



Critchlow Adkins
Children's Centers

2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT



Building Brighter Futures to meet the needs
of our children, families, and community!

Your Support Helps Local Families

AS A PARENT, FINDING A NURTURING AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CHILDREN IS A TOP PRIORITY,

and I am thrilled to say that Critchlow Adkins' Cordova Site has exceeded all my expectations.

Thank you for creating a space where children can thrive, learn, and build lasting friendships.

My family and I are grateful to be a part of the Critchlow community.
JUSTINE FRANZEN



GANNON'S KNOWLEDGE AND GROWTH OVER HIS 1.5 YEARS AT WHITE MARSH WAS INCREDIBLE

compared to his prior daycare facility. The topics covered, exposure to new things inside and outside of the classroom, the art projects-- just amazing! He went to Pre-K this year and it's been clear how well-prepared he is and how easy a transition Pre-K was. Overall, I can't recommend the White Marsh program enough, and I'm so thankful we were able to get Gannon in. He has had a wonderful experience.
ABBY BARNETT

OUR 3-YEAR-OLD SON CHARLIE STARTED AT THE CRITCHLOW EASTON PRESCHOOL SITE IN JUNE.

It has been a wonderful experience since day one. The Director, Donna, is incredibly welcoming, communicative, and available to address questions or concerns. She made me and my husband feel comfortable from our first meeting with her.

Charlie's classroom teachers have been amazing as well - it is obvious that teaching and caring for our children is their passion. Charlie comes home happy and exhausted each day. He was even disappointed when we told him he

wasn't going to school on a Saturday!



I am amazed by the variety of activities on the schedule. I never have a doubt that Charlie is learning or experiencing something new.

His independence and confidence have

noticeably grown since he started there. Thank you for providing a safe and nurturing environment for Charlie - I can't thank you enough.
CAROLINE KEMP

EDEN HAS ATTENDED CRITCHLOW FOR ALMOST 9 YEARS, AND HER SISTER NAOMI HAS FOR 2 YEARS.

This year, Eden will be graduating to middle school and leaving Critchlow. Because of the convenient hours, I am able to work full-time as a single parent to provide for my daughters. I am forever grateful to the St. Michaels teachers and Site Director, Mrs. Marlene, for the love and care shown to Eden and Naomi. I look forward to Naomi learning and thriving at CACC for the rest of her time in elementary school.
CIARA HASKINS

LOUISA IS LOVING BEING AT THE SCHOOL AGE SITE.

It has been tremendously convenient to get her into the school building early for summer camp. She was already so confident, having attended the Easton Preschool Site, but camp has made this transition to school so much easier. You and your team were a critical part of smoothing our family through a series of big life transitions, and for that, I want to say thank you. I'm glad we have been able to come into the Critchlow community.
JILL FERRIS

A Focus On Social-Emotional Learning



Children learn how to socialize and how to recognize and express emotions by observing those around them. During the pandemic, masking and isolation led to a significant delay in social and emotional development for children across the world.

Thanks to generous assistance from Critchlow donors, we have implemented two new programs to help our children identify and process their emotions. In 2023, we received a grant from the Qlarant Foundation to pilot a yoga program at our White Marsh Site. It was incredibly successful, and in 2024, we received funding from Betty Kenzie and Kim and Linda Cassidy to expand the program to all five of our sites.

Additionally, in the summer of 2024, we formed a partnership with Positive Strides Therapeutic Riding Center. Our children have begun visiting the center, and enjoy spending calming time outdoors with the horses.

A Note From Our President

As I look back on all the amazing things your support has made possible for Critchlow Adkins' children and families this past year—from quality educational childcare to enriching summer camps and hands-on STEAM* projects—I'm reminded of just how vital our role in the community is. Your generosity continues to inspire us, making these unique opportunities a reality.

Thanks to you, our students are learning new skills and discovering the joy of giving back. For example, the children at our White Marsh Site raised over \$700 for Talbot Hospice by collecting spare change, while kids at all of our locations made heartfelt Valentine's cards for nursing home residents and members of the Armed Forces.

Our community partnerships are also growing, offering our students diverse experiences both in and out of the classroom. We're thrilled to have more than 40 partners expanding our children's horizons, including our newest collaboration with Positive Strides Therapeutic Riding, where students learn about horses—their care, equipment, and training.

