

2023

SUBMITTED BY:
GAINESVILLE
FOR ALL

ANNUAL REPORT

A report to the Alachua County
Commission on 2023 operations of the
**GAINESVILLE EMPOWERMENT ZONE
FAMILY LEARNING CENTER**



*We Are
Growing
Greatness*



GNV4all
GAINESVILLE FOR ALL



GNV4all
GAINESVILLE FOR ALL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

• Summary	-----	1
• Renovations	-----	2
• Staffing	-----	3
• DCF Licensing	-----	4
• ELC Approval	-----	5
• Playground Opened	-----	6
• Family Assistance	-----	7
• Volunteers	-----	8
• Challenges	-----	9
• About Our Diverse Team	-----	10
• Relevant Data	-----	12
• GEZFLC 2024 Budget Overview	-----	21
• Photos of the Center	-----	22

Summary

Since Gainesville for All appeared before the Alachua County Commission in early January 2023, our biggest single achievement has been the opening of the Gainesville Empowerment Zone Family Learning Center on the campus of Metcalfe Elementary School on August 10 as scheduled.

Simply put, this feat would not have happened without the significant contributions of Alachua County, the City of Gainesville, Alachua County Public Schools and other partners from the public, private and non-profit sectors.

The GEZFLC, as of early December is currently serving 38 children ages six weeks to four years- old and their struggling families in Gainesville for All's efforts to make significant inroads toward helping to narrow Alachua County's academic achievement gap between black and white students—the worst in Florida and among the worst in the nation.

Alachua County, home of the University of Florida, which was recently ranked the No.1 public university in the nation, can and must do better.

We believe that through collaboration and adequate funding the GEZFLC can be the change that has been so elusive in this community for far too long. It is our goal to show by the end of the current school year, and after just 10 months of operations, our 4-year- old's will demonstrate skills beyond those of children the same age upon arrival at kindergarten for the 2024-25 school year.

Currently too many African American children, in particular, are showing up for kindergarten at Gainesville elementary schools lacking basic skills such as the ability to identify colors and shapes. Some don't even know their birth names.

While turning around this situation is our goal, we also recognize that it can't be done without giving sufficient focus to the needs of our Childrens' families. After all, it's no secret that typically low performing students are from low- income households with parents who commonly had negative experiences during their schooling years. Many are high school dropouts.

It's naïve to expect children from these families to do as well as children from middle-class, often college educated families. Thus, GNV4ALL is attempting to level the playing field by connecting family members to vital community services while immersing their young children into a highly touted curriculum.

Here is a look at what we've done over the past year:

Renovations

After the Alachua County School Board voted unanimously in early 2022 to allow GNV4ALL usage of its 8,000 sq feet Building 11 at Metcalfe Elementary to house the GEZFLC we immediately began our search for a reputable contractor to renovate the 8,000 square feet building to meet Florida Department of Children and Families and state health and safety requirements. Fortunately, we found the Robert Kelly Construction Co., which commenced work in the fall of 2022 under a contract that required \$127,000 in compensation. The work, which included installation of kitchen, laundry and bathroom equipment, electrical wiring, sidewalks, fencing, new doors and cabinets was completed in early summer of 2023. The work was fully funded by contributions received from private donors and grants.

The photos below show the inside of the GEZFLC with updates by Robert Kelly Construction, Co.



Staffing

As expected, our first hires were for director and assistant director. We're pleased to have brought aboard two of the best available talents after conducting a search that extended across much of the southeast.

In Angellia Walker, we found the type of director we set out to hire: Someone not only academically well qualified but a leader who is passionate about changing lives of the often disenfranchised for the better. A mother of seven children, Ms. Walker is equally adept at running a facility of our size, having served as operations/Teacher supervisor at the Rosen Preschool in Orlando for six years before moving to Gainesville last April to run the GEZFLC.

Ms. Walker has worked in the field of early childhood education since 1994 and holds a bachelor's degree from Ashford University where she transferred after leaving Palm Beach Atlantic University because of demands on her as a single parent.

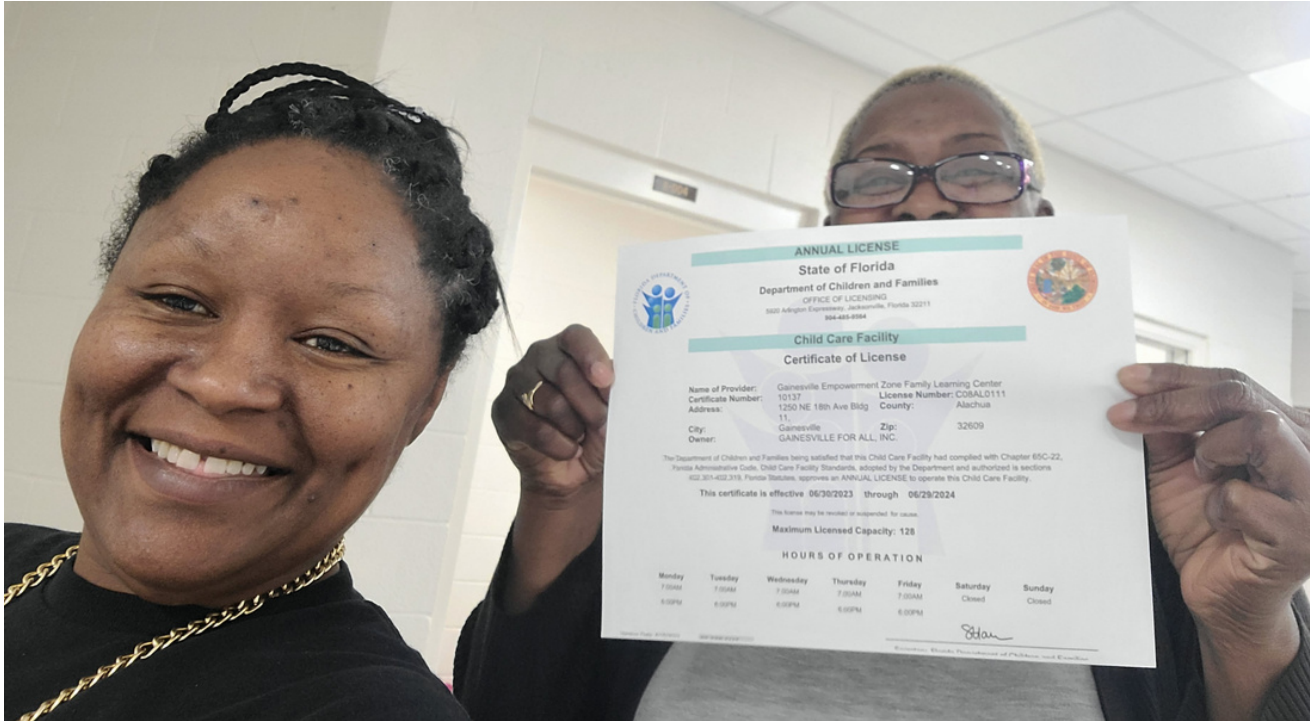
Two months after her arrival in Gainesville, Ms. Walker, a native of South Florida, hired her assistant, Schuran Cartwright who also came to Gainesville from South Florida nearly two years ago to work in child care. Ms. Cartwright holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services and an associate degree in early childhood education.

