

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Building a Brighter Future

A Rapid Pivot for
Colorado's Children
Who Are Blind or
Visually Impaired





COVER

Ezekiel celebrating his second birthday



THIS PAGE

Awnaleesa, age 2, and her parents

Dear Friends,

As founders of a young nonprofit, we always expected some challenges to our growth. But no one expected the worldwide impact of a pandemic.

As the world seemed to stop, we held to our mission of inspiring and empowering families to nurture the development of their very young children who are blind or visually impaired so that all children may discover their brightest future. None of this could have been possible without the friendship and generous support of our donors. Thank you!

At A Shared Vision, our work is always grounded in our mission to ensure that all children with blindness or visual impairment may discover their brightest future.

First, we pivoted our delivery model and provided vision services via telehealth to more than 200 families, many of whom were especially vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19. We are so grateful for our team of 15 teachers, who were a constant, supportive presence in these families' lives. As one parent said, "For us telehealth has been good because Wyatt has still been able to interact with people he is so used to seeing on a weekly basis. It has also been nice to talk to our EI-TVI about different fun activities to do while stuck at home."

The pandemic also impacted the way early intervention providers perform vision screenings because they could not meet with families in person. We responded by amplifying our Education Program, which builds the community of highly skilled and collaborative professionals who serve very young children with blindness or visual impairments. In cooperation with the Colorado Department of Education and Colorado Department of Human Services – EI Colorado, we conducted virtual vision screening trainings for more than 800 early intervention professionals, more than 500 of whom are now qualified to use the new tool to identify vision concerns in very young children and refer the family to a pediatric eye doctor and an EI-TVI.

Our passionate donors recognized the value that early intervention brings to Colorado families, especially during a pandemic. In 2020 total donations and grants increased 26%, including COVID-19 relief funding so we could continue identifying and supporting families in these communities. We are also so grateful to those we cannot thank through their anonymous gifts.

More than 94% of our expenses in 2020 were focused on programming. And very importantly, none of our expenses supported a brick-and-mortar structure or other capital investments as early intervention services are

best provided in families' homes – the ideal model for service delivery which is substantiated through years of research. We continue to operate as a nimble, virtual organization with little overhead. We are the only organization in Colorado dedicated to early intervention services for very young children with blindness or visual impairments throughout the state.

As we head into 2021, many of these challenges continue. We recognize that the demand for vision services may soon exceed the available supply of licensed teachers. We are actively seeking collaboration with organizations and providers who serve Colorado's children who are blind or visually impaired. Our planning and execution must remain focused on our mission, on what is best for Colorado's youngest children and their families.

We are so grateful for your continued partnership. With your help, we look forward to another year of growth in support of Colorado's families with very young children who are blind or visually impaired.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for enabling us to educate, inspire, and empower these wonderful families.

