



Vanguard Strong Start for Kids™

2021 Annual Report

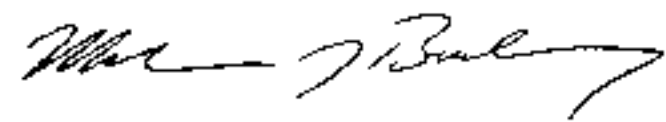
November 2021

Vanguard®

Meeting today's challenges for tomorrow's leaders



Carra Cote-Ackah
Director, Vanguard Community Stewardship



Mortimer J. Buckley
Chairman and CEO, Vanguard

When we launched the Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program™ five years ago, our long-term investment vision was an important driver of our philanthropic strategy. We continue to believe that powerful choices made today can set up a lifetime of success. During the 2020–2021 program year, child care providers and the families they serve faced unprecedented challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic, calls for social justice, and an often-contentious political climate.

The pandemic forced a new normal for all and compounded stressors for the most vulnerable people and systems, including young children, the adults who care for them, and the early care and learning sector at large. The Strong Start for Kids portfolio was intentionally designed to provide nimble, strategically responsive philanthropy. The incidents of the last year and a half required us to lean into this nimbleness, act urgently, and respond to evolving need.

Amid these challenges, we maintained our long-term focus because investing early helps give children the best chance for success in school and in life. Studies show that kids with access to high-quality early education are 25% more likely to graduate high school and four times more likely to have completed a bachelor's degree or higher, and earn up to 25% more in wages as an adult.

Since its inception, Strong Start has invested \$52 million (from crew and corporate donations) and partnered with 45 grantees on 117 projects to help build an ecosystem of supports for resilient families, effective programs, and connected communities. During this program year, evidence-based programs funded by Strong Start grants surpassed a **half million** children served since inception. The largest of those programs, Reach Out and Read, has distributed more than **one million** books, which reflects more than **one million** discussions between pediatricians and families about the importance of daily reading routines for healthy child development.

Looking ahead, the Strong Start portfolio plans to continue its focus on responding to the ongoing child care crisis and participating in the sector's rebuilding, meeting the evolving needs of children and families, and calibrating our equity work within the field. We have seen the early impacts of our efforts in each of these areas and will continue to build partnerships and strategies to help the early education sector thrive.

We thank you, our partners, and our colleagues for your continued support of this important work. Because every child has a right to a strong start.

Lives impacted

502,000



About Strong Start for Kids

Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program

Every child deserves the type of high-quality early learning experiences that build a foundation for future success in school and life. Our signature charitable initiative gives children growing up in poverty in Greater Philadelphia, Charlotte, Phoenix, and London the opportunity to grow, thrive, and learn, with a focus on improving school readiness.

Strong Start for Kids invests in tomorrow by supporting the development, learning, and joy of young children today. Our philanthropic program is supported by our crew's volunteer time and talent, along with generous contributions during the annual volunteer-led giving campaign, including a 100% company match and additional corporate dollars.

Responding to a prolonged pandemic

Addressing the evolving needs of a disrupted sector

Many of the child care centers and child services programs we support have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic's financial and social impacts. Some parents are reluctant to allow their children to return to early childhood programs, while other families are keeping their children home because of financial stresses such as job loss, food insecurity, or homelessness. For the centers, incorporating new health and safety practices require money, time, and emotional stamina, which often took attention and resources away from immediate program needs and ongoing improvement efforts. Many centers have closed because of staffing issues, these new requirements, or lower and uncertain enrollment.

To help address the most pressing needs, the portfolio implemented rapid response funds that provided essential, immediate support to early childhood education providers until public dollars became available. This included supporting grantees as they reallocated funds within their projects to help meet the basic needs of their children, families, and staff in the disrupted environment. Many programs supported by Strong Start, such as ParentChild+, quickly pivoted to adapt their service models to offer virtual support; others addressed urgent needs by reallocating funding toward food, shelter, clothing, and more.



One program supported by Strong Start for Kids, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, was recognized this year for its work to adapt during this extraordinary time. The [article in ZERO TO THREE Journal](#)¹ also notes the importance of rapid response funds to early learning providers.