As of early December, our staff consisted of 3 lead teachers and 5 teacher assistants and floaters. All three leads are college educated.

Department of Children and Families (DCF) Licensing

Together, Walker and Cartwright seemingly worked around the clock to meet rigid DCF requirements for opening a childcare facility. They performed a wide range of tasks such as helping prepare bids for furniture and playground equipment, purchased books, researched local tuition rates and developed policy manuals. Our DCF license was granted on June 6, 2023

The photo below features Angellia Walker (Director of the GEZFLC) and Schuran Cartwright (Assistant Director) proudly displaying our newly acquired DCF License.



The photo below shows our final DCF inspection by Kim Scott.



ELC Approval

With our state license in hand, we quickly pivoted to obtaining certification from the Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County, which would provide the bulk of operations funding. This was no easy task given the paperwork, which included background investigations for each employee and meeting staffing and curriculum requirements.

After assessing two ELC-recommended curriculums, High Scope and Creative Curriculum/Teaching Strategies Gold, we decided to go with Creative. We found it to be highly recommended and cost effective. Creative/Teaching Strategies offer support to staff via virtual training and one-on-one phone calls. Also included is an assessment tool, which is very useful in tracking a child's progress.

The Heart of Everything We Do

The Teaching Strategies objectives for development and learning are at the heart of everything we do. They define the path teachers take with the children in their classrooms. Our 38 research-based objectives for development and learning cover all areas that research has shown to be ultimately critical for children's success: social-emotional, physical, language, literacy, cognitive, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, and the arts. Two dedicated objectives also help teachers support and measure the expressive and receptive language learning of English-language learners.



Integrate Language and Literacy Throughout Your Day

With *The Creative Curriculum[®] for Preschool*, teachers nurture language and literacy development throughout the day, every day. Adults and children use language and literacy skills all day, so language and literacy development learning should occur throughout the classroom day, too, without being limited to a specific time slot. The curriculum incorporates the latest best practices that support children's language and vocabulary, phonological awareness, knowledge of the alphabet, concepts of print, emergent writing skills, and more through various engaging activities that happen throughout each day. This guide will illustrate how language and literacy skills are nurtured throughout the day, every day, with *The Creative Curriculum[®] for Preschool*.



Individualize learning with one platform, resources of the highest quality, and connected workstreams.

Through the leading early learning platform, our ecosystem brings together essential content, tools, data, and support aligned to research-based objectives, empowering teachers to easily identify and respond to each child's needs.

[Explore Our Platform](#) → [View Our 38 Objectives](#) →



Whole-child curriculum connected to assessment to individualize learning

Data and reporting to inform instruction and drive program efficacy

Incorporates all essentials for transformative family engagement

Intentional support for every professional development need, from beginner to expert



Playground Opened

Our state-of-the-art playground serving toddlers to 4 year-olds opened in early November after more than a year of preparation that included an extensive bidding process to find the right fit for a vendor. We settled on the vendor used by ACPS and were pleased with the result. More important, our children are thrilled. We invested more than \$100,000 in playground equipment that will benefit children in our community for decades to come.



Family Assistance

We work closely with community resource organizations such as Catholic Charities to meet the needs of our hard-pressed families. In the past few months alone, we've assisted families experiencing homelessness, eviction and suicidal thoughts.

One struggling mother talked of committing suicide as she dropped off her child. Staff members quickly alerted the director who along with other staff members talked her down and encouraged her to seek professional counseling. The mother and her children are now in family therapy.

Below are photos of some of the GEZFLC parents with their children.



Volunteers

We're blessed to have many volunteers who regularly give their time and hearts to GEZFLC children. We have volunteers from Alachua County Library, for instance, who provide storytime, music and other fun activities for our children.

Meanwhile, businesses such as Vystar Credit Union make their financial literacy program available to our parents free of charge.

Below are photos of long time volunteer Naomi Williams (on the top left) and photos of our mural painted by volunteers.



Challenges

- The biggest hurdle we've faced so far has been making our services affordable for our struggling families.

It should be remembered that our family learning center not only provides a highly rated curriculum and family services, but we pay competitive salaries to our staff, which includes college- educated professionals. We also provide health insurance and retirement benefits, in our efforts to raise the bar to attract top-quality employees. It's shameful that many zoo workers are paid more than childcare industry employees.

The point here is that to run a facility of our caliber, the costs simply are considerably higher. Because low- income families are our target audience, we felt compelled to make our services as affordable as possible. Less than two months after opening, we began making available scholarship assistance of up to 50 percent off parent contributions and beyond reimbursement rates paid by ELC. We're reducing our rates at a significant loss in revenue but with the hope that we can find private and public monies to make up for the deficit. (Please see attached links about childcare costs in Florida and their impact on black families in Alachua County)

- We had hoped to open our doors with 50 children but last- minute obstacles such as delays in getting our ELC contract approved left families with no choice but to enroll their children elsewhere to utilize their vouchers. Consequently, we opened with three infants, five one-year old's, two 2-year-olds, three 3-year-olds, and six VPK children totaling 19 children and five staff. As of December 1, we had 38 enrolled children and 8 teachers.
- We had planned on utilizing the federally funded Childcare Food Program starting on opening day but were notified just weeks before opening that the certification process would take longer than expected. We were told that we had to be open for at least three months to qualify. As a result, we had to find an alternative and sought assistance from Alachua County Public Schools Food Service, which agreed to supply our meals at a cost of about \$2,000 per month for our 30 plus children. These unexpected costs had not been budgeted.