Sincerely,
Your Founders
Stefanie, Paula, and Steve



Emmitt, age 2-1/2

OUR BOARD

Stefanie Hamilton,
Founder & EI-TVI

Monee Hutton

Paula Landry, Founder
& EI-TVI

Steven Lindauer,
Founder & Executive
Director

Kivanc Ozer-Afsar

Susan Raymond

OUR ADVISORS

Dr. Tanni Anthony,
Colorado Department of
Education

JC Greeley, retired
TVI/COMS

Dr. Kara Hanson,
UCHealth Eye Center


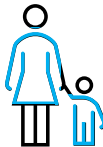




Laura Merrill, Colorado
Department of Human
Services

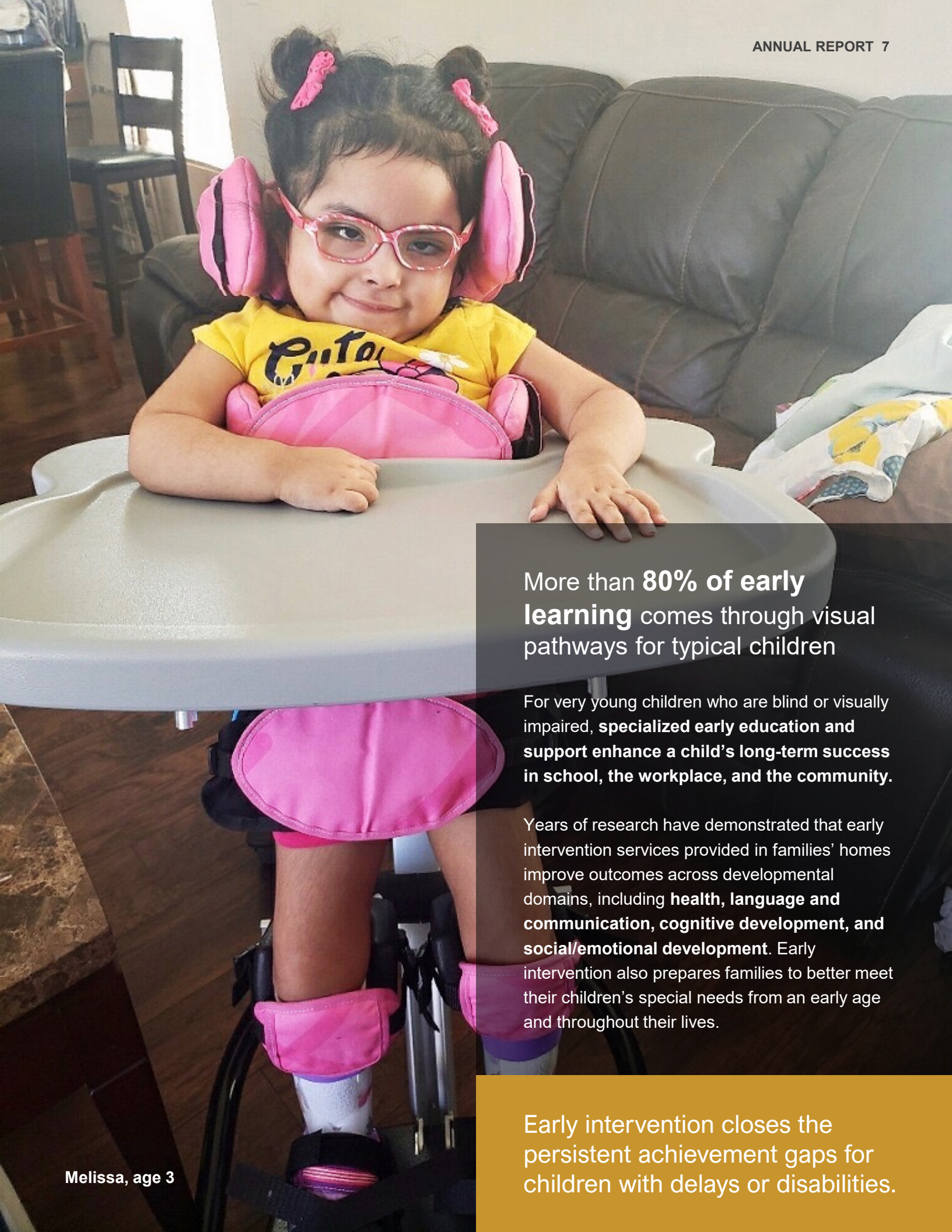
Dr. Anna Steele,
Children's Eye
Physicians

Our Impact in 2020

We helped brighten the future for a record number of Colorado's very young children with blindness or visual impairments.

Holding true to our mission during a very challenging year, A Shared Vision continues to be the leading provider of early intervention vision services in Colorado, and in many rural communities we are the only provider.

 <p>211 children served</p>	 <p>2,141 services provided</p>
 <p>36% increase in number of rural children served</p>	 <p>97% families recommend A Shared Vision to other families</p>
 <p>55 counties served, representing 83% of Colorado population</p>	 <p>600 professionals trained in vision screening via telehealth</p>



More than **80% of early learning** comes through visual pathways for typical children

For very young children who are blind or visually impaired, **specialized early education and support enhance a child's long-term success in school, the workplace, and the community.**

Years of research have demonstrated that early intervention services provided in families' homes improve outcomes across developmental domains, including **health, language and communication, cognitive development, and social/emotional development.** Early intervention also prepares families to better meet their children's special needs from an early age and throughout their lives.

Early intervention closes the persistent achievement gaps for children with delays or disabilities.

Melissa, age 3



Jamus, age 3, and dad

When a child turns three, we have to say "goodbye" as they transition from early intervention services into an unfamiliar world. We ensure they're not alone.