1. Marsha Gerdes, Crystal Anokam, Emma Blackson, Ellie Segan, Mary Kay Mahar, Beth Huertas, Bernadette Lewis, and Cynthia Richards, 2021. Adaptability and Resilience in Early Childhood Education During a Pandemic: Meeting Challenges, Maintaining Quality, and Creating Networks of Support. *ZERO TO THREE Journal* 41(4): 17-24.

Supporting child care businesses and children in crisis

The child care industry has long struggled to create a functional business model that offers the right balance of high-quality supply/access and resources to help recruit and retain experienced, trained, and certified teachers. Compound that with post-COVID issues—including parents' reticence to return to child care, a workforce recruitment crisis, and ongoing health concerns (particularly for children)—and rebuilding the sector becomes even more complicated.

Public and private capital have been critical for early learning providers over the last year. This includes a funder collaborative initiated by Strong Start, [Philadelphia Emergency Fund for Stabilization of Early Education](#), which is supported by new funders in the form of cash infusions. The sector has also benefited from additional capital and technical assistance, such as that offered by Strong Start for Kids partner Public Health Management Corporation. But the sector, and the stakeholders who interact with it, remains very fragile.

Although COVID-19's impact on young children's overall physical health has been relatively small (but concerning given the emergence of new strains of the virus), its impact on many other developmental domains has been profound. According to the National Institutes of Health, COVID-19 "not only suspended normal childhood activities such as attending school, interacting with extended family and friends, playing outdoors, and exploring nature, but also disrupted the consequent socio-emotional benefits that accrue from children's engagement in these experiences." This year, Strong Start intentionally supported projects that enabled young children, families, and providers to adapt mentally and emotionally, including a grant to long-time portfolio partner First Up to address trauma in and out of the classroom for children, teachers, and parents.

About Strong Start for Kids

Pursuing quality in the midst of a pandemic

The Strong Start for Kids portfolio maintains a long-term, disciplined focus to drive meaningful and measurable social impact in the early childhood sector.

Many projects adapted their approaches in response to the pandemic while continuing to drive improvements that advance the goal of preparing more children from low-income communities to be ready for school. We'd like to highlight one such program, Slide Into Success. The program, started in 2019 by [Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse](#), [Parent Infant Center](#), and [First Up](#), provides training for early childhood teachers. Its goal is to improve the quality of early childhood education programs in North Philadelphia.

Slide Into Success provides opportunities for classroom coaching; peer observations; and play, nature, and project-based learning in the areas of literacy, math, and science. Despite the constraints of the pandemic, the program supported, provided resources for, and trained early learning providers to help raise their quality ratings.



Prepared for success

In this video, Aaliyah McCullough, owner/director of Robin's Nest Early Learning Center in Philadelphia, describes why and how she pursued a high-quality designation for her center during the COVID-19 pandemic through the Slide Into Success program.



Cumulative investment
through June 30, 2021

\$52M

Our approach

Investing for impact

Across the world, more stakeholders are recognizing that investments in young children and the programs that serve them have the power to change a child's (and, ultimately, society's) long-term potential. Despite important public and philanthropic efforts, among others, the early care sector lacks the capacity and comprehensive reach to deliver high-quality services to all the children who

need them. We aim to do our part to change that.

The Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program is driven by decades of research demonstrating that high-quality, evidence-based investments made in the first few years of a child's life lead to lifelong cognitive, emotional, and economic improvements.

Our philanthropic dollars strategically target three levers that have a proven track record for improving school readiness in communities:

- 1 Programs that cultivate the role of parents and caregivers through one-on-one individualized and/or group experiences. These evidence-based programs help improve parenting practices and networks. They also increase critical connections to social supports that promote child health and well-being.
- 2 Programs that support high-quality improvement, expansion, and sustainability efforts for early learning centers and foster teacher development through training, coaching, and apprenticeship programs.
- 3 Projects that mobilize communities by coordinating early learning systems and stakeholders, and educating policymakers to advocate for more—and more equitable—public funding.