About Our Diverse Staff

- **James F. Lawrence** is serving as acting executive director of the GEZFLC. He is a founder of Gainesville for All, which created the GEZFLC as a major part of its social justice advocacy. Lawrence is the retired editorial page editor of upstate New York's second largest newspaper.
- **Angellia Walker** is director of the GEZFLC
- **Schuran Cartwright** is Assistant director
- **Sofiya Nazarov** is Executive Administrator. Sofiya has seven years of non profit administrative experience. She completed her Bachelors Degree at the University of Washington.
- **Victoria Liu** is Internal accountant.
- **Michael Solomon** is external accountant
- **Trish White**/Family Engagement Specialist
- **Ciera Williams** / VPK Teacher has her 45 hours, CDA Credentials, AA in Sociology, VPK Endorsed Director Credentials, and A B.A. in History.
- **LaPorsha Smith**/ 3-year-old Teacher has 25+ years in Early childhood Education. She was Assistant Teacher for 11 years, Director for 2 years, and currently working on her AS in Education.
- **Zoe Lackey**/ 2-year-old Teacher is working on obtaining her Certificate of 45 hours. She has completed a B.A in Liberal Arts and is a Certified teacher in the state of FL for Pre-K- 3rd grade.
- **TaKeshia Jackson**/ 1 year old Teacher Assistant is currently working to obtain her 45 hours certificate and has 1 year experience in Early Childhood Education.
- **Atlanta Allen**/Floater Teacher Assistant is currently working on her 45 hours and has worked in Early Childhood education for 1 year.
- **Iza Hill**/ Part time Teacher Assistant Floater has worked in Early Childhood Education for 50 years, owned her own home center for 10 years, and completed her 45 hours certificate. She works Part time.
- **Candice Stinson**/ Infant Teacher Assistant has completed her 45 hours Certificate and worked at the Alachua School District with special needs children for about 10 years.
- **Carolyn Fields**/ Infant Teacher Assistant has worked in Early Childhood Education for over 10 years and has completed her 45 hours Certificate.

All teachers and the director are currently enrolled in Infant /Toddler CLASS Group Training sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition.

Gainesville for All Staff

MEET OUR TEAM



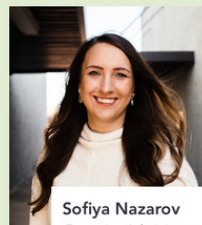
James F. Lawrence
Executive Director



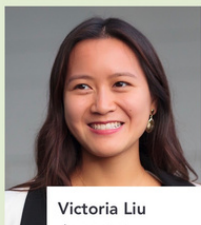
Angellia Walker
Director



Schuran Cartwright
Assistant Director



Sofiya Nazarov
Executive Administrator



Victoria Liu
Accountant



Ciera Williams
VPK (Pre-K) Teacher



Zoe Lackey
2-Year-Olds' Teacher



LaPorsha Smith
3-Year-Olds' Teacher



Candice Stinson
Infant Room



Iza Hill
Classroom Assistant



Atlanta Allen
Preschool Teacher Assistant

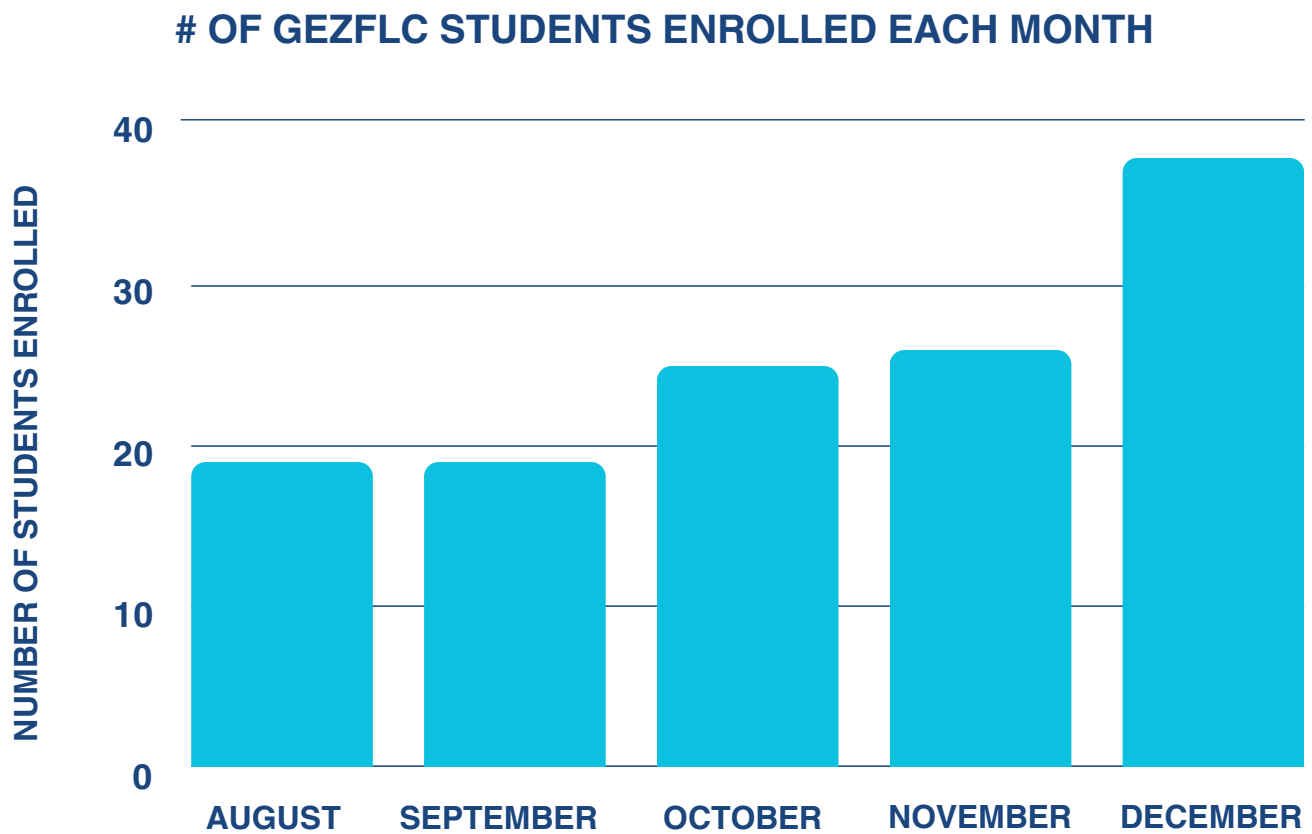


Keisha Jackson
Teacher Assistant



Carolyn Fields
Teacher Assistant

Relevant Data- GEZFLC Student Enrollment



In October we began awarding scholarships to assist families in paying for GEZFLC tuition rates. The above graph shows the correlation in enrollment rates and the timing of when scholarship began being awarded. This data demonstrates that a big obstacle for these families in enrolling their children in quality early childhood learning is the cost of tuition.

