



# Annual Report 2014

Nurturing. Educating. Inspiring. Since 1886.



**SouthSide**  
Early Childhood Center





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## Dear Friends,

At this, the end of our first full year in our new building, I have just one thing to say to all of you—THANK YOU!

This past year has been marked with so many firsts, all made possible by your generous support. In our new building, we were able to:

- **Enroll twice the number** of babies, toddlers and two-year-olds in response to an acute need for affordable high quality childcare during this critical period of early development.
- **Better address the needs of our families** by offering additional parenting classes and Family Fun Nights and adding new partnerships in the community to increase our families' access to a broad range of services.
- **Engage the children** in additional opportunities for exploration and adventure, all within walking distance.
- **Expand the children's access to information** far beyond the walls of SouthSide and the streets of their neighborhoods through the use of advanced technology. For example, a SMART Board transported the children to prehistoric times when they studied dinosaurs and brought to life lions and tigers in their natural habitats as they studied large cats.

The highlight of the year, however, has been the amazing progress made by the children at SouthSide with the help of their caring parents, our amazing staff and dedicated partners in the community.

Here are a few key examples. On average, 95% of SouthSide children met or exceeded expectations in all areas of their development—social-emotional, cognitive, language and physical. In addition, according to elementary school teachers and parents of SouthSide graduates, our children are excelling both academically and socially in kindergarten and beyond!

Thank you, as always, for all you do for the children of SouthSide and their families. You are truly making a difference in each child's life today and in the community as a whole tomorrow.

Sincerely,

**Katie Rahn**  
*Executive Director*



SouthSide's mission is to nurture, educate and inspire children and families in a diverse and inclusive environment, promoting healthy development and a strong foundation for success.

## Program Summary

SouthSide Early Childhood Center provides an exceptional, comprehensive program of early childhood education for up to 144 children, ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Eight out of ten of these children come from families who struggle every day to make ends meet, most earning less than \$20,000 per year. Many children in our inclusive program face additional disability and mental health challenges. Nearly every one of these boys and girls lives on the city's south side, in neighborhoods burdened by poverty and crime.

Whatever the challenges a child faces, SouthSide is ready. Our hands-on, research-based curriculum focuses on providing each child with the skills he or she needs to succeed in kindergarten, elementary school and beyond. Along with our highly qualified teaching teams, SouthSide's on-site specialists, therapists and a mental health professional provide a safety

net of early intervention services for children experiencing delays or disabilities. Our Family Partnership Program supports parents and guardians by providing the skills and resources they need to establish the stable, supportive homes that best enhance their children's learning. The Program empowers families to advocate effectively for their children throughout their school years. We also provide families with access to health service providers both at SouthSide and in the community to make sure that the children's healthcare needs are addressed.

In order to offer this comprehensive program, SouthSide must provide a scholarship of \$5,000 per child per year to supplement the funding we receive from government revenue, fees and our United Way allocation. Support from local foundations, corporations and individuals makes this possible...and we are so grateful!

## Uniquely SouthSide

- SouthSide is a fully-accredited early childhood center.
- Two experienced, degreed teachers facilitate the learning process in every SouthSide classroom.
- SouthSide's exceptional, research-based curriculum centers around the interests of the children and is built on a process of questioning and exploration.
- SouthSide identifies and provides individualized attention on-site for children with special needs through a network of in-house specialists and community partners.
- SouthSide employs a full-time Mentor Teacher and Mental Health Coordinator to fully support the children and teachers.
- SouthSide celebrates inclusion and diversity of all types.
- SouthSide's Family Partnership Program includes monthly parent meetings, multi-session classes, Family Fun nights, and other activities that prepare parents and guardians to become effective advocates for their children in school and beyond.
- SouthSide's Kindergarten Transition Program includes a parent meeting to explore kindergarten options, a Kindergarten Fair at SouthSide to showcase selected kindergarten programs, assistance with enrollment and registration and, for the children, a field trip to a local kindergarten classroom.