Of course, none of this would be possible without our incredible staff, who work tirelessly to provide the best for Critchlow's kids. This year, seven of our teachers earned their CDA (Child Development Associate Credential), meeting new standards for Maryland EXCELS programs. Teachers in our 3- and 4-year-old classrooms have also been trained in the University of Maryland's Children Discover Their World curriculum. And we couldn't be prouder of our site directors, Marlene Thomas and Keieve Colbert, who were both nominated as Women to Watch for their leadership and commitment to their children and families!

Childcare funding remains challenging, but your support and various foundation and state grants keep us moving forward. We recently welcomed Comptroller Brooke Lierman and Secretary of Housing and Community Development Jake Day to visit our programs and see Critchlow's impact firsthand.

As the need for childcare grows, we're excited announce we are expanding. Critchlow will soon have three classrooms and space for 30 more students at Chapel District Elementary in Cordova. We can't wait to move out of the cafeteria and into our own space, thanks to the extraordinary donors making this expansion possible! See the article below for more details.

Next year, Critchlow will celebrate 55 years of providing quality childcare to our community. On behalf of everyone at Critchlow Adkins, thank you for helping us grow over the years and for Building Brighter Futures for our children and families!

With much gratitude



Julie Crocker, Board Chair

*STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math



2023-2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

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Site Directors

Donna Austin, Preschool (Easton)
Annetta Biscoe, White Marsh
Keieve Colbert, School Age (Easton)
Melissa Johnson, Cordova
Marlene Thomas, St. Michaels

Building A Bright Future In Cordova



Due to the Chapel District Elementary School renovation, Critchlow Adkins was asked to move our preschool classroom to another location within the school. The relocation and the renovation provided the opportunity, not only to build a new preschool classroom, but to build 2 new school age rooms, a Site Director's office, and a teacher workroom. This expansion eliminates the need to host our school age children in the school cafeteria, and will allow us to provide care for up to 30 more children in our before- and after-school program and summer camps. Scan the QR Code or visit cacckids.org to learn more.



Our Mission

Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers provides quality, financially accessible childcare for children and their families in a nurturing, diverse, safe and enriching environment.

Critchlow Adkins has five sites, located in Cordova, Easton (2), Trappe, and St. Michaels, and serves families from across the Mid-Shore. All sites are accredited by the MD State Department of Education (MSDE), and have earned an Excellence in Early Learning and School Age Care EXCELS Check Level 5 Rating, reserved for the highest quality childcare programs in the state. Critchlow has earned recognition at these levels for more than 30 years.



Since our founding in 1970, Critchlow Adkins has cared for and educated more than 13,000 children across 4 generations of Mid-Shore families!

Critchlow Adkins offers:
PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS
(AGES 2 TO 4)

BEFORE- and AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS
(PRE-K TO 5TH GRADE)

