

Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation



Building Environments That
Enhance Program Quality

Summer 2026

Children's Investment Fund Newsletter



Students at LEO Inc. in Lynn enjoy their new outdoor play space. Photo: Lynne Damianos Photography.

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

How quickly summer approached! This spring has been a productive and exciting time for Children's Investment Fund. We were pleased to host another successful four-day Building Stronger Centers training, review a strong pool of EEOST Capital Fund large grant applications, and launch a new initiative to encourage the co-location of affordable housing with child care – an important step toward strengthening communities and supporting families.

We are grateful for your continued partnership and commitment to this work.

Wishing you a healthy, relaxing and joyful summer!

Best,



Theresa Jordan
Director



Program News

Building Stronger Centers 2026

Children's Investment Fund hosted its twelfth [Building Stronger Centers](#) (BSC) training from May 18 - 21, 2026. This four-day residential training program is designed for early education and out-of-school time centers that are planning major capital improvement projects over the next 2-3 years. This year, twelve outstanding organizations participated, bringing together more than 50 dedicated leaders and staff. We extend our sincere thanks to the staff, participants, and expert speakers who contributed their time and expertise to make this year's BSC training such a success!



Building Stronger Centers participants engaged in Lori Britton's presentation on capital campaign fundraising.



Building Stronger Centers participants met with architects to discuss preliminary plans.

New Predevelopment Loan Product: Co-Locating Child Care and Affordable Housing

CIF hosted a [webinar for affordable housing developers](#) interested in child care co-location projects. Attendees learned more about successful projects and resources available, including a new predevelopment lending product [funded by generous support from Boston Children's Hospital](#).

Speakers included:

Theresa Jordan, Children's Investment Fund

Sarah McKeever, CEDAC

Kira Wilke, Children's Investment Fund

Anna Schuessler, 2Life Communities

Mary Grace Casey, Shattuck Child Care Center

Tara Agrawal, Boston Children's Hospital

The CIF-CEDAC team also presented a similar workshop on co-location at MHP's in-person [Housing Institute](#) on June 26th in Worcester.

If you are a developer who is interested in child care, or a child care provider who is interested in co-location, please contact us at cif@cif-ma.org!

BENEFITS OF CO-LOCATION



- Provides essential services for families
- Strengthens community by creating mixed-use spaces and growing partnerships
- Child care can serve as a stable long-term tenant for a developer



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15

CEDAC's Director of Supportive Housing, Sarah McKeever, presents a slide on the benefits of co-locating child care and affordable housing.



Eric Mitchell (Pathways for Children), Theresa Jordan (CIF), Sarah McKeever (CEDAC), Kira Wilke (CIF) and Andrew DeFranza (Harborlight Homes) presented at MHP's Housing Institute in June. Also attending were Yesenia Gil (CIF) and Shyla Matthews (CEDAC).

Farewell to Bree!

We say a sad farewell to Bree Horwitz, Senior Project Manager at CIF, on July 10th. She will be replacing Bob Goldstein who is retiring as Executive Director of the [Franklin Square House Foundation](#). The Foundation awards capital grants to child care centers as well as shelters serving women.

Bree has been with Children's Investment Fund since 2015 and has three decades of experience in nonprofit development, including nine years underwriting affordable housing projects at CEDAC. She has been a crucial member of our team. We will miss her humor, her depth of knowledge, and her extensive experience in real estate development. We wish her all the best!

Looking for Facilities Funding?

The Children's Investment Fund provides low-interest, flexible loans for early education and out-of-school time providers looking to finance capital projects. Our rates and terms are often more favorable than those offered at conventional banks. If you're interested in learning more, please reach out to Yesenia Gil at ygil@cif-ma.org.

Project News

Whitin Community Center

The Whitin Community Center (WCC) [celebrated the groundbreaking](#) of its Aldrich School Building Childcare Expansion Project. The renovation will create four out-of-school time classrooms serving up to 100 children, expanding WCC's early education capacity. Supported in part by a \$1 million FY2025 EEOST Capital Grant, the project will also free space at WCC's main campus to grow preschool enrollment.

Community leaders, including Congressman James McGovern, joined WCC staff and board members for the ceremony. Construction is expected to finish in early winter, with enrollment beginning in the new year. [A video of the event is online.](#)



Whitin board members, staff—including Executive Director Heather Elster—along with Congressman James McGovern, the Northbridge Town Manager, and representatives from EEC and CIF gather for the groundbreaking.

Other News

Massachusetts launched a new [Outdoor Start](#) initiative to promote nature-based outdoor play spaces for children. The website features numerous resources and is a part of Governor Healey's Inter-Agency Early Education and Child Care Task Force work.

The Home for Little Wanderers opened a [Caregiver Assist Line](#) to support the mental health of educators serving young children.



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