SouthSide's new, state-of-the-art facility is designed to best support SouthSide's curriculum and the needs of our children.



SouthSide's child-centered programs instill a lifelong love of learning in and out of the classroom.



SouthSide is recognized as a model of excellence in early childhood education in St. Louis and throughout the State of Missouri.





# Meet Malik

**When he entered his classroom at SouthSide for the first time, Malik was completely overwhelmed by the sights and sounds that surrounded him and he began spinning in circles uncontrollably.**

Malik had just turned three when he enrolled at SouthSide at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year. In addition to his inability to deal with the anxiety he felt in a new place surrounded by new faces, Malik wanted nothing to do with toilet training, had very limited language skills and had a difficult time moving deliberately from one activity to another.

Malik's agitation was especially evident during Circle Time each morning, a time during which each preschool class at SouthSide gathers as a group to work on their current "study." During his first weeks at SouthSide, Malik was unable to participate in any way during Circle Time. To deal with his anxiety, he either threw a tantrum, completely broke down and cried inconsolably for several minutes, or stood and spun wildly in the center of the circle. Not surprisingly, the other children kept their distance.

Today, only one year later, Malik bears little resemblance to the child described above. He no longer wears diapers, has several friends in his classroom, moves deliberately from one activity to another and, perhaps most remarkably, joins his classmates and participates appropriately during Circle Time! He often greets visitors to the classroom and even helps remind classmates about classroom rules and procedures.

Magic, you say? Hardly.

Working closely with Malik's mother, Malik's teachers referred him to St. Louis Public Schools for evaluation and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) was created for him that included Occupational, Speech and Language therapy for Malik at SouthSide. Through SouthSide's Bright Futures program, a paraprofessional was assigned to work with Malik daily in the classroom. He received supplemental support from SouthSide's mentor teacher and in-house therapists to help him develop strategies that enable him to participate during Circle Time and move more easily among learning activities. This intensive, targeted attention transformed Malik in the course of one short year into the happy, outgoing child he is today.







# Meet Gabrielle

**Before she was even 18 months old, Gabrielle had experienced more trauma than many people will face in a lifetime.**

When she was six months old, a fire in the apartment where she was living left Gabrielle burned on a large part of her body. Her mother was hospitalized several times for mental health issues and, at one point, Gabrielle had to be removed from her mother's custody for her own safety. When Gabrielle first arrived at SouthSide, she was afraid of most adults, had little experience interacting with other children and had a difficult time adjusting to even the smallest changes in her routine. There were many times, especially during her first few months, when Gabrielle would wake up crying at the end of nap time and be inconsolable for hours.

Today, only 15 months later, Gabrielle is a happy, energetic soon-to-be three-year-old child. She has made tremendous progress both educationally and emotionally. She loves her teachers and can't wait to come to school each morning. In fact, this child—who was so shy and withdrawn when she arrived at SouthSide—has become the class clown, entertaining her classmates (and herself) with those comments that other two-year-olds find hilarious! Her father, who is now her primary caretaker, has found a stable job and is very involved in his daughter's life. His primary goals, developed through meetings with the Family Partnership Program Manager, revolve around making sure that he provides Gabrielle with all the educational opportunities he can today and in the future. He often meets with Gabrielle's teachers and asks for ideas for activities he can do with her at home. With her father's love and support, Gabrielle is healing both physically and emotionally from the trauma in her past and her future looks bright!