When children are supported in their early years, they are more prepared to succeed in school, lead healthier lives, and strengthen their communities. Supporting nurturing home environments for infants and toddlers, high-quality classrooms, and a strong early childhood sector in our communities has never been more vital.

Our approach

Our theory of change

Watch a brief video about the foundational principles that inform our approach to addressing persistent inequities in early childhood education.



Community-building



If we invest in...

Resilient families

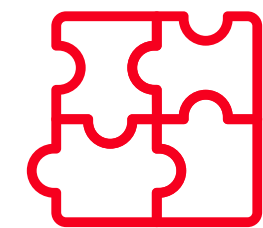
- Parenting education and skill-building
- Parent outreach and connections

We will see...

More families understanding their role in their child's development and learning and having support to access quality services.

Resulting in...

More low-income children becoming school-ready through higher participation in high-quality early learning opportunities.



Effective programs

- Quality improvement and access
- Workforce development
- Learning beyond the classroom

More programs providing high-quality early learning opportunities supported by a prepared workforce.



Connected communities

- Coordination, partnership, and systems-building
- Community planning, learning, and equity strategies
- Policy and advocacy

More communities united to strengthen coordination, resources, and policies that advance early learning.

Field-building

Advising, convening, and providing thought leadership to advance philanthropic learning communities, share best practices and lessons learned, and create resources that contribute to the field's collective knowledge.

Our approach

Partnering for impact

Our work fosters partnerships to advance family support and early learning programming in the highest-need communities near Vanguard's largest corporate operations. We respect and build on local strengths to ensure that families, programs, and communities have the resources to help all children have the best possible start in life.

Strong Start's key opportunity for impact lies not just in grantmaking but in Vanguard's ability to leverage other philanthropic assets in support of early childhood education in underserved communities. In particular, we advocate for increased, sustainable public funding to address racial disparities in access to high-quality services and opportunities for children of color. We partner with leading philanthropic and private institutions that share our vision for young children. We also recognize the strengths of community-based organizations

and seek to elevate their leadership and reach. Strong Start considers race and inequity as a lens for understanding differentiated outcomes. Accordingly, we have made grants and sought leadership opportunities in an effort to create a more level playing field. Data show that nonprofits led by people of color receive less funding than nonprofits with white leadership teams. Strong Start implements best practices to engage with members of these underserved communities so that our grantmaking and decision-making are informed by direct feedback rather than by indirect needs assessments.

Listening to grantees, parents, and the provider community helps us gain perspective on where and how additional funding could have the most impact and will help shape our future investments.

Grants to Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)-led nonprofits

Active BIPOC-led grantees

Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Esperanza

First Up

Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation

Frontline Solutions

Fund for the School District of Philadelphia

Jumpstart for Young Children

Maternity Care Coalition

National League of Cities

Read Charlotte

Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse

National Black Child Development Institute

Our approach

Five years of making an impact

Strong Start for Kids is a balanced portfolio of investments focused on creating conditions in our target communities that allow all children, regardless of race or zip code, to have access to the types of affordable, high-quality child care and early learning experiences that prepare them for school. Our portfolio casts a broad net, working with the best partners that reach children and families where they are: at home, in pediatrician offices, in child care settings (both center-based and home-based), and in the community.

In some cases, projects provide direct services to children, families, and early childhood educators. In other cases, projects focus on building partnerships

across the social services sector to strengthen and coordinate service delivery or expand access to services by increasing public investment in the early childhood sector.

School readiness is often viewed as a point-in-time, individual assessment of a child's ability as they enter kindergarten. Some school districts use formal kindergarten readiness assessments, though these assessments are inconsistent in design, purpose, and usage. Strong Start's focus on school readiness reflects a broader definition—the culmination of consistent exposure to nurturing environments and developmental learning experiences that lay the foundation for physical, cognitive,

and social-emotional development during a child's first five years.

Although most children who benefit from projects that Strong Start supports are not formally assessed, Strong Start relies on the wealth of research about quality childhood experiences that lead to school readiness. Strong Start delivers social impact by promoting those experiences among families, increasing access to those experiences, and strengthening the richness of those experiences in under-resourced settings.

