

# Community Update - March 2025



## *CCC Friends,*

Community Children's Center has been working hard to support Douglas County's young children and caregivers. Two projects are nearing fruition that will bring additional licensed child care capacity to our community!

Both of these projects are testaments to the power of collaboration and willingness to pivot when needed. With the shared goal of serving the young children and families of Douglas County at the forefront, we will find a way!

On behalf of the CCC Staff and Board, we want to extend a special **THANK YOU** to our donors, volunteers and community members who have shown an enormous amount of support as we took on the significant initiative of providing early child care services and support to Douglas County.

It is our mission to continue to support our littlest learners and their families to grow a better community.

We are excited about completing the building project at 346 Maine and welcoming families and the community through our doors this summer!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Peltier".

Executive Director

## Early Childhood Community Center 346 Maine

CCC has been working diligently on the renovation of 346 Maine St. into an early childhood community center for Douglas County. We hoped to open the building this spring. As is often the case, we have experienced construction delays which will take the project into the summer months. Core services in the building will be a Family Resource Center with robust wraparound supports and a child care center.

The original financial model for the child care center was dependent upon engagement and investment from Douglas County employers who wanted to support their employees in securing high-quality, reliable child care. While businesses acknowledged the challenge that child care places on their workforce, our efforts did not translate into the necessary investment required for the success of the model.

CCC needed to look at other collaborative models for the sustainability of the child care piece of the project. At the same time, Creating Connections was looking to expand its services to the families of Douglas County. Creating Connections currently has three locations in Johnson and Wyandotte County, Kansas where they provide applied behavior analysis (ABA), speech and occupational therapy services in an inclusive setting with peers. Most recently, they have expanded their services to include child care and preschool services in efforts to provide all children the opportunity to learn from each other and have the support of their highly qualified, multi-disciplinary staff. At 346 Maine, Creating Connections will provide care and education for infants through six-year-olds, in addition to ABA, speech and occupational therapies, parent training and behavior intervention. Not only does this result in additional child care capacity for Douglas County, but also much needed support for children with autism and other developmental differences.

One of the original goals of the child care center space was to create care options for non-traditional hours and/or on a drop-in basis. A collaborative memorandum of understanding the opportunity for innovative use of the spaces when Creating Connections classrooms are not in session. While these services will not be available upon opening, we are excited to work with KDHE licensing to create new pathways to maximize the use of the space to meet the needs of more Douglas County families.



4640 W. 27th St.

With grant dollars from the Child Care Capacity Accelerator program through the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund, CCC signed a short term lease for a former child care building in southwest Lawrence. Unfortunately, the building fell into disrepair with the previous tenants. CCC staff and a dedicated volunteer crew worked tirelessly for several months to bring the space back to a state where it could be relicensed.

At that time, Emerald Learning Center (ELC) from Ottawa expressed an interest in leasing the space long-term. Through collaborative work with CCC, ELC, and the building owner, ELC signed a five-year lease agreement bringing new licensed child care capacity into Douglas County and ensuring that the families that receive care in that location will have a longer-term child care solution. The new center is due to open on April 1, 2025, and will serve 78 children, infants through school age.



- Child care for infants - six
- Year round care
- 7:30 am - 5:30 pm
- Accepts DCF subsidies
- Multi-disciplinary staff
- Support for developmental differences
- For more information call 785-222-0005
- [creatingconnectionskc.com](http://creatingconnectionskc.com)



## Federal Funding Update

Several weeks ago, the Trump administration attempted to put a freeze on Federal funding assistance which included grants to nonprofit organizations like ours. CCC is currently receiving Federal funding through three different grant awards including the \$4.9 million Capital Projects Fund grant for a large portion of the renovation of 346 Maine.

As injunctions and lawsuits surrounding this issue continue, we are happy to report that Federal dollars are still being distributed to CCC on a regular basis and business is proceeding as usual.

## CCC Board of Directors

Kirsten Flory, President  
Doni Mooberry Slough, Treasurer  
Kate Campbell  
Sally Lundblad  
Jenn Preston  
Linda Robinson  
Eileen Weiss  
Suzanne Wikle

# Highlights



## Clothing Closet

2024 was a banner year for CCC's Clothing Closet located at Kennedy Early Childhood Center! We more than doubled the numbers from 2023 by providing over 22,000 essential items to Douglas County families. The Clothing Closet will continue to operate at Kennedy throughout this school year then will make its move to 346 Maine. We are thankful for the space and the partnership with USD 497 over that past several years.



## Grow & Go

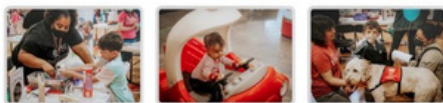
Each one-hour Grow & Go playgroup highlights an activity or showcases an early childhood professional, giving little ones and their caregivers the freedom to explore and interact. Over a year's time, 235 families with 311 children accessed Grow and Go 534 times. Families are accessing Grow and Go multiple times as a way to meet social support needs and leave with ideas for resources and activities to enrich their child's day.



## Peer Fellow

CCC is excited to partner with Douglas County to bring a Peer Fellow to our team for 2025. The program connects trained individuals, sharing insight and wisdom gained through lived experience, to community members. In our space, we will connect caregiver to caregiver. Our Peer Fellow will start before the end of March.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY RESOURCE FAIR

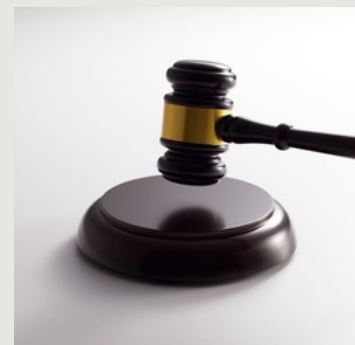


ACTIVITIES | RESOURCES | FOOD & DRINK

April 19, 2025  
10am-12pm  
Kennedy Early Childhood Center  
1605 Davis Road  
Lawrence, KS  
66044



COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CENTER



## Parent Partner Path to Permanency (4P)

CCC will be working with the 7th Judicial District Juvenile Division of the Douglas County Kansas District Court and Kansas Legal Services to pair all parents involved in a Child In Need of Care (CINC) case with a lived expert. CCC's Family Resource Center will provide multidimensional support to help these families navigate complex systems.



COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CENTER

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