# The Importance of Early Childhood Education

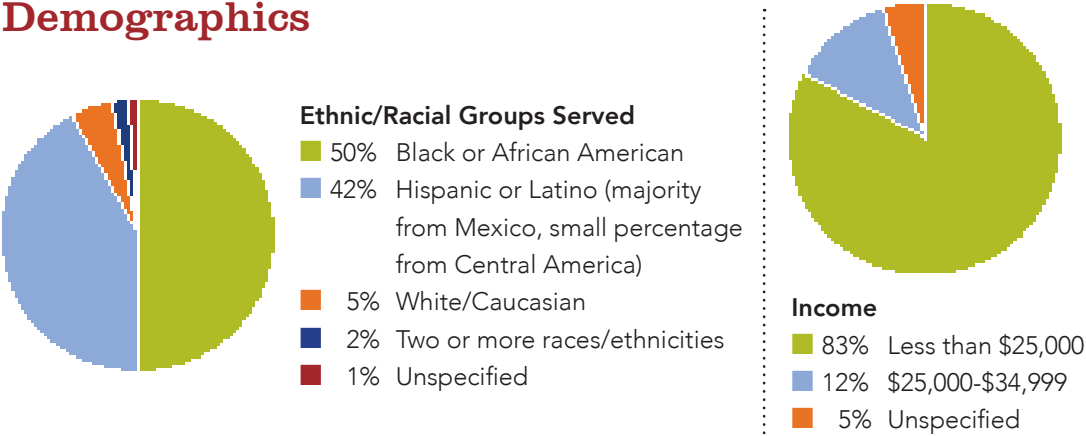
- Children living in poverty lack access to routine medical care, safe housing, an adequate supply of healthy foods, mental healthcare for both them and their parents, and appropriate special education services.
- Children living in poverty are more likely to experience trauma in their early years.
- All children deserve to have high quality early childhood experiences, but research shows that children living in poverty stand to gain the most.

High quality early childhood education, intervention and family support can lead to increased kindergarten readiness, decreased need for special education services, increased likelihood to be reading at grade level, increased chance of graduating high school and increased chance of positively contributing to their communities.



## SouthSide Facts & Stats—2014-2015

### Demographics



A total of **50%** of the students enrolled at SouthSide come from immigrant families.

#### Gender Served



#### Age Ranges Served

**100%** 6 weeks–5 years

#### Ability

At least **25%** have a developmental delay or disability.

#### Homeless

**10%** (or about 10-12 families) at SouthSide are homeless at any given time.

#### Household Leadership

**74%** Single moms (Many have dads or other male relatives who are active in their lives.)

**1%** Single dads

**25%** Two parent homes

At full capacity (144 students), 2 of 3 children will qualify for the Federal Free or Reduced Lunch Program, a nationally recognized measure of poverty.

#### Tuition Status

**91%** Head Start Students

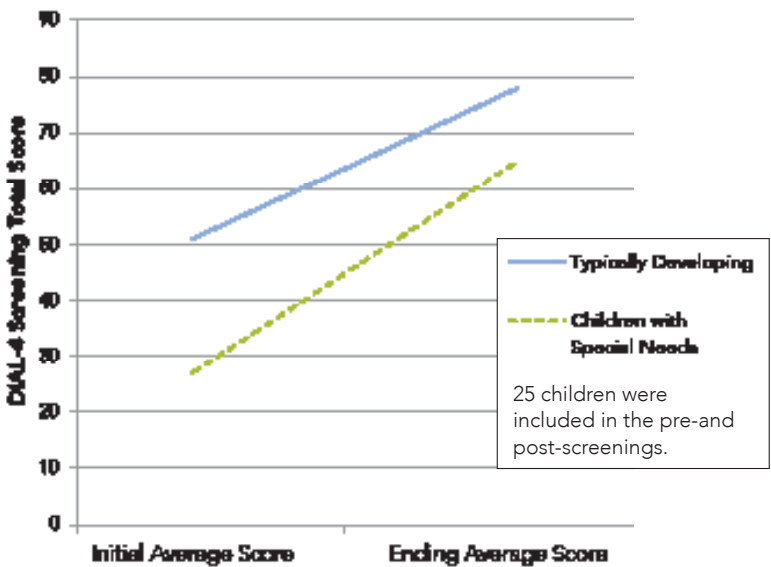
**5%** Full Pay Students

**4%** Staff Students

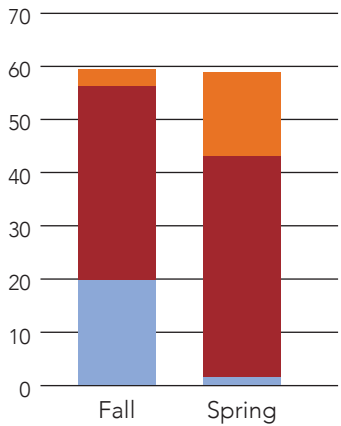
We served a total of **135** children and their families during the **2014-2015** school year.