This report marks the conclusion of five full years of early childhood investment since the inception of Strong Start for Kids. In that time, Strong Start has

funded 117 projects totaling **\$52 million**; 94% of closed projects met primary objectives and delivered meaningful results to the community. To date, Strong Start's resources have helped **502,000** people, including **1,000** early childhood educators. Strong Start invested in the creation of nearly **2,200** new child care/pre-K seats, and our COVID-19 emergency funding helped retain more than **31,000** seats at centers that faced the prospect of permanent closure.

Advocacy organizations supported by Strong Start in Pennsylvania were successful in increasing state budget allocations by more than **\$12 million**, making another **2,100** subsidized pre-K seats available to low-income

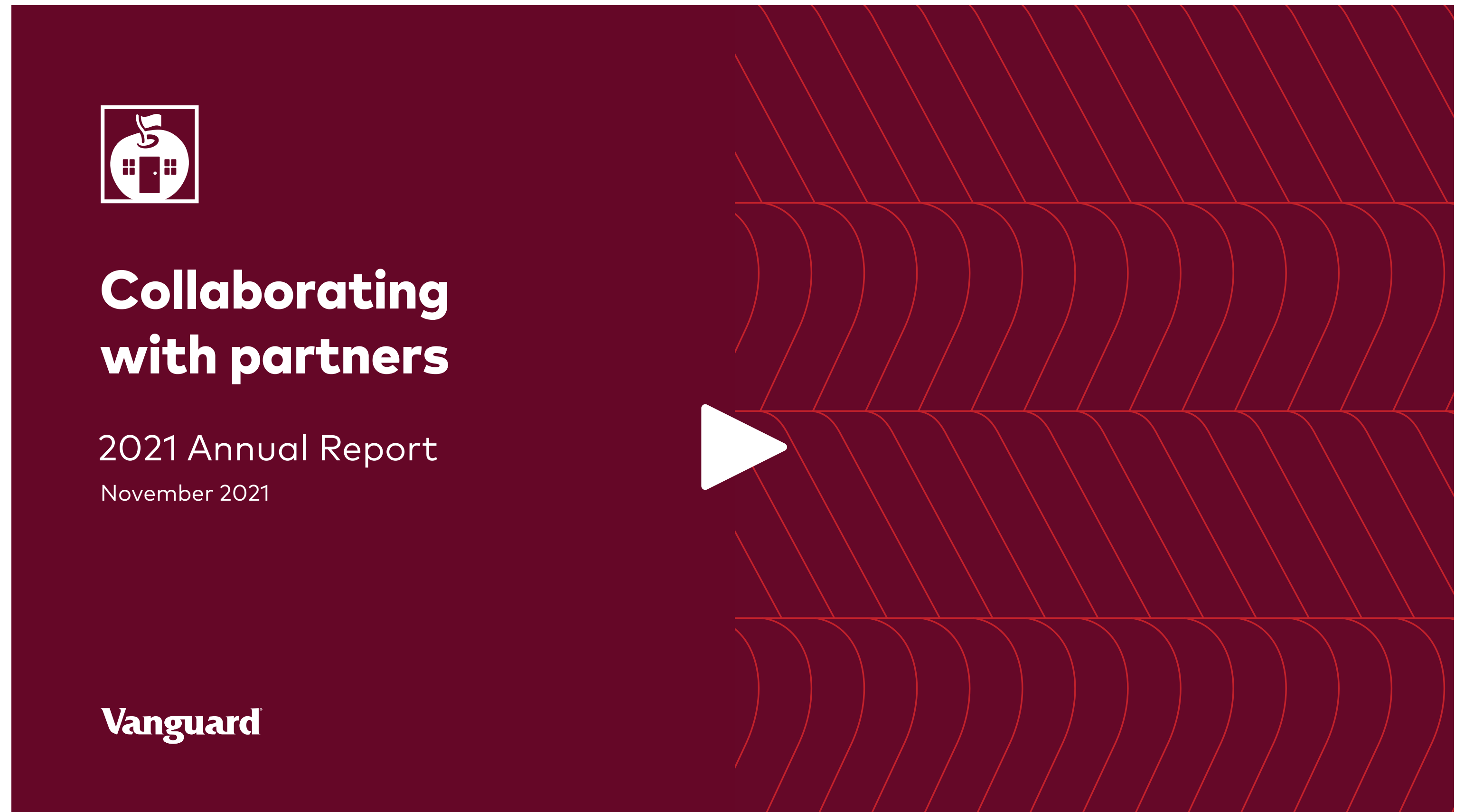
Our approach

families. These top-line measures, while important, can mask the power inherent in bringing community voices to the forefront, forging partnerships across stakeholders, and testing new ideas, all of which play an important role in driving social change.

The numbers also do not convey how critical Strong Start for Kids is to the communities in which we work. As the second-largest private funder of early childhood initiatives in Greater Philadelphia and through meaningful, consistent investment in Charlotte, Phoenix, and London, we demonstrate how critical it is for the business community to put our resources to work in partnership with nonprofits, government agencies, and private foundations to address critical community needs.

Collaborating with partners

This video highlights our collaboration with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)—just one example of partnering with leading institutions that share our vision.



Our approach

Program-year investments

Investment highlights

The grants shown here reflect new project commitments approved in program year 2021.

Twenty-five grants were made to 21 organizations, including new and long-standing partners, to continue projects that were generating positive results or to launch new initiatives. Priorities included responding to acute needs as the pandemic lingers and integrating our equity intentionality—supporting BIPOC-led organizations or targeted activities to increase inclusion and equitable opportunities.

Resilient families

