State, we successfully led efforts to include historic SEL investments in the state budget while further establishing an equity focus in the state's SEL framework.





## 1 in 4 Girls

report experiencing  
sexual abuse by age 18<sup>1</sup>

## 1 in 20 Boys

report experiencing  
sexual abuse by age 18<sup>1</sup>



1. Finkelhor, D., Shattuck, A., Turner, H. A., & Hamby, S. L. (2014). The lifetime prevalence of child sexual abuse and sexual assault assessed in late adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 55*(3), 329–333. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2013.12.026>
2. Finkelhor, D., & Dziuba-Leatherman, J. (1995). Victimization prevention programs: A national survey of children's exposure and reactions. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 19*(2), 129–139. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0145-2134\(94\)00111-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0145-2134(94)00111-7)

### Campaigns

# Connected Community Care

This year, Committee for Children fostered the safety and well-being of children and their families with three public awareness campaigns.

### Child Safety

## The Hot Chocolate Talk<sup>®</sup> Campaign

Talking to kids about sexual abuse prevention can be scary, but it doesn't have to be. Children who are informed about their bodies are less likely to be abused, and children who feel comfortable talking with a caring adult are more likely to disclose abuse if it happens.<sup>2</sup> Committee for Children created the Hot Chocolate Talk campaign to empower families to have important personal safety talks with children. In tandem with National Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Hot Chocolate Talk campaign presented free conversation guides with evidence-based, age-appropriate language to help families start and continue child protection conversations. These guides are available to families year-round.





## Campaigns

### Bullying Prevention

## Captain Compassion® Campaign

Seven out of 10 children witness bullying in schools.<sup>1</sup> About 50 percent of minority youth have witnessed racially motivated cyberbullying.<sup>2</sup> Bullying negatively affects not only victims, but also children who bully and bystanders who witness bullying. With student safety and success on the line, Committee for Children reintroduced bullying prevention superhero Captain Compassion in support of National Bullying Prevention Month. This year's Captain Compassion comics inspired kids and adults to activate their upstander power to prevent racially motivated cyberbullying. The comics and other campaign resources helped kids and adults learn how to foster welcoming and inclusive communities.

### Parent and Caregiver Support

## Winter Well-Being

In 2020, rising numbers of adults in the United States reported that stress and worry about the COVID-19 pandemic had negatively impacted their mental health.<sup>3</sup> In response, Committee for Children launched its first annual Winter Well-Being video series to support parents' and caregivers' social, emotional, and mental well-being. The weekly videos featured a psychologist's evidence-based advice and self-care tips to help adults prioritize their mental health throughout the pandemic winter. Video topics included self-compassion, being present with family, managing holiday stress, setting intentions, expressing gratitude, and more.

1. Bradshaw, C. P., Sawyer, A. L., & O'Brennan, L. M. (2007). Bullying and peer victimization at school: Perceptual differences between students and school staff. *School Psychology Review*, 36(3), 361–382. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2007.12087929>
2. Tynes, B. M. (2015, December). Online racial discrimination: A growing problem for adolescents. *Psychological Science Agenda*. <http://www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2015/12/online-racial-discrimination>
3. Panchal, M., Kamal, R., Cox, C., & Garfield, R. (2021, February 10). *The implications of COVID-19 for mental health and substance use*. Kaiser Family Foundation. <https://www.kff.org/report-section/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use-issue-brief>

# Increased Efficiency and Impact

As our reach continues to expand, we're focusing our investments on sustainable, scalable programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed inequities in education and amplified the need for greater social-emotional supports for students and educators, making our investments in SEL program development and training more critical than ever.

As awareness of the need for SEL in schools has grown, so has our impact. Last year, we reached 20.5 million children, moving us closer to our goal of positively transforming the social-emotional well-being of 100 million children annually by 2028.



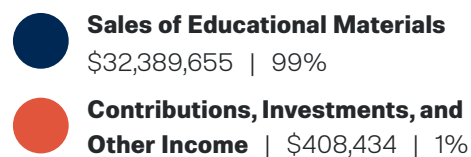
# 20.5 MILLION



## Program and Support Expenses



## Support and Revenue



## Supporters

# Investing in Our Future

Thank you for your generosity!

## Individual Supporters

Alexandre D'Avila Mello Bettamio Guimaraes

Anonymous

Dave Wallace

Erin Ashe

Erin Maher

Joanna Gubas

John Andrews

Jonathan and Erin Woods

Jon Reingold

Miguel Boluda

Roy Fleischer

Stanton Koch

## Organizational Supporters



### Special Thanks

With sincere gratitude, we want to highlight The Allstate Foundation's generous grant of \$240,000 for the development and expansion of innovative social-emotional initiatives. The Allstate Foundation's support enabled our Innovation Team to create resources such as an activity book for *The Imagine Neighborhood™* podcast and a fellowship for teens focused on storytelling and social-emotional skills. Our work is made possible by supporters like The Allstate Foundation, as well as individual donors, educators, and industry researchers and advocates. Thank you!



Southwest



Anonymous

Tannen Family  
Foundation Inc.