LETTERS

Plant, Cultivate, Nurture...THRIVE.

How do you help something thrive? You prepare the soil, plant a seed, and then you care for it — encouraging growth and development over time. This year, several long-term projects came to fruition. Thanks to the careful cultivation of founding Executive Director Ms. Lynda Gavioli and the time and talents of our Parenting Director Gatha Green, our region now has a Family Resource Center for the first time in five years. The center will host nurturing parenting classes and supportive services that help reunite families who are in the DCFS system.

Programs like this and our signature programs in Early Childhood Education, Healthy Living and Youth Development provide essential services to the children and families in Northeast Louisiana. As you read through the Annual Report, you will see that our numbers of participants are growing, our funding sources are expanding, and we continue to reach into the region to meet participants where they are.

Here is what you won’t see: the talented staff that create and sustain these programs. It is through their care and commitment that the Children’s Coalition for Northeast Louisiana can respond quickly to community need. When our area flooded, the staff rallied with the help of United Way to distribute over 20,000 diapers to families in our region. When state budget cuts threatened college funding, our staff worked with a local donor to create a scholarship program for area youth. Together, they are creating communities where children and families can truly thrive.

- Dr. Lynn Clark, Executive Director

After serving on the Board of Directors of the Children’s Coalition for several years, I have witnessed amazing growth and success throughout the organization. I’ve had the privilege of working with both Lynda Gavioli, our founder, and her successor, Dr. Lynn Clark. Both ladies have always had a clear and concise vision of growing the organization as well as its programs.

This is an exciting time for the Coalition. Our vast array of programs benefits children from infancy, early childhood, school age, preteen and teenage years. We offer support for families as well. Each year, our reach becomes broader to benefit more children throughout the Northeast Louisiana Region.

This growth is largely due to the fantastic community support we receive from our membership and various programs. One of our largest fundraisers, Fashion Fusion, has grown by leaps and bounds since its beginning. Last year, we moved the event from the West Monroe Convention Center to the Monroe Civic Center Arena. While it was a frightening and daunting task, the event was once again a major success. We hosted the Dragon Boat Races on Bayou DeSiard this past spring as well. This event was a huge success and a great deal of fun for the entire community. We look to make both of these events even larger next year!

Please read through this annual report and visit our website, which gives more in-depth information on our programs and how they help to enrich children’s lives daily. We cannot do this alone. We are a TRUE coalition, and our membership helps us to continue to produce outstanding events and programs. Without you, none of this would be possible. I encourage everyone to join us in this remarkable journey as we continue to make a difference in children’s lives as well as their families and the community.

- Jody Stratton, Board President
Thanks to generous donors and new funding at the state and federal levels, we were able to grow our programming in all four of our focus areas. Programs like the Family Resource Center for Northeast Louisiana and Jus4Me bring parenting to families in the DCFS system and teen parents in area high schools. The Children’s Coalition Institute is only one of four programs chosen in the state to train early childhood teachers in the new Ancillary Teaching Certificate, and the Baby Bayou exhibit at the Children’s Museum shows parents and educators a model of brain-based learning. Finally, the new “Next Step” Scholarship program provided youth in the Parenting, Healthy Living and Youth Development programs with college scholarships.
**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Early Childhood Education is at the very heart of the Children’s Coalition mission and core values. By providing high-quality training and coaching for early childhood educators, a national model of comprehensive care for infants and toddlers, and expanded services for PK students into child care centers and community networks that coordinate enrollment and assessment in support of quality child care, the Coalition works with the state to create systemic reform in Early Childhood care and education.

### 2015 – 2016 EARLY CHILDHOOD OUTCOMES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Child Care Connections: Louisiana Department of Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helping parents find quality child care, and providing training and technical assistance to child care providers region-wide (11 parishes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>181 foundational learning opportunities/trainings</td>
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<td>2,346 teachers trained, an average of 195 per month</td>
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<tr>
<td>630 technical assistance/coaching sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>107 child care referrals</td>
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| 2 | Children’s Coalition Early Head Start: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families |
| Providing quality child care for children from birth through age three at three centers in Ouachita Parish |
| 93 children served |
| 1 pregnant mom served |
| 79 total families served |
| 60 average monthly enrollments |

