



# Vermont Newsletter

October 2024

## We're Always Learning More About Act 76

As I am writing this, eligibility has just expanded for Child Care Financial Assistance. Last year at this time, the Readiness Payments were just starting to roll out and the promise of increased reimbursement rates and more families becoming eligible for financial assistance was still months away!

There has been so much change in this system in a short period of time; we still don't know the full impact of Act 76. And this latest change in eligibility will be perhaps the largest change of all. I'd love to hear from you about what the eligibility change means for families that you work with.

If you are still unsure of everything Act 76 means for your business, you are not alone. Last week the team at FCF learned something new about eligibility for Financial Assistance: Did you know that in the application for financial assistance, the question about assets refers to only liquid assets (like bank accounts) not real estate or other assets?

This change was made in April, so if you know any families that were not eligible because they had too much in assets, please suggest that they contact their eligibility specialist to have this re-evaluated. More information related to Act 76 and eligibility, can be found on the [CDD CCFAP website](#) and folks can find the [CCFAP Application here](#).

## Need to Access Capital?

In September, we reviewed the first planning grant applications and have offered awards to seven successful applicants. If you have an idea for a large expansion or new building but you're not sure how to get started, our planning grant project could be a great opportunity for you. Completed applications are reviewed each month.

If you want to know more about this new project supported by Let's Grow Kids and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, check our [Vermont Grants webpage](#) for the guidelines. Or [email us](#) for more information.

The first round of Make Way for Kids applications were due on September 30. We received 37 applications that we are carefully considering! The next deadline is February 3, so if you have an idea for a new location or an expansion, it's not too soon to start planning for your application. To learn more about this grant and whether they might be a good fit for your business, please reach out to [vtgrants@firstchildrensfinance.org](mailto:vtgrants@firstchildrensfinance.org)

You can find more information about the Planning Grant Project and the Capacity Building Grants on our [Vermont Grants webpage](#). And if you want some inspiration, follow us on social media to see our 2023-2024 grantees and their amazing projects!

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## Working Together to Chart a Path Forward!

The First Children's Finance Vermont team met with the VTAEYC team to discuss how we can collectively serve child care businesses and systems across Vermont.

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One of our favorite things to do is to be out in the state, meeting with child care entrepreneurs and our statewide partners to keep improving the system. In the past month we have been in just about every county!. A few memorable visits include:

- Family child care homes in Benson, Randolph and Orwell
- Centers in Colchester, Swanton, Salisbury and Rutland
- Statewide partner meetings in Warren, Rutland, South Burlington and Burlington

Up next, you can find us at the Vermont Afterschool Conference at Sugarbush (October 24-25), the Gathering for the Future of Rural Vermont in Randolph (October 25) and the VTAEYC Conference at Killington (October 28-29). We hope to see you there!

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## Business Sustainability

In September, along with our regular two-hour trainings, we began two new Business Leadership Cohorts. The Business Planning Cohort completed the Business Planning Workshop and began a series of five virtual panels with a panel of child care financiers including a bank, a credit union, two CDFIs and a federal agency.

We still have a few trainings left on the fall calendar: Board Governance and Planning for the Future are the last two trainings in October. You can register for these and any of our other trainings on the [Northern Lights](#) calendar. To learn more about the Business Leadership Cohort, we made [a short video](#) that shares

experiences of your peers. If you would like to be on the list for a future cohort, email [infovt@firstchildrensfinance.org](mailto:infovt@firstchildrensfinance.org).



In partnership with VTAEYC and SPARQS, SharedServicesVT has some new resources for you!

### Successful Program Management: Forms, Policies & Templates

- Find fillable forms and blank templates for all your classroom needs. Examples include immunization checklist, HR, safety, board policy, daily reports & more
- Check it out [HERE](#)

### SSVT Site Map/Reference Sheets

- [Family Child Care Home](#)
- [Child Care Centers](#)

SharedServicesVT is your resource HUB for all things child care and ECE. You need a membership, but it's free! [Sign up now.](#)

Finally, the Child Development Division just shared the newly revised incentive system for quality and capacity. You can get all [the details here.](#)

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## It's Riddle Time!

Thanks for reading! Now, it's time for the FCF monthly challenge. First, shout out to our previous winner, Ginelle Hunter!

For this month, do you know the answer to this riddle?

*What has many keys, but can't open a single lock?*

First person to reach out to [infovt@firstchildrensfinance.org](mailto:infovt@firstchildrensfinance.org) with the correct answer will win a prize!

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*The Vermont Business and Technical Assistance Program (BTAP) provides expert business training, technical assistance and consulting to help start, sustain, and grow child care businesses. The BTAP is made possible through a grant to FCF by the Vermont Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families, Child Development Division. The Vermont BTAP is a partnership between [First Children's Finance](#) and [Let's Grow Kids](#).*

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