SUMMER CAMP

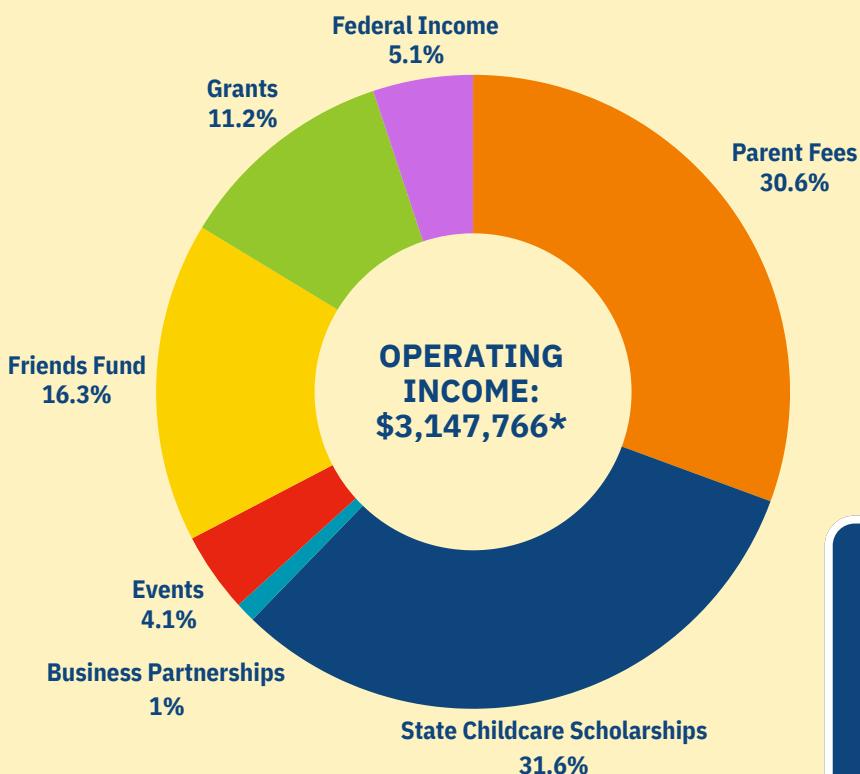
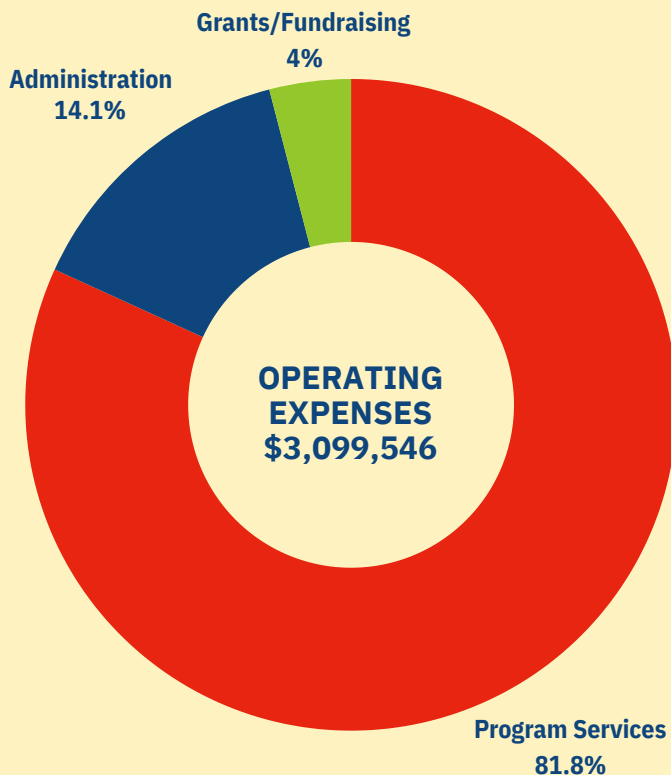
2023-24 By The Numbers

350 children enrolled in our school-year & summer camp programs

50+ children receive tuition assistance

\$40,000 in tuition assistance provided

4 generations of families served



*Includes a one-time Maryland Rebuilds grant

30+ field trips

225 STEAM projects annually at our 5 sites

45 teachers with certifications or higher degrees

20 kids who attended since preschool have "graduated" on to middle school this year

Governor's Administration Visits

We were honored to host site tours for two officials from Governor Moore's administration. Maryland State Comptroller Brooke Lierman and Secretary of Housing and Community Development Jake Day visited both our School Age and Preschool Sites in Easton.

During these visits, Executive Director Cristy Morrell shared the history of Critchlow Adkins and information about our educational programming. Staff, Board Members, local delegates, and our visitors shared robust conversations about the importance of early childhood education and the economic impact of childcare. We are extremely grateful for the opportunity to meet with Comptroller Lierman and Secretary Day and to show them how Janice Adkins and Happy Critchlow's vision to provide high quality, financially accessible childcare has grown, thanks to the generous support of our community!



A Special Honor



Critchlow Adkins is proud to have partnered with Talbot County Public Schools (TCPS) and the Talbot County Judy Center Early Learning Hubs for many years. In the Spring of 2024, we were recognized with their Community Partner of the Year Award.

Over the course of the year, we collaborated with TCPS and the Judy Centers on several high-impact early learning initiatives, with two in particular standing out.

Critchlow Adkins staff provided support and counsel to TCPS as they went through the pre-kindergarten Maryland EXELS (Excellence Counts in Early Learning and School Age Care) and Accreditation process. In addition, we partnered with TCPS and the Judy Centers as part of our Maryland Rebuilds grant to host "Dine and Discovery" sessions for local childcare providers. During these sessions, we provided information about high-quality care and the EXCELS and Accreditation processes, and offered ongoing support.

We would like to express our deepest thanks to TCPS and the Judy Centers. Receiving this award was a true honor for our organization, but we are even more honored by their continued, invaluable partnership.