Inspiration for Our Families

For many of our little ones, they enter pre-school in their local school districts with our help to navigate through that process.

Each family inspires us! Their strength and their joy in their children's accomplishments help newer families weather the inevitable challenges they will face. Here's one of the many inspirational stories about saying "goodbye." Meet Jamus, a 2020 "graduate," and his mom Nicole. Their first day of preschool was emotional for both of them.

"Jamus and I cried the first day - a lot. By the second day Jamus only got clingy at the door, yet I cried. And by the third day, Jamus kissed me goodbye and told me to have a good day, and I cried.

On the fourth day, Jamus didn't even say goodbye to Daddy, and went into school, and I cried. And I cried because he adjusted so well and so quickly.

Jamus is thriving and happy and feels confident in his new learning and friends. He's even wearing his glasses the entire time at school!"



Jamus, age 3

Focus on Vision Screening

The pandemic brought vision screening to a halt. We partnered for a creative solution.

With unexpected suddenness, business processes changed for everyone in March 2020. This included Colorado's professionals responsible for vision screening of very young children. They no longer had a protocol that would allow them to conduct screenings as they were unable to meet with children face-to-face. Yet, the state was required by law to continue screenings.

In a collaborative and creative effort, the Colorado Department of Education and A Shared Vision quickly developed a new statewide vision screening protocol that enabled professionals to conduct screenings via telehealth. Then, in partnership with Early Intervention Colorado, A Shared Vision developed the accompanying virtual training program to reach EI professionals statewide.

Between April and December, A Shared Vision conducted 36 virtual trainings for more than 600 early intervention professionals associated with Community Service Boards, Child Find, and Early Head Start teams to very positive reviews.

By the end of 2020, more than 380 professionals had completed the final assessment and were qualified to use the new tool to identify vision concerns in very young children and refer the family to a pediatric eye doctor and an EI-TVI. Even as overall referrals into early intervention declined, A Shared Vision supported a record number of children as professionals began using the new tool.


The trainings continue into 2021 with additional sessions scheduled through August. To learn more about the training and to sign up click [HERE](#).

By year end,
over **600**
professionals
were trained

Representing
14 states and
Canada

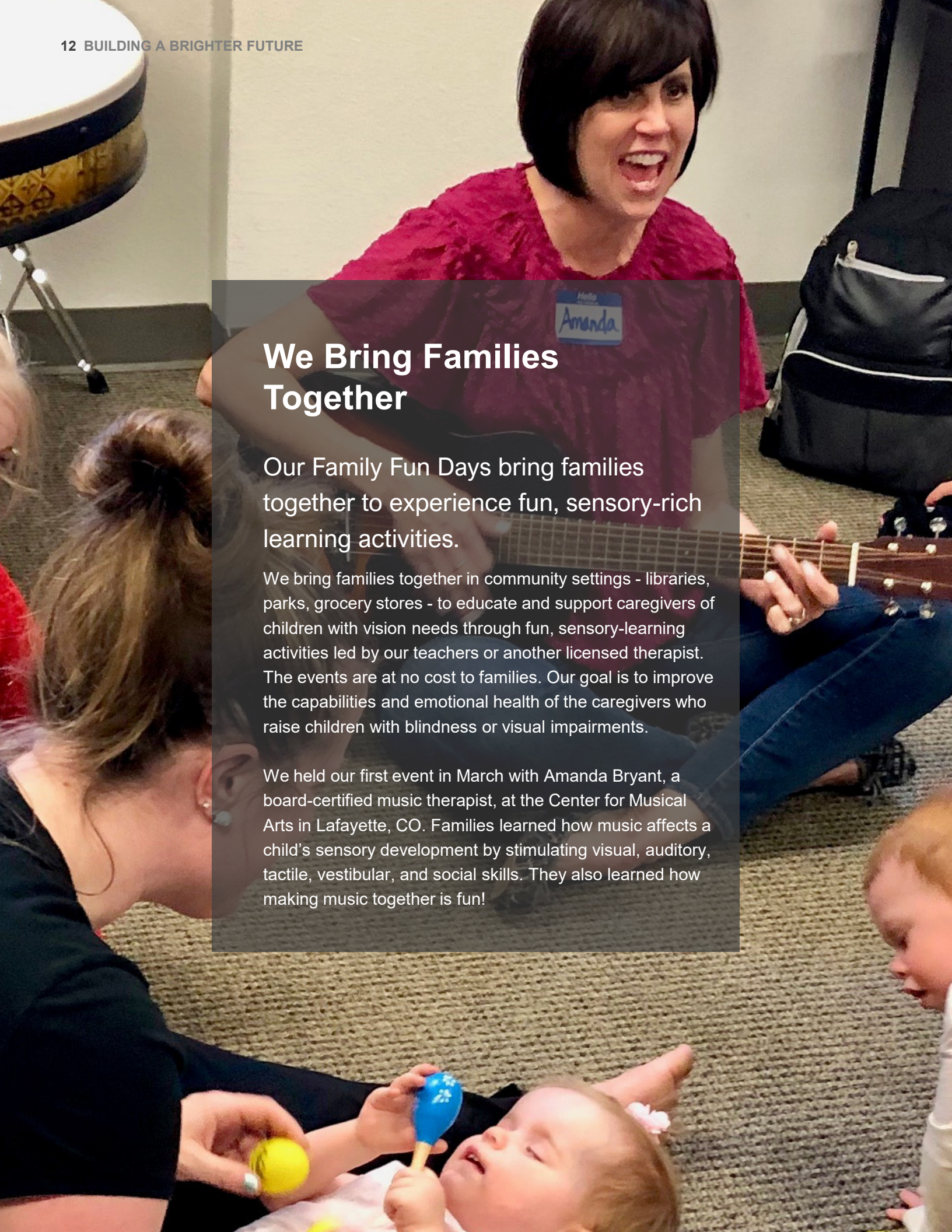
380 professionals
were qualified to
conduct vision
screenings