| 3 | Preschool Expansion Classrooms: Louisiana Department of Education |
| Providing quality preschool programs with a certified teacher in age-appropriate settings within child care centers |
| 50 Pre-K children served in 2 child care centers |
| 117 children birth to 4 years old served through diverse delivery |
| 3 certified teachers employed through grant funds in partnership with Monroe City Schools |

| 4 | Community Networks: Louisiana Department of Education |
| Working to unify the early childhood system through streamlined program expectations, supporting teachers and coordinating enrollment and observations in three parishes: Ouachita, Morehouse and Richland |
| 90 sites participating in coordinated enrollment |
| 177 of classrooms/sites using a state-approved assessment |
| 47 child care directors meet monthly |
| 563 completed observations |
| 10,000+ parents contacted annually |

| 5 | Baby Bayou Exhibit at the NELA Children’s Museum: School Readiness Tax Credits |
| Partnership to educate parents and visitors of the museum about the importance of early brain development with an age-appropriate play space for the infants and toddlers |
| 5,822 visits to the Children’s Museum since Baby Bayou opened in May 2016 |

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**PROGRAM SNAPSHOTs**

**Children at EHS (ULM site) engage in story time**

**Child Care Connections teaches that fine motor skills are important at Mini Scholars Child Care Center, West Monroe**

**Preschool Expansion classrooms at Little Flower Academy in Monroe promote sensory play**

The children in the PK Expansion classrooms did well with the small child care setting. It allowed them to be children a while longer.
- Kristy Rainwater, Teacher at Little Flower
Healthy Living concentrates on developing the body as well as the mind. When children are healthy and well-nourished, they are better able to learn, grow and thrive throughout their school years. Our school-based and out-of-school programs encourage positive physical and mental development, and community-based initiatives meet the unique needs of families in our region.

2015 – 2016 HEALTHY LIVING OUTCOMES:

1. **Al’s Pals: Kids Making Healthy Choices: Northeast Delta Human Services Authority**
   - Teaching preschool children the social-emotional and resiliency skills to make healthy choices
   - 1,879 students served in 9 child development centers
   - 97 Pre-K classrooms
   - 19 kindergarten classrooms in Ouachita, Morehouse and Monroe City Schools

2. **Al’s Pals: Kids Making Healthy Choices: School Readiness Tax Credits**
   - 11 Pre-K classrooms in Caldwell Parish
   - 12 family in-home child care providers implementing the Al’s Caring Pals Program, a home adaptation of the Al’s Pals program

3. **Literacy Plus: Monroe Housing Authority, Capital One Bank, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities**
   - Providing literacy programs that bridge the home and school
   - 200 Monroe Housing Authority children at Berg Jones after-school program
   - 25 middle school students at CenturyLink Leadership Institute
   - 125 adults & children at Primetime Family Literacy at Berg Jones Elementary School
   - 17 middle school students in the Carroll Junior High Robotics Club

4. **U-ACT: Northeast Delta Human Services Authority**
   - Working as a coalition in Union Parish to develop and implement a 5-year plan to address underage drinking and prescription drug abuse
   - 1,950 students pledged to be drug-free & alcohol-free during Red Ribbon Week.
   - 12 student ambassadors chosen to be the voice of the youth in Union Parish
   - 10 U-ACT Coalition members and 10 student ambassadors received Generation RX curriculum by student pharmacists from ULM
   - 10,000 people educated at 5 community-wide events

5. **Mental Health Consultation: Tulane Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health**
   - Educating teachers and parents on developmentally-appropriate practices
   - 4 parishes served: Ouachita, Lincoln, Morehouse, Richland
   - 20 child care centers receive mental health support annually
   - 200 children served per month
   - 715 hours spent in centers with direct service to children, owners/directors, staff and/or parents

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**Program Snapshots**

- **Students at Madison James Foster Elementary in Monroe participate in a balloon release for the 2015 Bully Awareness Day**
- **Mrs. Isbell’s Pre-K Class at Boley Elementary teaches an Al’s Pals Lesson on emotions**
- **U-ACT Student Ambassadors in Union Parish stand in front of the Sober Pledge**

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**Jeanette Wynn, Teacher at Berg Jones Elementary**

Al’s Pals has been such a great success in my classroom, not only this year but in the previous years as well. I have seen a very positive impact on the children’s behavior. Negative behaviors such as biting, hitting, name-calling and bullying have decreased in my classroom and on the playground.