Critchlow Adkins Gives Back

One of the most valuable things we teach our students is that it is important to give back to our community. Inspired by your generosity, our Critchlow Adkins kids participated in many charitable activities this year, including:

COLLECTING CHANGE
to benefit Talbot Hospice

TRIKE-A-THON TO RAISE MONEY
for St. Jude's Children's Hospital

LIP SYNC VIDEO TO RAISE MONEY
for Talbot Interfaith Shelter

HELPING THE ROTARY CLUB
with Operation Christmas

TOY, BLANKET, & TOWEL DRIVE
for Talbot Humane

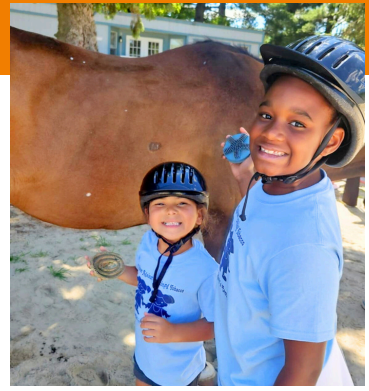
HOLIDAY CARDS FOR VETERANS
and active duty military members

SUPPLIES FOR SERVICE DRIVE
for Neighborhood Service Center



We Love Our Community Partners

Each year, we work with more than 40 Community Partners, who help provide the most enriching and well-rounded experience possible for the children we serve. Some of our wonderful partners are Choptank Community Health, our local emergency services departments, S.O.S. (Sink or Swim), Imagination Library of Talbot County, the Talbot County Judy Center Early Learning Hubs, and the Talbot County Health Department, to name just a few. For a complete list of our Community Partners and they support Critchlow Adkins, please visit our website at www.cacckids.org.



We are pleased to welcome Positive Strides Therapeutic Riding as our newest Community Partner. During the summer of 2024, our children visited the farm and worked with the horses. They learned about horse riding equipment, proper etiquette, and grooming. Children had the opportunity to lead horses on a walk, and even got to paint a horse. Most importantly, they were able to observe the horses and learn the peace and calm of these beautiful animals. We look forward to our continued partnership with Positive Strides!

Our Business Partners are STARS!



★ PLATINUM \$5,000+

Blue Crab House
Gay's Seafood
GW Hall and Sons
Preston Automotive

★ PLATINUM PLUS \$10,000+

Anderson Wealth Mgmt
Michael Brennan:
(Miles & Stockbridge)
BSC Group, LLC
Catering by Jamie
Pamela Gardner, AIA

Catherine Joyce:
(Morgan Stanley)
Marasun
Shapers Salon
White Marsh Transport

Livingston Septic Service

★ SILVER \$1,250+

Bluepoint Hospitality
DuCo, LLC
Dynamic Diesel
Higgins Crab House
James Group
Janet Larson
(Benson & Mangold)

Chuck Mangold
(Benson & Mangold)
Spring & Associates
Sump & Associates
Tred Avon Family Wealth
Willow Construction

★ BRONZE \$750+

Avery Hall Insurance
Easton Utilities
Ewing, Dietz, Fountain, & Kaludis
KlineCo, LLC
Smith and Weston Construction
Steve Moody's Entertainment Connection

★ BLUE \$500+

Albright's Gun shop
Avon Dixon
Bullock's Deli
Cambridge Yacht Basin
Christopher Insurance
Doc's Downtown Grille
Good Life Lawn Care & Landscaping
Kitchen Creations
Kleppinger Electric
Koski Enterprises

Laser Letters
L&L Charters
Moore Funeral Home
Morgan Stanley Easton Group
Reliable Pest Control
Shore United Bank
Sight and Sounds
Terrapin Group, LLC
Towers Concrete
W&L Rentals

★ GREEN \$250+

Bartlett Tree Services
Benson & Mangold
Carpenter Street Saloon
Chesapeake Building Components
Coventry Motor Works
DJ Shannon Keener
Freestyle Fabrication
George's Green Thumb

Out of the Fire
RLE LLC
Roto Rooter
Shore Sportsman
Talbot County Chamber of Commerce
What's Good, LLC
Windswept Clothiers

To become a CACC STAR BUSINESS PARTNER, please call 410.822.8061 or visit WWW.CACCKIDS.ORG

Foundation & Trust Grant Partners

Bryan Brothers Foundation
Christmas in St. Michaels
Dock Street Foundation
Fullwood Foundation
Maryland State Department of Education
Mid-Shore Community Foundation
MSCF Donor-Advised Funds:
Arthur H. Kudner, Jr. Fund
Cassady Family Fund fbo Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers
Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers Endowment Fund
Ferree Fund

Fryling Fund
Reynolds/Cristiano Fund
Philip A. Zaffere Foundation, Inc.
Rotary Club of Easton
St. John Foundation
Talbot County Health Department
Talbot Optimist Club
Van Strum Foundation
Women & Girls Fund of the Mid-Shore
Women & Girls McKenna & Alexa Daisy Fund



Critchlow's Lasting Legacy

Lynn Freeburger-Partridge was substitute teaching at St. Michaels Elementary School in 2004 when she heard an announcement directing children to go to Easton Day Care (now Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers) after school. She was delighted to learn that there was a childcare program on school grounds.