A young child with dark hair, wearing glasses and a blue headband, is intently focused on playing with a sensory bin. The bin is filled with colorful beads in shades of blue, yellow, red, and green. A string of gold beads is draped across the bin. The child's hands are visible, reaching into the bin. The background is dark, and the child is wearing a light-colored shirt.

"This was one of the most outstanding, timely, and applicable trainings that I have had and I've been doing this for 16 years! I walked away with something that I can do starting immediately that can directly and permanently impact families of young children as well as address a dire need in the community as shown by the research." (Mara Kuczun, Bilingual Early Childhood Special Educator).

Kota, age 2

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a red ruffled top and a name tag that says "Amanda", is sitting on the floor and playing a guitar. She is smiling and looking towards a group of people. In the foreground, a woman with her hair in a bun is holding a baby who is holding a blue balloon. Another baby is visible on the right side of the frame. A large drum is visible on the left side of the frame.

We Bring Families Together

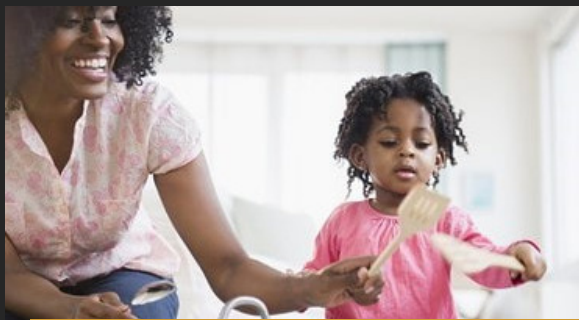
Our Family Fun Days bring families together to experience fun, sensory-rich learning activities.

We bring families together in community settings - libraries, parks, grocery stores - to educate and support caregivers of children with vision needs through fun, sensory-learning activities led by our teachers or another licensed therapist. The events are at no cost to families. Our goal is to improve the capabilities and emotional health of the caregivers who raise children with blindness or visual impairments.

We held our first event in March with Amanda Bryant, a board-certified music therapist, at the Center for Musical Arts in Lafayette, CO. Families learned how music affects a child's sensory development by stimulating visual, auditory, tactile, vestibular, and social skills. They also learned how making music together is fun!