Organization	Grant amount	Grant term	Site	Purpose
Campaign for Grade-Level Reading	\$922,650	March 2021–August 2022	PA AZ NC	To execute the Strong Start Challenge-winning idea of providing microgrants to families with young children to engage in local cultural institutions and experiences that promote family attachment and relationship-building.
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Foundation	\$600,000	July 2021–December 2022	PA	To support Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia in its efforts to promote early literacy to families with young children and to incorporate new authors and books into the network to ensure that children see themselves and worlds beyond their own.
ParentChild+	\$600,000	July 2021–June 2022	PA NC	To provide home visiting services for disconnected families with young children and family child care providers to strengthen positive interactions, early literacy, and school readiness.
Southwest Human Development	\$350,000	January 2021–December 2022	AZ	To support early literacy through the Reach Out and Read program and its network of pediatric practices that create literacy-rich waiting rooms, provide new books at well visits, and counsel parents on the importance of reading to children.
Reach Out and Read Carolinas	\$260,000	January 2021–December 2022	NC	To support the Reach Out and Read program and a book diversity initiative to work with community stakeholders to incorporate new authors and books into the organization's network to ensure that children see themselves and worlds beyond their own.
Southwest Human Development	\$240,000	January 2021–June 2022	AZ	To provide home visiting services for at-risk families focused on maternal and child health, parent engagement, parental knowledge of child development, positive parent-child interactions, and prevention of child maltreatment.
Temple University	\$173,559	July 2021–June 2023	PA	To support the dissemination, research, and evaluation of early language intervention for Spanish-speaking caregivers.
I CAN	\$55,004	July 2020–June 2021	UK	To support I CAN's Tots Talking program, which is designed to help parents change their communication behavior to support 2-year-olds at risk for delayed language.
ParentChild+	\$20,000	July 2020–September 2020	NC	To provide general operating funds in response to intensified family and business needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our approach