- Jeanette Wynn, Teacher at Berg Jones Elementary
Youth Development encourages positive mental health, physical health and nutrition, and support with key issues that matter to young people. Working across the community and the state, the Youth Development staff uses data to target needs and to rally resources in support of adolescent reproductive health, suicide prevention and juvenile justice issues like truancy.

2015 – 2016 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES:

1. **SOS (Signs of Suicide): Living Well Foundation, Union Parish, Ouachita Parish and Monroe City Schools**
   - Helping middle school students to recognize signs of depression and suicide in themselves and others
   - 700+ students trained in how to recognize signs of depression and suicide
   - 335 students screened for potential mental health problems

2. **Mapping Adolescent Reproductive Health: Louisiana Public Health Institute**
   - Building a coalition to help identify and meet the reproductive health needs of adolescents
   - 150 participants at 8 community meetings formed the Ouachita Adolescent Reproductive Health Coalition
   - 175 mapping interviews conducted for research
   - 3 overall goals with 8 specific activities for coalition action plan

3. **Youth Leadership Summit: Junior League of Monroe**
   - Developing leadership skills in students chosen by school counselors, resulting in Open Your Heart Pajama Drive
   - 256 middle and high school students from 34 Monroe City, Ouachita Parish, and area private and parochial schools attended the first Youth Summit
   - 1,800 pairs of pajamas collected from area schools and distributed to CASA, Baptist Children’s Home and City of Hope

4. **4th JDC Youth Services Planning Board**
   - Meeting the needs of youth at risk of entering the foster or justice system
   - 20-member, cross-sector coalition from Ouachita and Morehouse parishes
   - 175 truancy survey cards were filled out at Monroe City, Ouachita Parish and Morehouse Parish schools to help recognize the importance of the facts surrounding truancy in our schools
   - 300 resources shared in Youth Services Directory 2016

The kids loved the Youth Summit; they learned a lot and felt it changed their outlook on the topics discussed. They realized the importance of leadership, and it has changed school culture due to the youth leaders leading by example.

- Shannon Short, Ouachita Jr. High
Parenting Education has consistently provided evidence-based programs such as The Nurturing Skills for Teen Parents, Triple P Seminars and Nurturing Programs for parents of children ages 0 to 12. With the addition of programs like the Family Resource Center and Jus4Me Teen Parenting, coalition staff continue to meet our parents where they are with what they need.

2015 – 2016 PARENT EDUCATION OUTCOMES:

1. **Family Resource Center: Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services**
   - Providing parenting, life skills and VISIT coaching to help reunite families in the DCFS and foster care system
   - Grant awarded in December 2015 and will begin providing services July 1, 2016 with a goal to serve 160 families in 2016 - 2017

2. **Jus4Me Teen Parenting: United Healthcare, Louisiana Children’s Trust Fund**
   - Encouraging healthy pregnancy outcomes for pregnant and parenting teens at the school site through Nurturing Parenting for Teen Parents
   - 52 pregnant and parenting teen mothers and fathers
   - 5 high schools and 1 middle school in Ouachita, Union, Morehouse and Madison parishes
   - 15 out of 15 babies born healthy

3. **Parenting for All: School Readiness Tax Credits**
   - Providing on-demand, evidence-based parenting sessions in the community
   - 1,612 parents served in 174 sessions at libraries, churches, Early Head Start and Coalition office
   - 10 monthly sessions for grandparents at Anna Meyer Library

4. **SHARE: School Readiness Tax Credits**
   - Providing peer-to-peer support for families who have experienced pregnancy and infant loss
   - 15 parents supported at monthly meetings
   - 20 volunteers trained in the Caring Companions Program to provide support to bereaved families

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**PROGRAM SNAPSHOTs**

- Parenting Director Gatha Green presents a Jus4Me session at Wossman High School
- Jus4Me helped me in different ways. I have learned that it is important to have a bond with your baby. It has helped me to learn how to take care of my child when he gets here.
  - Joh’Neisha, Wossman High School
In addition to working on programs in our four focal areas, the Children’s Coalition comes together as a staff to present several community-based events each year.