Clockwise from top left:
Amanda Bryant, Music Therapist
Kennedy, age 2-1/2, her and mom
Lane, age 1-1/2, and his mom
Hazel, age 2, and her mom



How to Play in a Kitchen Band

Everyday objects in the kitchen or around the home can be played with to expose your young child who is visually impaired to a variety of new sounds, textures, and sources of vibration – all musical concepts that you can use in parent-child play. kitchen band play is endless fun and different every time!



Let's Make a Gardening Sensory Bin

So much learning goes naturally into gardening or just being outside. Even if your child can't see a flower, they can touch the petals, smell its fragrance, and listen to how it sounds swaying in the breeze. Gardening together is one way to help your child develop an understanding of the outside and how things grow.



Have a Seat! An Activity with Chairs

Different kinds of chairs can be found all around the house. But what makes a chair, a chair? They can be used to teach your child who is visually impaired about many different concepts besides how they're used as seats. Chairs can also be incorporated into parent-child play and literacy activities.

Staying Home Is Fun!

During the pandemic, families asked for fun, developmentally appropriate things to do while staying safe at home. We quickly launched our Learning Experiences initiative.

In 2020 we began developing fun, sensory-rich learning experiences that families could do with their Early Intervention Teacher of the Visually Impaired during a video call and then enjoy on their own. These experiences are family-centered, linked to everyday routines like feeding, bathing, or playtime, and incorporate Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) principles. The ECC provides a framework for instruction in a specialized set of vision-related skills for students who are blind or visually impaired.

Parents may contact their teacher for more information about the Learning Experiences and schedule an experience with their child.



Solvi, age 2, and Lucky

Keeping In Touch

Do you want a recipe you can do with your child? How do you build a busy board? What's the difference between an EI-TVI and a vision therapist?

Our newsletter is full of these answers, and more. It goes out to more than **1,800 subscribers** in Colorado and around the country, including families on our caseload, Community Centered Board service coordinators and other early intervention providers.

Our website is constantly being updated with new parent resources.

For the professional community, learn how to make a referral to **A Shared Vision** or sign up for an upcoming training that we're hosting.



Parent Resources

Empowerment through knowledge, community with others. Our website is a great place to start.



Newsletter

Interesting stories, activities, and resources delivered monthly to your email.