Effective programs

Organization	Grant amount	Grant term	Site	Purpose
First Up	\$1,200,000	July 2021– June 2024	PA	To support an initiative that offers the early childhood education workforce targeted training and tools to identify and respond to behavioral and mental health challenges in classrooms associated with trauma.
Esperanza	\$992,100	January 2021– December 2022	PA	To implement enhancements to the early childhood education program at Esperanza College of Eastern University, provide resources to students to sustain enrollment, offer coursework to prepare students for career advancement opportunities, and establish Esperanza as a resource for Latinx early childhood professionals in Philadelphia.
Public Health Management Corporation	\$474,184	July 2021– June 2022	PA	To support the continued improvement of fiscal practices and financial sustainability as the early childhood education sector recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.
Southwest Human Development	\$247,500	January 2021– June 2022	AZ	To support quality-improvement initiatives for a cohort of child care and early learning centers in Maricopa County through coaching and technical assistance delivered by a multidisciplinary team that supports each center's unique challenges, and to improve the organizational, leadership, and classroom learning capacity of each program.
Please Touch Museum	\$100,000	July 2021– December 2021	PA	To support the reopening and sustainability of an anchor institution dedicated to the healthy cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development of young children in Philadelphia.
First Up	\$30,000	March 2021– December 2021	PA	To fund the technology needed for families and providers in West Philadelphia affected by COVID-19 to participate in quality virtual pre-K.

