

# Overview & History

For more than 45 years, Children's Council has been the heart of child care and early education in San Francisco, advancing the belief that high-quality child care can transform lives and communities.

Our more than 120 team members help families navigate their child care and preschool options and secure financial assistance to pay for it. We provide home-based child care businesses with the training and resources to succeed. Through a wide range of free programs and workshops, we support parents and caregivers as they build child development skills.

As the city's second-largest nonprofit contractor, with an annual budget of over \$100 million, we are a major stakeholder in the child care system. We educate the public and advocate for increased investment in early education at the local and state level.

## History

Our history of connecting San Francisco families to child care began in 1973. Co-founders Patty Siegel and Martha Roditti began by organizing neighborhood playgroups in response to the growing community need for full-time child care.

In 1975 and 1976, with significant support from both the Rosenberg Foundation and the Ford Foundation, Children's Council was able to expand its services and begin building its comprehensive list of licensed child care throughout San Francisco.

After the federal welfare-to-work child care program was introduced in 1996 (CalWorks in California), Children's Council expanded to meet the needs of working families, quadrupling in size in a few years. Under the leadership of Executive Director Dr. Linnea Klee, Children's Council added many innovative programs serving the needs of San Francisco's children, families and child care community.

Sandee Blechman was named Executive Director in 2011. Under Sandee's leadership,



Children's Council grew to serve over 20,000 families and 2,000 child care providers annually. We began to build a base of private support to augment our government funding and launched our annual Child Care Champions Luncheon.

In May 2019, Gina M. Fromer, M.A. was named Children's Council Chief Executive Officer. A sixth-generation San Franciscan with over three decades of leadership experience in youth & family services and education programs, Fromer is committed to advancing the key initiatives of Children's Council, with an emphasis on furthering the organization's mission to ensure that all families in San Francisco have access to quality, affordable child care.