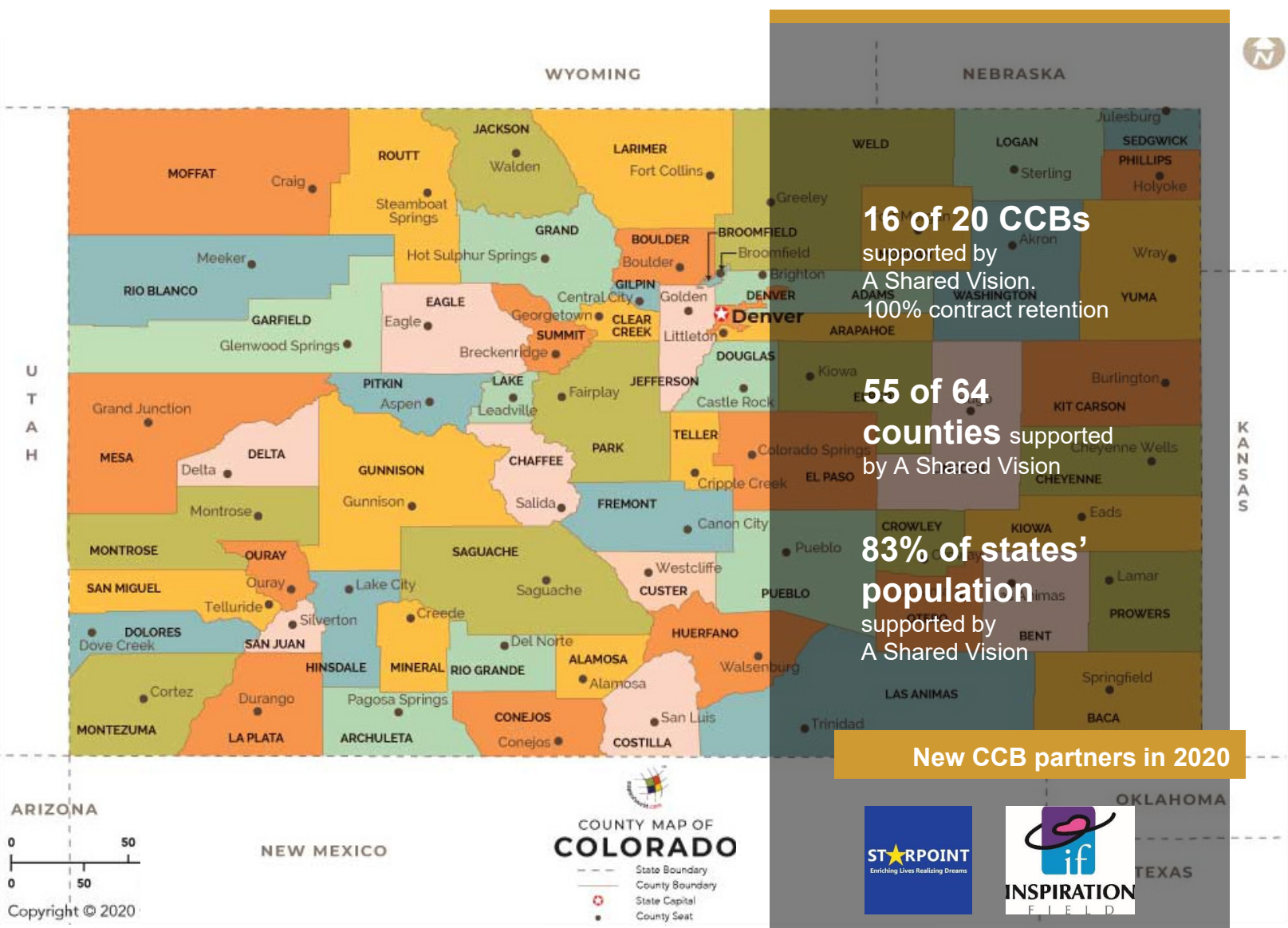
Social Media

Frequent updates and fun pictures about A Shared Vision, of our families and our team.

Our Colorado Partners

Meeting our families' needs throughout a diverse state is only possible through teaming and collaboration.

We collaborate with Early Intervention Colorado and 16 of the state's **Community Centered Boards (CCBs)** who support 55 counties, representing 83% of the state and rural populations. **Children's Hospital of Colorado KidStreet**, which serves children with multiple disabilities, also contracted with us for another year to provide weekly vision services and training at their child-care center.



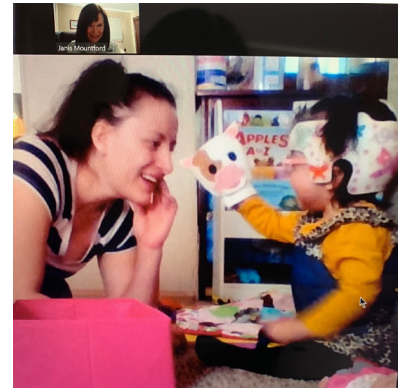
Sharing a Vision

We collaborated with Utah and neighboring states to host a virtual Western Regional Early Intervention Conference, supporting the needs of providers and families impacted by the pandemic.

The Western Regional Early Intervention Conference (WREIC) supports professionals working with, and families of, children birth to five years old who are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, or deafblind. WREIC has been in place for over 30 years, making it one of the longest ongoing early intervention conferences in the country. Our executive director serves on the planning committee.

Due to the pandemic, they decided to host a series of virtual sessions in collaboration with the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. **A Shared Vision's** executive director Steven Lindauer and co-founder Paula Landry presented an 85-minute briefing with Dr. Tanni Anthony from the Colorado Department of Education on the history of Colorado's vision screening and the state's response to vision screening for children birth to age five during the pandemic.

The vision screening trainings hosted by **A Shared Vision** has attracted professionals from all across Colorado, as well as from 13 states and Canada.



From top:
Viry, age 2, and mom during telehealth visit
with teacher, Janis Mountford
Jada, age 3, and her mom
Winter, age 1
Tydus, age 2
Awnaleesa, age 3

Our Team


We are grateful for our teachers. Their value to our families and the state of Colorado is priceless.

Our team of 15 licensed Early Intervention Teachers of the Visually Impaired are dedicated to serving Colorado's families who have very young children with blindness or visual impairments.