**ALL CHILDREN’S DAY, Downtown Monroe RiverMarket**
Included a children’s community-wide, pumpkin-decorating contest and family-friendly exhibitors with resources.
- 750 attendees
- 40 pumpkin contest entries
- 12 performances by local spirit groups

**WHAT WORKS CONFERENCE: SAFE + HEALTHY KIDS**
Brought together leading experts with local data to help us better-protect the children of Northeast Louisiana. Topics focused on the following issues: Sex-Trafficking Along I-20, Internet Crimes Against Children, Addiction 101 and Child Abuse Mandated Reporting. CEUs offered in seven career paths for counselors, social work, therapists and educators.
- 485 participants
- 60 students from ULM
- 140 students from Louisiana Tech

**FAMILY DAY AT THE PARK**
In partnership with the City of Monroe, this city-wide event combined games, activities, crafts, music, food and fun in Forsythe Park.
- 800 attendees

**FASHION FUSION “CIRQUE DU CHIC”**
6th Annual signature fundraiser for the Coalition, presented by AOSS Medical Supply, LLC. Featured fashion from local boutiques and the Debbie Bourg School of Dance at the Monroe Civic Center Arena.
- 18 local boutiques
- 1,800 tickets sold
- 148 performers/models
- 16 community celebrity models

**BAYOU DESIARD DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL**
A first for the Coalition, the Dragon Boats offered the opportunity for businesses to sponsor a boat in the 4th Annual Dragon Boat Races! Despite an 8-week planning period, it was a total success! Presented by Progressive Bank.
- 17 21-person boats/teams rowed
- 2,000 attendees on race day
- 6 food trucks
- 6 family resource tables
**SUPPORT THE CHILDREN’S COALITION**

What does it mean to be a member of the Children’s Coalition? While there are some tangible benefits for our members (recognition, discounts, email updates, etc.), it is the intangible that really matters. Stop for a moment; imagine a specific child, any child. Got that image? Now, ask yourself: what will it take for that child to grow, thrive and flourish?

Membership is how you invest in that child. Whether it be to continue essential programming beyond grant funding, support community outreach events or develop new community-based programs, your membership dollars help the Coalition to respond to the needs of our children nimbly and quickly. By joining the Coalition, you become part of a community that is committed to caring for our children and families in Northeast Louisiana.

So, join us! Consider becoming part of the Coalition today as either a member, patron or sponsor, so all children have the opportunity not just to survive but to also thrive.

**THERE ARE THREE MAIN WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT THE CHILDREN’S COALITION:**

1. **BECOME A MEMBER**
   Membership has its benefits! Find out what it means to join the Coalition.

2. **SPONSORSHIP**
   Sponsor an event or program and align your organization or business with a community-based organization that impacts over 30,000 children each year.

3. **SCHOOL READINESS TAX CREDITS**
   Receive a dollar-for-dollar refundable tax credit for a $5,000 donation to the Children’s Coalition.

Visit [www.childrenscoalition.org/support](http://www.childrenscoalition.org/support) for more information.

**MEMBERS**

$25-$75 **FAMILY MEMBERSHIP**

- Jada Ali
- Gloria Ard
- Raymond Armstrong
- Mary Barrias
- Aaron Beeson
- Ruby Billups
- Leslie Boose
- Denise Breard
- Peggy Buhfling
- Jennifer and Ralph Calhoun
- Clifton Castle
- Laura Chestnut
- Dee and Mark Cramer
- Mary and Frederick Crandall
- Josh Cross
- Dana Crumley
- Angela D’Angelo
- Kathy Danna
- Katie Dean
- Nikki Deason
- Mark DeBard
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- Jaclyn Hall
- Jean Hartzog
- Antoinette Hoard
- Carolyn Honeycutt
- Kathryn Hosking
- Janie Humphries
- Beverly Jarrell
- Megan Jeffcoat
- Joyce Landrum
- Louisiana Delta Community College
- William Love
- Laurie Luffey
- Maryann Mason
- Donna McGee
- Rebecca Mixon
- Kentara Murphy
- Addie and Thomas Nelson
- Amy Netherland
- Barbara Oakley
- Joyce Powell
- Prevailing Faith Christian Academy
- Lori Ray
- Romona Reed
- Mary Riser
- Stephanie Rivers
- Kimberly Shepherd
- Dr. and Mrs. Ronald Stratton
- Our Lady of Fatima School
- Magic Grill of West Monroe
- Hoffman & Soignier, APAC
- Drew and Joe Farr
- Stalanda and Vincent Binkley
- Gerry and Paul Binkley
- Stalanda and Vincent Butcher
- Carol’s Kids
- Christopher Youth Center
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- Dee and Mark Cramer
- Gretchen Dean
- Andreea and Terry Dyer
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- Dr. and Mrs. David Barnes
- Behavioral Solutions
- John Belton
- Barbara Biersmith
- Garry and Paul Binkley
- Stalanda and Vincent Butcher
- Carol’s Kids
- Christopher Youth Center
- Kelly and Paul Coburn
- Dee and Mark Cramer
- Gretchen Dean
- Andreea and Terry Dyer
- Faith and Power Ministries
- Families Helping Families
- Family Life Home Health
- First Choice Hospice
- Freedom 13 Ministries
- Goliath Green
- Jackie Guillot
- Jaclyn Hall
- David Harlt
- JD’s Repair
- Jesus Good Shepherd
- School
- Paula and Robert Lane Learning Tech-Ouest
- School
- LifeChoices Pregnancy Resource Center
- Monroe Chamber of Commerce
- Morehouse Community Medical Centers
- Charles Morgan
- Lindsay and Heath Mury
- Margie and Brandon Nielsen
- Northeast Louisiana Children’s Museum
- Mark Parrish
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- St. Francis Medical Center
- Vantage Health Plan