Relevant Data

The following chart and graph display the median Household Income in Alachua County vs. Florida and Black vs. White Citizens.



Florida Department of Health
Bureau of Community Health Assessment
Division of Public Health Statistics and Performance Management

Median Household Income, Single Year

Data Year	Alachua		Florida	
	White Dollars (\$)	Black Dollars (\$)	White Dollars (\$)	Black Dollars (\$)
2021	\$59,756.00	\$38,610.00	\$65,519.00	\$46,176.00
2020	\$55,619.00	\$35,264.00	\$61,065.00	\$43,418.00
2019	\$54,994.00	\$31,183.00	\$58,809.00	\$41,702.00
2018	\$54,112.00	\$30,132.00	\$56,008.00	\$39,586.00
2017	\$51,350.00	\$27,674.00	\$53,357.00	\$37,280.00
2016	\$50,684.00	\$27,057.00	\$51,444.00	\$35,722.00
2015	\$50,142.00	\$26,561.00	\$50,308.00	\$34,664.00
2014	\$49,195.00	\$25,687.00	\$50,002.00	\$34,467.00
2013	\$48,324.00	\$26,518.00	\$49,641.00	\$34,282.00
2012	\$48,847.00	\$27,087.00	\$50,042.00	\$34,690.00
2011	\$46,934.00	\$27,004.00	\$50,554.00	\$35,334.00
2010	\$45,099.00	\$27,216.00	\$50,316.00	\$35,197.00
2009	\$43,195.00	\$26,935.00	\$50,062.00	\$34,650.00

Citation: <https://www.flhealthcharts.gov/ChartsDashboards/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=NonVitalIndGrp.Dataviewer&cid=0293>

Relevant Data-Median Incomes in Alachua County



Florida Department of Health
Bureau of Community Health Assessment
Division of Public Health Statistics and Performance Management

Median Household Income, Single Year



Data Note(s)

Data Source: United States Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, Table B19013.

Chart will display if there are at least three years of data.

Multi-year counts are a sum of the selected years, not an average.

Quartiles are calculated when data is available for at least 51 counties.

MOV - Measure of Variability: Probable range of values resulting from random fluctuations in the number of events. Not calculated when numerator is below 5 or denominator is below 20, or count or rate is suppressed. The MOV is useful for comparing rates to a goal or standard. For example, if the absolute difference between the county rate and the statewide rate is less than the MOV, the county rate is not significantly different from the statewide rate (alpha level = 0.05). When the absolute difference between the county rate and the statewide rate is greater than the MOV, the county rate is significantly different from the statewide rate. MOV should not be used to determine if the rates of two different counties, or the county rates for two different years, are statistically significantly different.

Denom - abbreviated for Denominator.

Population estimates are not available for persons whose county of residence is unknown. Given this, the denominator and associated rate are not available.

* - Indicates the county rate is statistically significantly different from the statewide rate.

Median household income in dollars. Median household income, includes income of all persons 15 or older in household

Data displayed reflect the American Community Survey 5-year estimates for the year selected.

Chart will display if there are at least three years of data.

Quartiles are calculated when data are available for at least 51 counties.

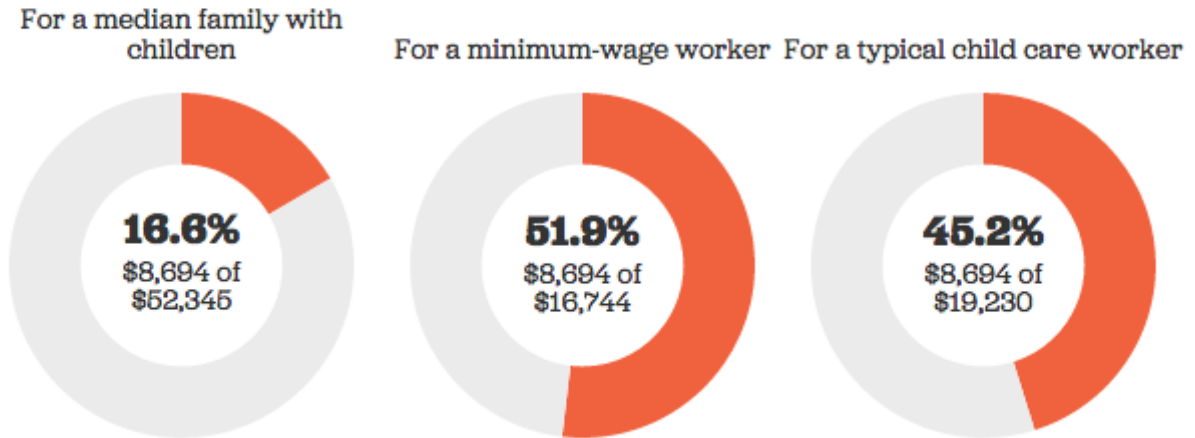
This is secondary, quantitative data.

Relevant Data-Cost of Childcare Compared to Income

The following graph shows childcare costs in Florida vs. Income.

How big a bite does child care take?

Infant care costs as a share of income in Florida



Average cost of infant care in Florida: \$8,694/year (\$725/month)

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, child care is affordable if it costs no more than 10% of a family's income. By this standard, only **30.2%** of Florida families can afford infant care.