After ten years working with children in the public-school system and three years with **A Shared Vision**, **Tina Martin** retired. We will truly miss her support for our Larimer and Weld county families. She and her family are moving to Florida to be closer to her family.

We were thrilled to welcome back **Caitlin Geoffrion** as an EI-TVI. She first joined **A Shared Vision** as an intern in 2018. After becoming a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments for the Adams 12 Five Star school district, she rejoined **A Shared Vision** to support our families with younger children. In January 2021, Caitlin was recognized for her work in the classroom with the Colorado Avalanche's Most Valuable Teacher Award.

Hazel, age 2, with her sister and mom, plus teacher Paula Landry



"Our A Shared Vision teacher has been a core part of our child's development as we have seen his vision and learning progress. We are so grateful to have her walk alongside us as we navigate these early years AND vision challenges."



Wyatt, age 2, and his teacher, Tina Martin

Financials

For the year ending December 31, 2020

Revenue

Individuals	\$61,367
Foundations, businesses, organizations	\$42,221
Services	\$212,987
Total revenue	\$316,575

Expenses

Program services	\$296,061
Management and general	\$10,766
Fundraising	\$5,314
Total expenses	\$312,141

Net operating revenue	\$4,434
-----------------------	---------

Net assets at beginning of year	\$26,123
---------------------------------	----------

Net assets at end of year	\$30,557
---------------------------	----------

A Shared Vision services are provided at no cost to families.

Unlike center-based programs, we do not charge tuition or other fees to the families we support. Our services are paid by Colorado's Community Centered Boards leveraging Federal IDEA Part C and other state funds.

A Shared Vision is a nimble, virtual organization with very little overhead. None of our expenses include brick-and-mortar structures or other capital investments as early intervention vision services are best provided in families' homes - the ideal model for delivery which is substantiated through years of research.

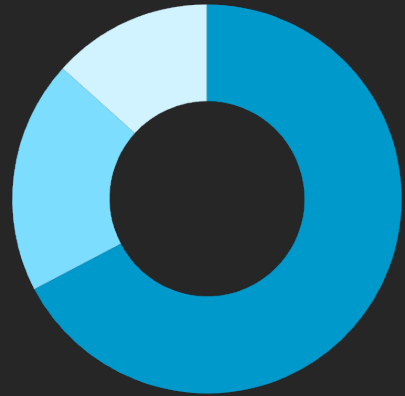
A Shared Vision's financial position is continuing to strengthen, The financials are a snapshot in time and include a \$54,200 Paycheck Protection Program loan we received as part of the US Government response to COVID-19. We anticipate the loan being forgiven in its entirety, at which point the money will be recorded as revenue.





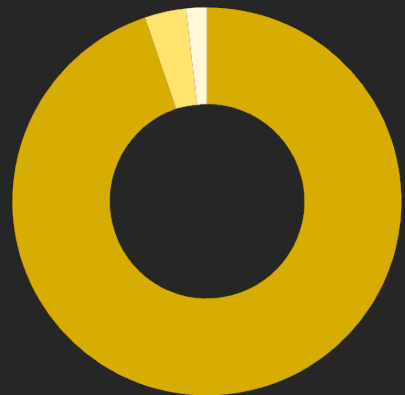
Havyk, age 2

Revenue



- 67.3% Services
- 19.4% Individual donors
- 13.3% Foundations, businesses, organizations