As she taught around Talbot County, Lynn discovered that Critchlow Adkins had five childcare sites and was eager to become involved. She became a donor and began attending events. Lynn later joined the Critchlow Adkins Board of Directors, where she served for six years, and she continues to serve on Critchlow committees. When the 1970 Society was established, Lynn became a member. She chose to add Critchlow Adkins to her estate plans because, "If quality, stimulating childcare was important in 2004, it is now critical in 2024 and beyond." Thank you, Lynn, for your steadfast support of our mission and our children!!



From Critchlow to the Future!



Kaleigh Hammond attended Critchlow Adkins from preschool through elementary school. She began working for CACC as a substitute Teacher's Aide when she was 16 years old. Kaleigh graduated from Easton High School last spring, and is now attending Chesapeake College on a full scholarship, and plays on the college's volleyball team. After achieving her 2-year degree, she plans to transfer to a 4-year college to study for a career in architecture or interior design. Kaleigh's future is bright, thanks to the support your generosity made possible for her during her formative years.

"Critchlow helped [prepare me for success] by teaching me to find solutions to better myself and others. I also learned how to ask for help. I was surrounded by so much diversity, and it helped me understand that everyone has a different background, and you never know what people are going through."

What Will YOUR Legacy Be?

The 1970 Society was established in 2021 to honor past legacy gift donors and recognize those who have committed to making a planned gift to Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers. By leaving a gift to Critchlow Adkins in your will, you leave a legacy that supports early childhood education and enriches our entire community.

"I included Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers in my estate plan to help ensure that hard-working parents will have safe and stimulating childcare for their children before and after school."

~Lynn Freeburger-Partridge

MEMBERS OF THE 1970 SOCIETY

**Mr. and Mrs. Kim Cassady
Dr. Fayette and Mr. Robert
Engstrom**

**Mrs. Margaret Keller
Mr. Michael Klein**

**Mrs. Lynn Freeburger -
Partridge**

**Dr. Margaret Rennels
Alice Ryan**

Mrs. Katie Schroeder

*If you have made a planned gift
to Critchlow and would like to
join the 1970 Society, please let
us know.*

If you would like to join The 1970 Society, contact our Executive Director, Cristy Morrell, via email at cmorrell@cacckids.org or by phone 410-822-8061 or visit our website at www.cacckids.org

Conor's Project 2023

Conor was a Critchlow Adkins student who passed away in 2017 in a pool-related accident. Conor adored his teachers and loved his time at Critchlow Adkins. His grandfather, Rennie Gay, launched Conor's Project to celebrate his memory.

Every September, the community gathers for a sporting clay tournament and crab feast to raise money for swim lessons and enrichment programming for our children.



Held on September 10th, Conor's Project 2023 raised an astounding \$63,000 for Critchlow Adkins! We are honored to be the beneficiaries of this incredibly special community event, and send our heartfelt gratitude to Rennie and everyone who participates in honoring Conor's memory in this way.



Trivia Night 2023

Thank you to everyone who attended our 2023 Joy of Children Trivia Night Fundraiser! Our Joy Committee, led by Susie Wheeler, Linda Laramy, and Dru Haines, planned this spectacular event at the Tred Avon Yacht Club with the support of Development Director, Liz Connelly. Master of Ceremonies Sandy McAllister's perfect combination of humor and encouragement led to a record-setting Fund-A-Need auction. The evening ended with a rousing game of trivia led by DJ Shannon Keener. A bonus round, entitled, "Are You Smarter Than a Critchlow Kid," featured questions asked and answered by students in our programs, which were based on enrichment activities done at our sites.

The evening was a rousing success, raising more than \$45,000 to support our enrichment activities, provide tuition assistance, and fund our Preschool Site playground renovation!

Question: Who Builds Brighter Futures for our children and their families? Answer: YOU!!