Source: Economic Policy Institute: *The cost of child care in the United States*

ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

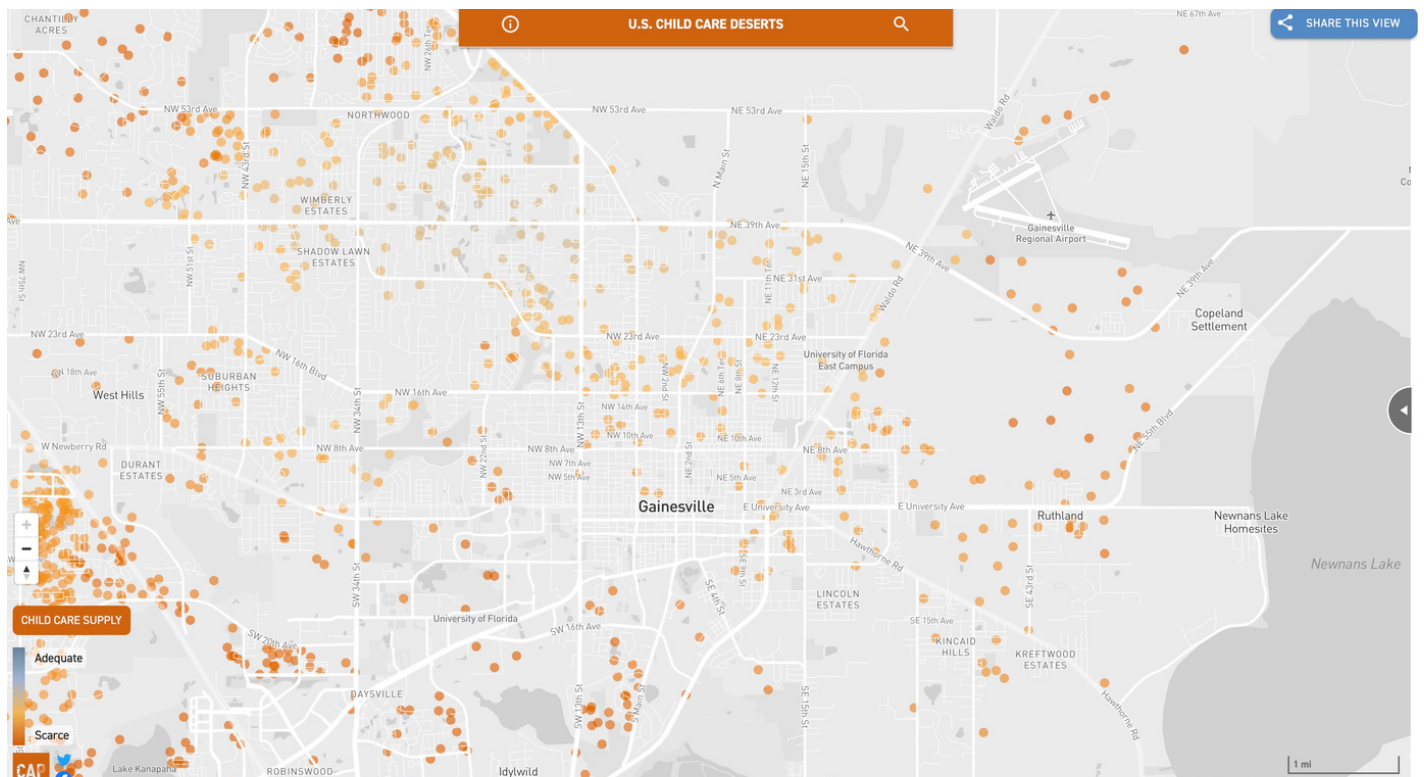
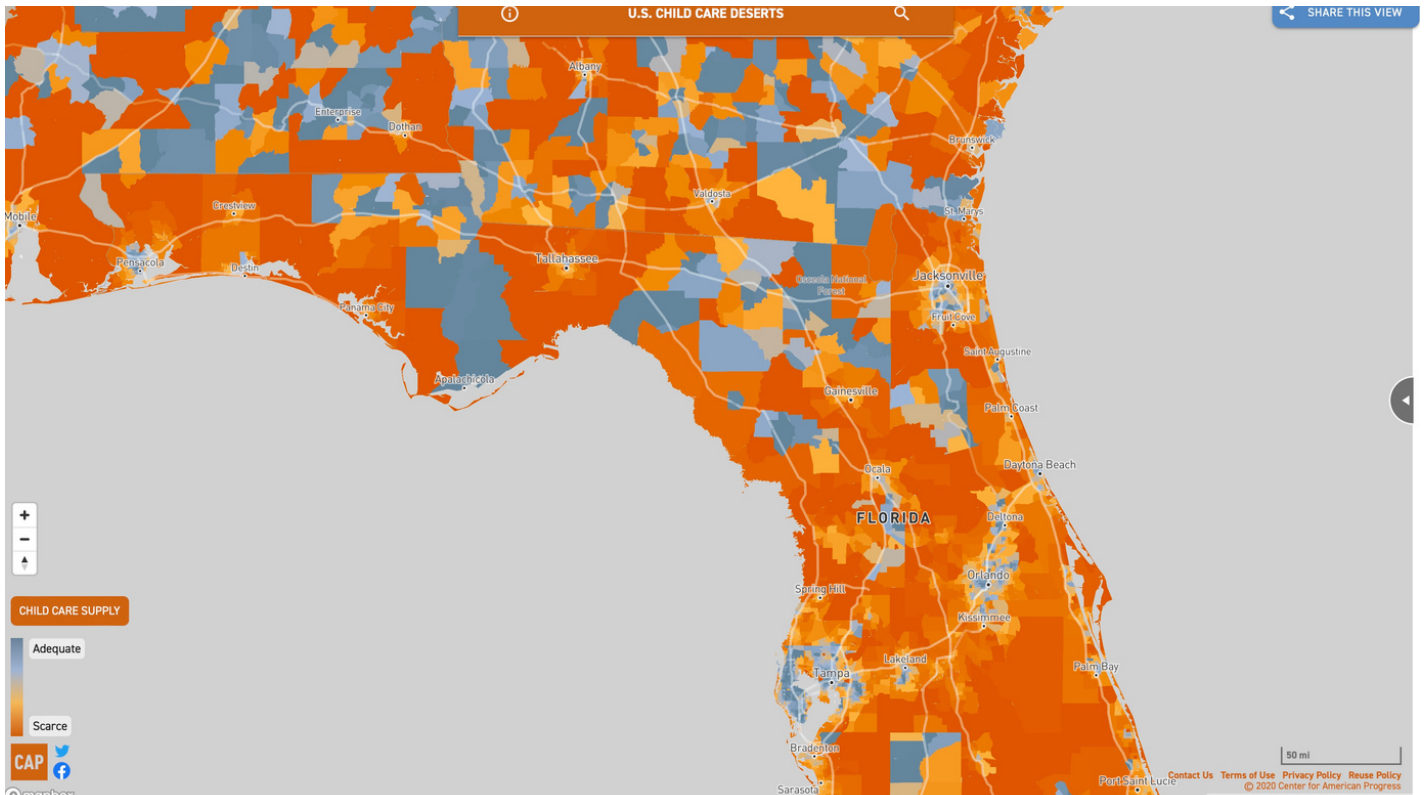
In 2021 the average household income of Black Alachua County Citizens was \$38,610.00, based on this average, the share of childcare cost compared to income for Black families in Alachua county is 22.5% of their income. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, childcare is affordable if it costs no more than 10% of a family's income. This percentage is more than double that.