Expenses



- 94.8% Program services
- 3.5% Management and general
- 1.7% Fundraising

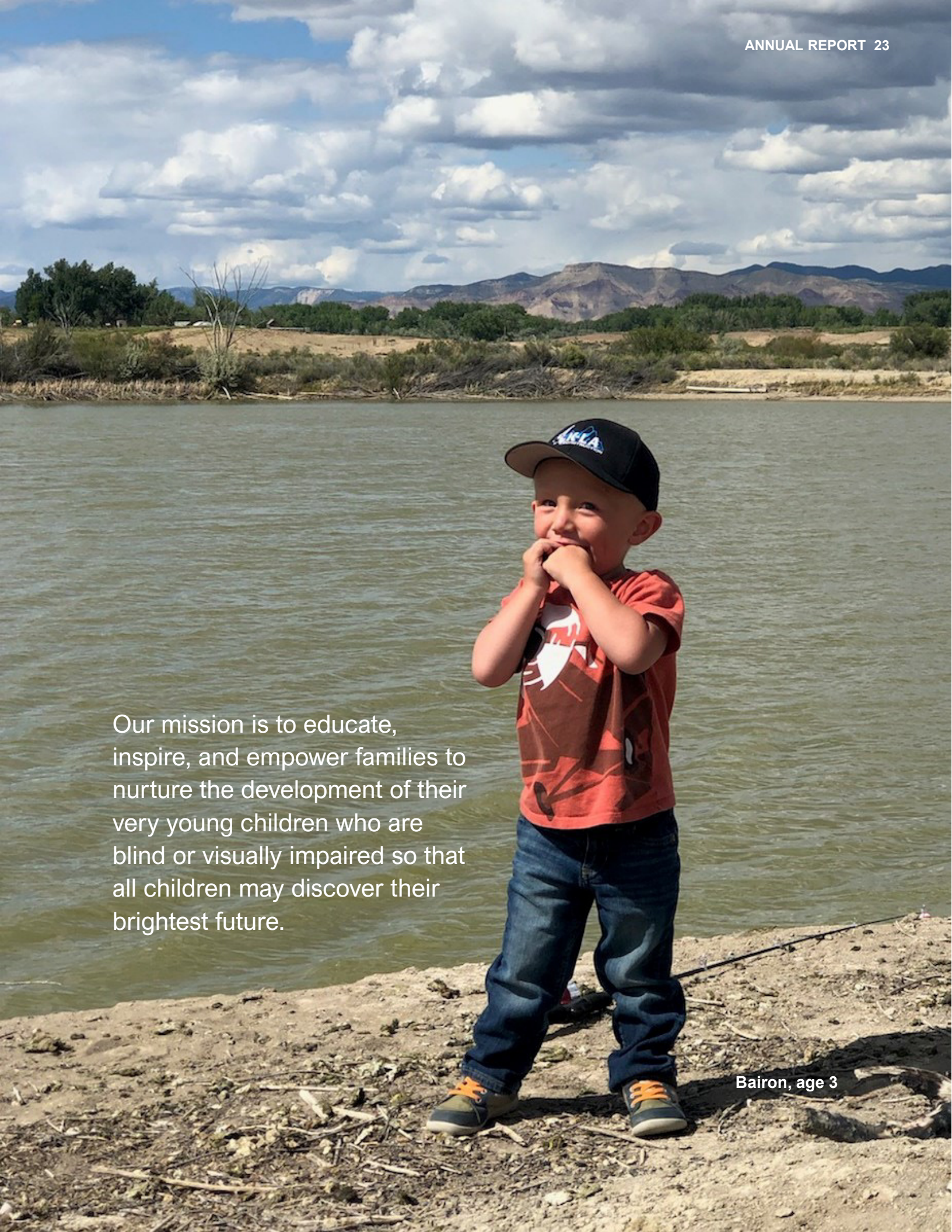
Thank you

We are truly grateful for our friends and families who gave at record levels during this very challenging year for so many. We are also so very grateful to those we cannot thank personally through your anonymous gifts. Thank you!

The Buell Foundation supported A Shared Vision for the third year in a row, and several foundations and companies gave generously in 2020, including the **Kenneth King Foundation, Kroger, the Allstate Foundation, Xcel,** and the **Denver Lions Club.** The **Montrose Community Foundation, Yampa Valley Foundation,** and **Jeffco Hope Fund** provided COVID-19 relief funding so we could continue identifying and supporting families in these communities.

Our mission is to educate, inspire, and empower families to nurture the development of their very young children who are blind or visually impaired so that all children may discover their brightest future.

Bairon, age 3





A Shared Vision

Partners in Pediatric Blindness and Visual Impairment

10135 West 101st Drive
Westminster, CO 80021
(303) 349-1961

www.asharedvision.org

A Shared Vision

We are teachers who educate, empower, and inspire caregivers of very young children who are blind or visually impaired. We work with families in their homes which is the optimal environment for early learning according to research. We conduct assessments and provide specialized strategies, resources, and tools specific to each family. We prepare caregivers to be their child's first teacher and help guide their child's cognitive, social, emotional, communication, and physical development for their brightest possible future.

