

Rural Community Development Initiative Grant Program

Success Story: Let's Grow Kids Builds Community Capacity for High-Quality Childcare

\$250,000

Investment by Let's Grow Kids

\$250,000

USDA Rural Development RCDI grant match

3 out of 5

Of VT's youngest kids without childcare access

71.5%

Of VT kids under 6 with both parents in workforce

2025

Year goal to achieve 100% access to childcare in VT

36,000+

LGK supporters wanting childcare policy change

The NEED

High-quality childcare in Vermont, like most of the U.S., is severely inhibited by lack of funding, facilities and educational materials. Founded in 2000 by philanthropists Rick Davis and Carl Ferenbach, The Permanent Fund for Vermont Children—now called Let's Grow Kids (LGK)—is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping all Green Mountain families find access to childcare that is trustworthy, healthy, stimulating and within a reasonable distance from home for working parents.

The CHALLENGE

LGK identified the Counseling Services of Addison County (CSAC) and the Orange County Parent Child Center (OCPCC) as orgs that can build childcare capacity within their various communities. Their approaches of 'high-touch' technical assistance for early educators proved effective, but they didn't have the capital to offer their services indefinitely. When many different funding sources can slow down or stop at a moment's notice, building capacity for dependable childcare becomes a daunting challenge.

The SOLUTION

Through its Rural Community Development Initiative grant program (RCDI), USDA Rural Development matched a \$250,000 investment by LGK to create new childcare programs and support established programs for CSAC and OCPCC. By expanding and developing services and capacity, this investment will have a transformational impact for families throughout both regions whose livelihoods depend on a safe, well-equipped and welcoming place for their children to spend hours away from home.

For program regulations and requirements, please go to the [USDA RD RCDI Fact Sheet](#)

