

Our Mission is to advance quality care and education of children in their early years. Think Small uses leading-edge knowledge from the early childhood field to create services and tools that support and strengthen the abilities of families and early childhood professionals.

Preparing Early Childhood Professionals

- **Professional Development, Consultation, and Coaching:** Think Small provides metro-wide professional development opportunities focused on the essential elements of high quality care. Opportunities include classes and workshops provided in English, Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Oromo, Amharic, and Karen; individual and site-based consultation and coaching support; business support to help maintain a successful childcare business; and career guidance for certification and licensing. **Enrollment in 1,130 trainings** during FY17 was **15,563**. We also connect providers with quality improvement grants and emergency funding for early childhood programs.
- **Community Outreach and Access:** Think Small's multilingual Outreach staff connects with historically underserved communities, including those in low-income neighborhoods, English Language Learners (ELL), communities of color, immigrant and refugee families, so they can fully engage in Minnesota's early childhood care and education system. Outreach staff work to expand the reach of Think Small services and identify needs and gaps within these communities. Staff assists families and providers navigating complex government systems, connecting them to resources and services available at Think Small and other organizations. Staff provides languages translation and interpretation for ELL providers and families.
- **Publishing:** A leading publisher of curriculum, management, professional development, and business resources for adults who care for, teach, and nurture young children, Redleaf Press publishes on a broad range of topics. These products are designed to assist early childhood professionals in using stimulating, child-centered practices based on sound and proven theory about learning and child development. Redleaf publishes between **24 and 30 new titles** a year and has **287 titles in print**. In FY17 over **200,000 products** were distributed to customers both in the U.S. and abroad. Redleaf books are translated into **13 different languages** with over **53 books in translation**. Over 50% of Redleaf's books are available as e-books and in other digital formats. Approximately **715,800 catalogs** are mailed to customers annually.
- **Library:** A branch of the St. Paul Public Library the Debra S. Fish Early Childhood Library is available statewide. Now numbering **6,148 items**, the library's collection is a part of Minnesota's public interlibrary loan system and materials can be delivered to all local libraries.

Strengthening Families

- **Family Engagement:** Think Small is committed to strengthening family's access to high quality care as well as increasing their knowledge about early childhood development and preparing children for Kindergarten. Think Small Parent Powered texting delivers evidence-based texting messages to parents and caregivers, across MN, for children birth to 5 years old. These short text messages encourage parents to do fun and engaging activities with their children to increase their literacy and numeracy development as well as tips on how to be healthy.

- **Innovations:** Think Small develops and supports interventions that target low-income families including addressing the achievement and opportunity gaps between white children and children of color. We work to identify ways child care providers can engage more fully with their families in addressing the literacy gap early on. We are currently collaborating with University of MN, LENA Foundation, and Reading Corps to implement parent engagement and provider coaching to increase the literacy levels of very young children. To date we have served **23 early childhood providers** and **11 parents** in these initiatives.
- **Scholarships and other Financial Supports:** Think Small serves providers and families with targeted financial supports. Think Small administers **5,580 eligibility-based scholarships** for families to enroll children in programs with Parent Aware quality ratings in Hennepin and Ramsey Counties. We administer Basic Sliding Fee Child Care Assistance for eligible low-income families in Ramsey County.

Catalyzing Change

- **Policy, Advocacy and Initiatives:** Think Small works across the state activating field leaders and other stakeholders across systems on issues that concern our youngest children. This includes civic engagement of child care providers and parents, with an intentional focus on raising the voice of diverse cultural, refugee, and immigrant communities. To support this work, Think Small provided **30 communications** to over **6,000 subscribers** of our Action Center and published **50 blog posts** viewed **7,243 times**. In addition, Think Small participates in a variety of state and national early learning policy coalitions and workgroups. Think Small also plays an important role in advancing policy efforts such as Parent Aware, Early Learning Scholarships, Child Care Assistance and most recently the economic development of the child care sector. By leading from the development of policy concepts through the piloting stages and helping take promising initiatives to scale, the agency has helped improve access to quality early learning opportunities and build accountability in the system. All efforts focus on ensuring that families have a variety of high quality early learning opportunities that will put their child on the path to school and life success.