Citation:

<https://www.epi.org/child-care-costs-in-the-united-states/#/FL>

Relevant Data

The following visuals show childcare deserts in Gainesville.



Citations:

[https://childcaresdeserts.org/?](https://childcaresdeserts.org/?lat=29.65043603717568&lng=-83.32179716019584&zm=6.962745121204944&lyr=ccmedianhomevalue)

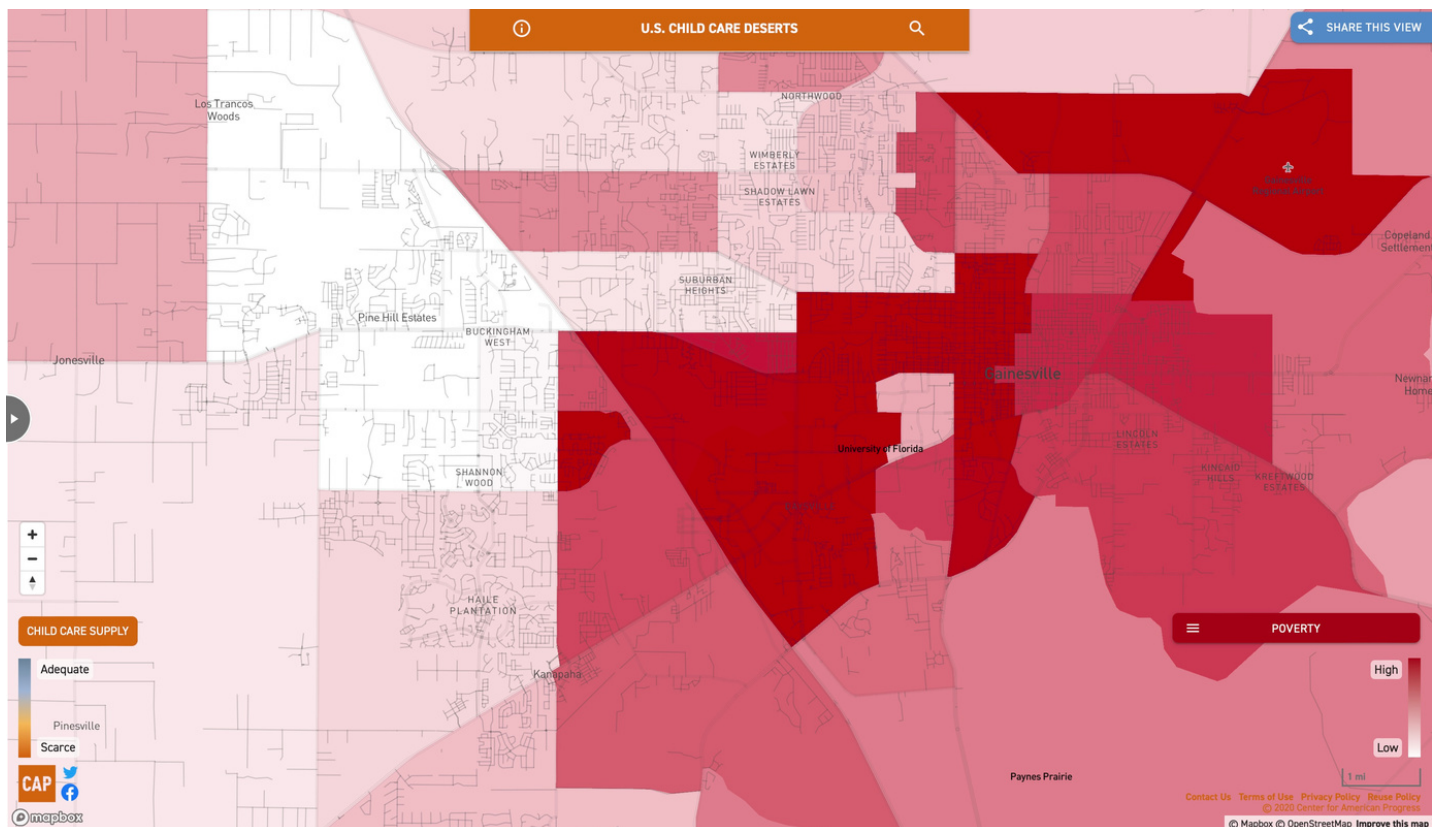
[lat=29.65043603717568&lng=-83.32179716019584&zm=6.962745121204944&lyr=ccmedianhomevalue](https://childcaresdeserts.org/?lat=29.65043603717568&lng=-83.32179716019584&zm=6.962745121204944&lyr=ccmedianhomevalue)

[https://childcaresdeserts.org/?](https://childcaresdeserts.org/?lat=29.66438928740078&lng=-82.32055507113478&zm=12.5&lyr=ccmedianhomevalue)

[lat=29.66438928740078&lng=-82.32055507113478&zm=12.5&lyr=ccmedianhomevalue](https://childcaresdeserts.org/?lat=29.66438928740078&lng=-82.32055507113478&zm=12.5&lyr=ccmedianhomevalue)

Relevant Data

The following visual shows poverty levels in Gainesville.