Our approach

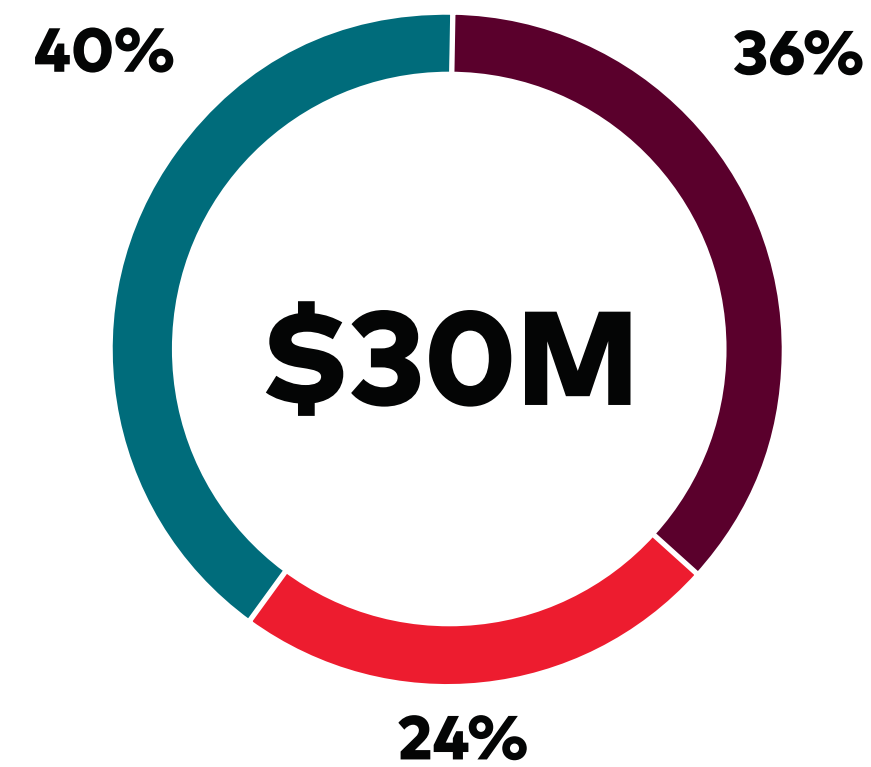


Connected communities

Organization	Grant amount	Grant term	Site	Purpose
People's Emergency Center	\$1,470,237	January 2021– January 2024	PA	To support the Building Early Links for Learning program, which promotes resilience in young children experiencing family homelessness by ensuring enrollment in high-quality early childhood education.
School Readiness Consulting	\$768,120	January 2021– March 2022	PA AZ NC	To build awareness and knowledge of inequity in the early childhood system through targeted communication tools. The project will specifically highlight the capacity and strengths of providers of color in Vanguard's U.S.-based sites.
Nonprofit Finance Fund	\$623,420	January 2021– December 2022	PA	To offer individualized coaching to build the financial capacity and resilience of small, Philadelphia community-centered early childhood nonprofits. The project will specifically target and highlight the needs of the marginalized and underinvested Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous early childhood communities in Philadelphia.
Children First PA	\$570,000	August 2021– February 2023	PA	To support the launch and pilot of a citywide early childhood provider council that offers governance, leadership, and direction to the early childhood education sector in Philadelphia.
Smart Start of Mecklenburg County	\$310,000	January 2021– June 2022	NC	To support an organizational transformation, including a new leadership team and structure, new capabilities, and integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices throughout the organization to improve internal culture and external engagement.
Frontline Solutions	\$141,031	November 2020– November 2021	PA	To convene Black early childhood providers to gather data, assess strengths, uncover gaps and needs, and create a strategic framework that empowers them for decision-making roles within early childhood sector leadership.
LISC Phoenix	\$100,000	August 2021– July 2022	AZ	To perform a child care landscape analysis and develop a set of place-based strategies that identify and meet family child care needs and reveal and mitigate barriers to accessing high-quality care.
Home Grown	\$50,000	March 2021– December 2021	US	To provide general operating support for this national funders collaborative committed to improving quality, practices, resources, and access to stable, home-based child care.
Invest Early NC	\$25,000	April 2021– March 2022	NC	To support a strategic planning process to inform philanthropic investment to catalyze effective systems-level change.
National Black Child Development Institute	\$10,000	June 2021– August 2021	PA	To support programming during National Black Child Development Week, which aims to increase parent and child literacy activities and engagement.

Portfolio at a glance

Strong Start for Kids portfolio:
Active grants by strategies and tactics



Program highlights

In program year 2021 (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021), Strong Start for Kids contributed over \$10 million to early childhood programs and initiatives. On June 30, the portfolio reflected \$30 million in active grants with 38 partners on 54 projects.

40%

Effective programs

\$12.0M

<i>Quality improvement and access</i>	
Free Library of Philadelphia	\$3,002,350
Fund for the School District of Philadelphia	1,585,000
First Up—Trauma-Informed Care	1,200,000
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Foundation	960,000
First Up—Pre-K Scholarships	800,000
Temple University	573,623
Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse	528,365
Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC)	474,184
Philadelphia Department of Public Health	379,435
First Up—Family Child Care Quality Improvement	300,000
Reinvestment Fund	282,699
Southwest Human Development	247,500
First Up—Virtual Pre-K	30,000
<i>Workforce development</i>	
Esperanza	992,100
Jumpstart for Young Children	175,000
<i>Learning beyond the classroom</i>	
Please Touch Museum	488,168

36%

Connected communities

\$10.9M

<i>Coordination, partnership, and systems-building</i>	
CHOP—Community Clinical Integration	\$1,837,000
People's Emergency Center	1,470,237
CHOP—Home Visiting IPV Coordination	627,500
Nonprofit Finance Fund	623,420
PHMC	600,000
Children First PA	570,000
Free Library of Philadelphia	500,000
Smart Start of Mecklenburg County	310,000
Read Charlotte	300,000
Please Touch Museum	100,000
Home Grown	50,000
<i>Community planning, learning, and equity strategies</i>	
School Readiness Consulting	768,120
National League of Cities	400,000
Reinvestment Fund	300,000
Frontline Solutions	141,031
LISC Phoenix	100,000
Invest Early NC	25,000
National Black Child Development Institute	10,000
<i>Policy and advocacy</i>	
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children	482,000
Children First PA	321,700
Council for a Strong America	304,000

Early Childhood Funders Collaborative	\$300,000
Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children	284,046
Pennsylvania Early Learning Investment Commission	143,600
Pennsylvania Child Care Association	120,690
Maternity Care Coalition	100,000
United Way of Pennsylvania	98,368

24%

Resilient families

\$7.0M

<i>Parenting education, skill-building, and connections</i>	
Drexel University	\$1,630,000
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium	1,000,000
Campaign for Grade-Level Reading	922,650
Maternity Care Coalition	660,000
ParentChild+	600,000
CHOP—Language Environment Analysis	600,000
CHOP—Reach Out and Read	600,000
Southwest Human Development—Home Visiting	350,000
Reach Out and Read Carolinas	260,000
Southwest Human Development—Reach Out and Read	240,000
Temple University	173,559