## SouthSide Children Show Amazing Growth During the 2014-2015 School Year

### Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning



### Preschool Social-Emotional and Cognitive Growth

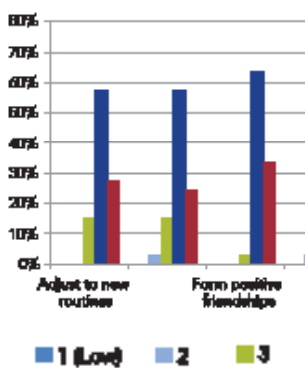


\*Teaching Strategies GOLD data 2014-2015

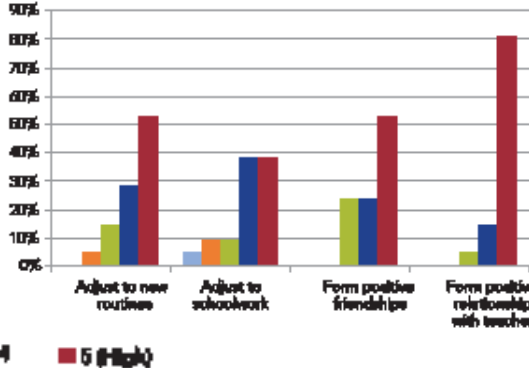
## And They are Prepared for Kindergarten

according to Parents and Teachers of SouthSide Graduates!

#### Chart 1: Parent Responses



#### Chart 2: Teacher's Responses







# SouthSide's Community Collaborations

Participation in community collaborations like Ready by 21, the Jefferson Collaborative and Teaching St. Louis provides SouthSide with the opportunity to impact our local community as it struggles to deal with the larger issues related to social justice and education equity. SouthSide lends expertise on and advocates for the importance of exceptional early childhood experiences for children and families as a part of the long term solution for many societal issues.

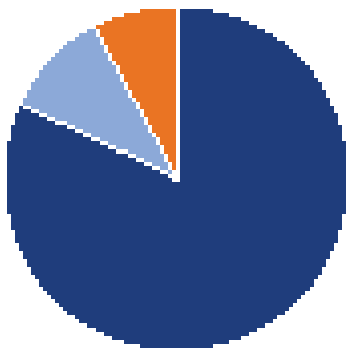
# SouthSide's Community Partnerships

- ALIVE**
- American Eagle Credit Union
  - Annunciation Catholic Church
  - AT&T Gateway Pioneers
  - Belle Children's Services of St. Louis Arc
  - Board of Religious Organizations
  - Bonhomme Presbyterian Church
  - Center for Hearing and Speech
  - Community School
  - Equifax Volunteer Team
  - Faith Des Peres Presbyterian Church
  - Franciscan Connection
  - Goldfarb School of Nursing
  - Healthy Kids Express
  - Helping Hand-Me-Downs
  - Hope Montessori Academy-Des Peres
  - Institute for Family Medicine
  - Jefferson Collaborative
  - John Hancock/Edward Jones
  - Kingdom House
  - Lion's Club
  - Missouri First Steps
  - National Charity League
  - Operation Food Search
  - Places for People
  - Prosperity Connection
  - S.O.C.K.s
  - Safe Kids St. Louis (SSM Cardinal Glennon)
  - Santa's Helpers
  - St Louis University
  - St. Gabriel the Archangel 7th graders
  - St. Louis City Dept of Health
  - St. Louis Community College
  - St. Louis Learning Disabilities Association
  - St. Louis Public Schools-Early Childhood
  - St. Vincent de Paul
  - United 4 Children
  - University of Missouri-Extension
  - Washington University Olin School
  - Youth in Need