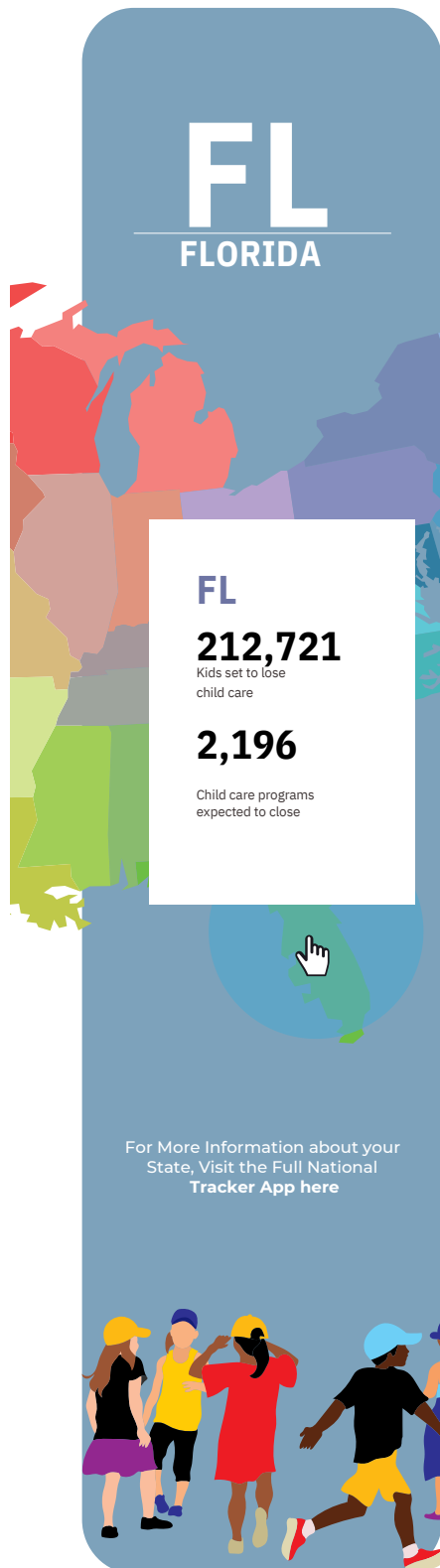


Citation:

<https://childcaredeserts.org/?lat=29.643712036619164&lng=-82.3885525262304&zm=11.986623342836369&lyr=ccpoverty>

Relevant Data

Number of Childcare Centers expected to close in Florida and the impact it will have.



CHILDREN IN FLORIDA SET TO LOSE CHILD CARE DUE TO CHILD CARE CLIFF

Beginning September 30, 2023, states will face a steep dropoff in federal child care investment. Without Congressional action, this cliff will have dire consequences. More than three million children are projected to lose access to child care nationwide. Seventy thousand child care programs are likely to close. This will have ripple effects for parents forced out of work or to cut their work hours, for businesses who will lose valuable employees or experience the impact of their employees' child care disruptions, and state economies that will lose tax revenue and jobs in the child care sector as a result.

Congress should act quickly to protect Florida's children, families, and communities from the higher costs, reduced earnings, and productivity loss that will come with going over the child care cliff.



"Child care is not yet stable. Temporary funding has offered some relief, including allowing me to offer wage increases to compete with other companies. However, I am praying for long term assistance to continue to maintain a quality environment."

CHILD CARE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

212,721

Without intervention, 212,721 children in Florida are expected to lose their child care as a result of the stabilization cliff.

2,196

2,196 child care programs are projected to close - making it even harder for families to find safe, nurturing child care options.

\$604

MILLION Florida parents will lose \$604 million in earnings as a result of being forced to cut work hours or leave the workforce.

As children and families feel these consequences, so will state economies. The loss of the federal funds will mean:

\$633.4

MILLION less in employer productivity

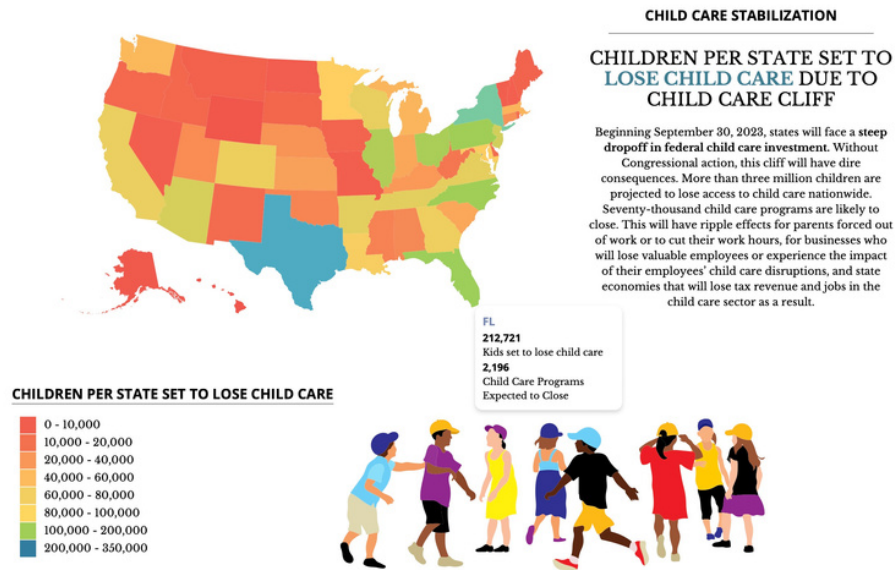
15,824
CHILD CARE JOBS

Finally, the child care sector has been far behind the rest of the economy in recovering jobs post-pandemic. We hear stories around the nation about child care classrooms having to close because there are not enough early educators. An additional 15,824 child care jobs are expected to be lost in Florida, at a minimum.

tcf.org

Relevant Data

Number of Childcare Centers expected to close in Florida and the impact it will have.



According to this data, Florida will be one of the top states in regards to the number of childcare services lost beginning in September 2023. It is expected that 212,721 children in Florida will lose childcare and 2,196 childcare centers will close. This will result in \$633.4 million loss in employer productivity and 15,824 lost childcare jobs.