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$100-$250 **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

- ARCO, A Community Resource
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- Dr. and Mrs. David Barnes
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- Senator Mike Walesworth
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**PATRON**

$300-$450 **COMMUNITY PARTNER**

- Maureen and Bradley Crooks
- Drew and Joe Farr
- Hoffman & Soignier, APAC
- Magic Grill of West Monroe
- Our Lady of Fatima School
- Dr. and Mrs. Ronald Stratton
- Roxana Barrow
- Dr. Lynn Clark
- Debbie’s School of Dance
- Drs. Leigh and Bart Liles
- Monroe Housing Authority
- Patti and Todd Nelson
- Origin Bank
- P&H Surgical Center
- St. Francis Medical Center
- Vantage Health Plan

**PATRON**

$500-$1,000 **SUPPORTING PARTNER**

- Maureen and Bradley Crooks
- Drew and Joe Farr
- Hoffman & Soignier, APAC
- Magic Grill of West Monroe
- Our Lady of Fatima School
- Dr. and Mrs. Ronald Stratton
- Roxana Barrow
- Dr. Lynn Clark
- Debbie’s School of Dance
- Drs. Leigh and Bart Liles
- Monroe Housing Authority
- Patti and Todd Nelson
- Origin Bank
- P&H Surgical Center
- St. Francis Medical Center
- Vantage Health Plan

**PATRON**

$1,000 **BRONZE**

- CenturyLink
- Derek and Jon Daniels
- Elizabeth Smith

**PATRON**

$2,000 **SILVER**

- Cognitive Development Center
- Dr. and Mrs. Louis Gavioli

**PATRON**

$3,000 **GOLD**

- Jean and Saul Mintz Foundation
- Julie and Dewey Weaver
- Van-Trow Toyota, LLC

**PATRON**

$5,000 **PLATINUM**

- Jean and Saul Mintz Foundation
- Julie and Dewey Weaver
- Van-Trow Toyota, LLC
School Readiness Tax Credits redirect business tax liabilities locally into quality early childhood experiences through training, coaching, equipment and partnerships.

**Upcoming in 2016 – 2017**

**Dia de la Familia**
- 10AM – 2PM
- Lake D’Arbonne State Park
- SEPT 17

**Dragon Boats**
- 8AM – 2PM
- Bayou DeSiard
- MAY 13

**Bull Y Awareness Campaign**
- Region-Wide
- OCT 19

**What Works Conference**
- 8:30AM – 4:30PM
- ULM Student Union Building
- DEC 9

**Fashion Fusion 2017**
- 7:30PM
- Monroe Civic Center
- FEB 25

**Save the Date**

**School Readiness Tax Credits**

Thank you to the following businesses for your contribution!

Adrian James Logging, Inc
Advanced Rental Solutions
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Mclawrence Foods, LLC
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Woodman Financial Services

**There were 128 donors in the 2015 fiscal year. Thank you to the following businesses for your contribution!**

Joe Farr, Thomas & Farr Agency

*This program is a win-win for everyone. I get to support a great organization and receive 100% of my donation back!*