## 2014 Income and Expenses



Income	
\$813,239	Government Grants
\$610,258	Private Foundations & Grants
\$285,007	Contributions
\$249,840	United Way
\$221,629	Special Events, net
\$41,877	Parent Fees
\$15,212	All Other
<hr/>	
\$2,237,062	Total Income



Expenditures	
\$1,797,552	Program Services
\$221,101	Fundraising
\$191,257	Management and General
<hr/>	
\$2,209,910	Total Expenditures
\$4,200,961	Net Assets (December 2014)

SouthSide partners with public, private and nonprofit agencies in the community to enhance the services we are able to provide to our children and their families in order to meet their needs more comprehensively.





# Thank You!

## Supporters

On behalf of the board, staff, teachers and most of all, the children and families of SouthSide Early Childhood Center, we want to thank everyone who supported us during fiscal year 2014. Every one of you—individual, business, organization or foundation—is truly a champion for SouthSide’s children and their families! Every gift that you make, large or small, impacts the boys and girls we serve today and through their future success, the entire St. Louis community.

A complete listing of those who supported the children of SouthSide between January 1,

2014 and December 31, 2014, can be found online at <http://southside-ecc.org/home/support-us/donor-listing/>. Please know that we’ve worked hard to ensure the accuracy of this list so if your name has been omitted or misspelled, call us at 314-333-7111.

## Our Volunteers

A huge thank you to all our incredible volunteers who this year read to the children in the classrooms, introduced children and families to educational resources available to them online, built a boot rack to store the galoshes that keep little feet dry on rainy days and so much more!

Volunteers from John Hancock and Edward Jones build two boot racks that were filled with children’s rubber boots purchased through the efforts of the seventh grade class at St. Gabriel the Archangel School.

St. Gabe’s seventh graders have volunteered in SouthSide classrooms each year, for over 15 years, as their annual service project. The boots allow the children at SouthSide to explore the wonders of puddles and snow without worrying about wet feet and ruined shoes.



In 2014, **163** generous individuals, corporate groups, schools and organizations volunteered at SouthSide for a total of **2,896** hours!

Monetary value of these hours? **\$89,700**

Value to our children and their families? **Priceless!**



## Leadership Team

**Katie Rahn**  
*Executive Director*

**Patricia Budler-Little**  
*Mentor Teacher*

**Mary Jane Driscoll**  
*Director of Donor Relations*

**Krysta Grangeno**  
*Family Services Manager*

**Allan Meyers**  
*Controller*

**Jackie Weaver**  
*Program Director*



## 2014-2015 Board of Directors

**Amy Moss**  
*President*

**Peggy Ladd**  
*Vice President*

**Tim Burke**  
*Secretary*

**Jason Riney**  
*Treasurer*

Michael Campbell  
Carolyn Cotta  
Molly Duncan  
Elizabeth George  
Gary Gray  
Lora Gulley  
Wendy Hershey  
Dawn Kotva  
Danielle McPherson  
Chris Miller  
Falencia Moore  
Kelly Richert  
Jim Rubin  
Jennifer Scheessele  
Julie Thomas Sward  
Rob Warner  
Katy Wittwer

## 2014-2015 Advisory Council

**Diane Kalishman**  
*Chairman*

Peggy Brockmann  
Vicki Carlson  
Wendy Dyer  
Sally Gaan  
Gina Hoagland  
Jenny Hoelzer  
Keith Jacob  
Amelia Lewis  
Derek Mays  
Sharon Mink  
Anne McDonnell  
Sally Sandy  
Mary Schoolman  
Ginger Smith  
Robbyn Wahby  
Bert & Carol Walker  
Hank Webber  
Michael Weisbrod  
Trish Williams





# SouthSide

## Early Childhood Center

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