Citation:
<https://tcf-ccs-map.netlify.app/>

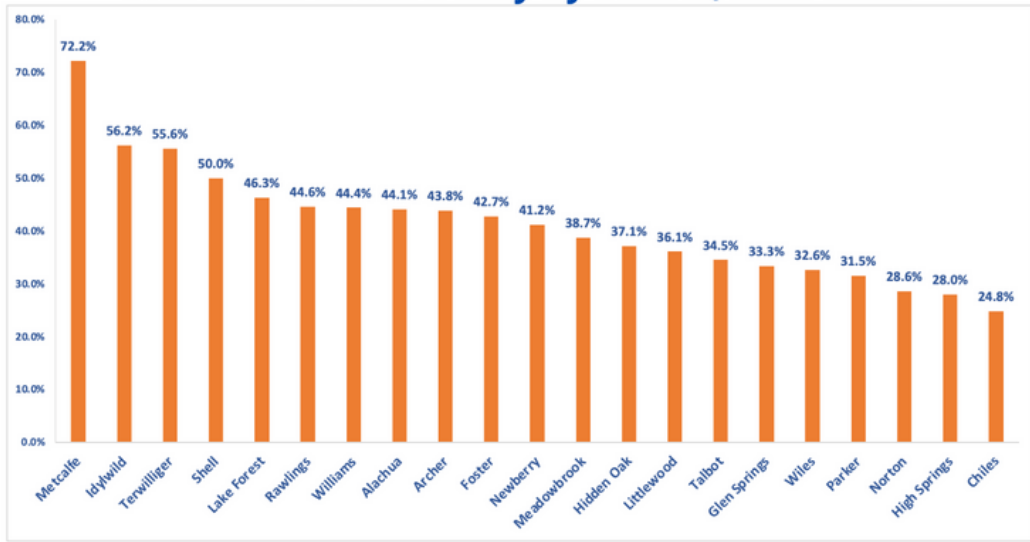
Relevant Data

We have partnered with the University of Florida School of Dentistry to provide free oral health screening to the students at the GEZFLC. If they are in need of dental work the School of Dentistry connects them with free dental services. The School of Dentistry already provides oral health screenings to schools in Alachua county. Based on their data, Metcalfe Elementary school (where the GEZFLC is located) has the worst rating in oral health among students, 72% of third graders at Metcalfe Elementary School have untreated tooth decay. See graph below.

University of Florida College of Dentistry Department of Community Dentistry & Behavioral Science Why Children's Oral Health Matters

<p>#1 Chronic Disease</p> <p>Tooth decay is the MOST COMMON chronic disease in children, disproportionately affecting those from lower income households.¹</p>	<p>40% Tooth Decay</p> <p>In 2021, 40% of Alachua County third graders had untreated tooth decay; 7% of those had an URGENT need for dental care.²</p>	<p>3 Million Missed School Hours</p> <p>Dental disease costs Florida's children an estimated 3 million school hours each year and can result in pain, infection, and difficulty eating and speaking.³</p>	<p>Oral Health Access</p> <p>61.8% of Alachua County residents reported COST as the primary reason why their child or children were unable to receive needed dental care.⁴</p>
---	---	--	--

Percentage of Alachua County Third-Grade Students with Untreated Tooth Decay by School, 2021-2022



¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hygiene-related diseases: dental caries (tooth decay). 2016.
² University of Florida College of Dentistry Department of Community Dentistry and Behavioral Science. Oral health surveillance program, 2021.
³ National Research Council. Advancing Oral Health in America. Washington, DC: The National Press, 2011.
⁴ Alachua County Community Health Needs Assessment, 2020.

Citation:
Graph provided by Olga S. Ensz, DMD, MPH Clinical Assistant Professor Department of Community Dentistry & Behavioral Science

Gainesville Empowerment Zone Family Learning Center

2024 Budget Overview

This comprehensive summary delves into the intricacies of the Gainesville Empowerment Zone Family Learning Center Budget for the fiscal year 2024, offering a detailed analysis of key projections and financial insights.

Significant operational and capital needs of the Family Learning Center are sourced from tuition, private grants, and reimbursable grants from the City of Gainesville and Alachua County. The absence of office rent, generously provided by the Alachua County Public Schools, significantly bolsters our financial stability. A total of \$346,623.52 is projected to be used from remaining reimbursable grants that are provided by the City of Gainesville and Alachua County to help cover a portion of salaries and wages for the year. These reimbursable grants are projected to be depleted by the end of June 2024.

Revenue projections are grounded in a strategic approach, envisioning operation at 75% capacity from January to July 2024, transitioning to 100% capacity from August onwards. This phased strategy aligns with our broader plan to incrementally increase enrollment and program participation.

Careful management of operating expenses results in a total of \$47,297.26. Of this amount, \$28,297.26 is allocated to crucial areas such as office supplies, technology, and insurance. Operational expenses, covering essential services such as electricity and internet, are estimated at \$13,000.00, showcasing our commitment to maintaining a functional and well-equipped workspace. Program expenses, specifically in marketing, reflect an investment of \$6,000.00, emphasizing our dedication to promoting GNV4ALL initiatives.

Salaries and administrative-related costs constitute a substantial portion of the budget, amounting to \$808,192.29. This encompasses compensation for key personnel, including an executive director, assistant director, family engagement specialist, teachers, teacher assistants, and additional staff. The budget also incorporates various human resource expenses, covering FICA, reemployment tax, and professional fees. At full capacity, our plan includes employing 5 full-time teachers and 8 full-time teacher assistants to serve the 87 children.

The GEZFLC benefits from the donated services of professionals, executives and talented persons who volunteer hundreds of hours. The President and Executive Director of GNV4ALL receives no compensation for his services.

The Family Learning Center is offering partial and whole scholarships to families who demonstrate financial hardship. The demand for scholarships is greater than our ability to fund and we anticipate greater demand in the future.

GNV4ALL is actively pursuing other initiatives to fund the operations of the Family Learning Center.

In summary, our total expenses for the year are projected at \$856,489.55. The phased capacity projections, coupled with diverse revenue streams, meticulous expense management, and strategic resource allocation, underscore our commitment to financial sustainability and mission fulfillment.

We conduct periodic reviews and adjustments to the budget to ensure ongoing financial health. For any inquiries or clarifications, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Photos of the Center



Photos of the Center



Photos of the Center



Photos of the Center



Photos of the Center