Our approach

Top 10 partners

Top ten partners account for 64% of active grant commitments

	Strong Start partner	Grant amount	Project(s) description
1	Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Foundation	\$4,624,500	Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's world-renowned clinical expertise, groundbreaking research, innovative spirit, and vast network make it an ideal strategic partner for Strong Start. Five projects were active with CHOP at the end of program year 2021. Strong Start is the primary funder of the Greater Philadelphia region's Reach Out and Read program, an early literacy program that partners with pediatricians to provide new books and guidance to families about the importance of daily reading. Strong Start's grant provided approximately 80,000 children with 130,000 new age-appropriate books. Another early literacy initiative we support is a study evaluating how a promising program, LENA Start, helps parents improve the frequency and quality of conversations with their children, which affect both the children's language development and the parents' engagement. To support its broader investment in home visiting, Strong Start funds a project using CHOP's influence to strengthen home visiting organizations' response to intimate partner violence by building partnerships across nonprofit and city agencies to increase the effectiveness of referrals and retain families facing this issue in home visiting services. In child care centers, we support the adoption of an evidence-based approach to improve the behavior of at-risk children and reduce the prevalence of suspensions and expulsions. This program addresses national studies showing that vulnerable children, particularly boys of color, are being suspended and expelled from child care at alarming rates. Lastly, we support the creation of an integrated model of care for at-risk children. This innovative approach is building best practices for coordination among pediatric primary care, nurse home visiting, and quality child care to increase access to services and create a robust continuum of care.
2	Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation	\$3,502,350	We have partnered with the Free Library of Philadelphia to work with 44 child care centers in targeted neighborhoods to create literacy-rich spaces in classrooms stocked with quality books and materials, provide teachers with intensive instructional coaching, and provide culturally appropriate books and toys to parents to enhance literacy development and pre-literacy play opportunities at home. We also support Philadelphia's grade-level reading campaign, Read by 4th, a local affiliate of a national campaign and a program of the Free Library of Philadelphia that takes a systemic approach to unite families, educators, and community partners to improve children's literacy across the country.
3	First Up	\$2,330,000	First Up offers best-in-class training, effective advocacy, and accessible coaching to give early childhood educators and advocates the specialized tools they need to transform lives. Strong Start partners with First Up on four projects: developing and implementing a training and shared-services model for 40 in-home child care providers in Philadelphia; fund-raising and channeling more funding to high-quality pre-K centers by creating centralized support for providers and businesses to participate in Pennsylvania's pre-K tax-credit program; stewarding resources for technology needed for families and providers in West Philadelphia to utilize a virtual pre-K offer; and a new initiative that offers the early childhood workforce targeted training and tools to identify and respond to behavioral and mental health challenges in classrooms associated with trauma.
4	Drexel University	\$1,630,000	The West Philadelphia Action for Early Learning Initiative is a Drexel University-led collaboration of social service, education, and community groups working to create an educational support system for children and families in the West Philadelphia Promise Zone. Strong Start supports a grassroots family engagement effort that deploys trained peer-to-peer mentors who connect with 1,500 families to build awareness of the importance of early childhood development, distribute information and books, and facilitate workshops. Strong Start has also supported the group's launch of Family University, a parenting workshop series.
5	Fund for the School District of Philadelphia	\$1,585,000	Strong Start supports the Fund for the School District of Philadelphia, the fiscal intermediary for the Philadelphia public school system, in training 600 pre-K teachers on quality literacy instruction and fully stocking classroom libraries with new books and materials.

Our approach

Top 10 partners

Top ten partners account for 64% of active grant commitments

6	People's Emergency Center	\$1,470,237	People's Emergency Center (PEC) is a multiservice organization dedicated to changing the life trajectory of families, children, and youth experiencing homelessness. With support from Strong Start since 2017, PEC has created a small team of early childhood experts that works closely with emergency housing providers to promote resilience in young children by ensuring enrollment in high-quality early childhood education. PEC also engages in advocacy to address policies and other barriers to quality child care and early learning for homeless children.
7	Public Health Management Corporation	\$1,074,184	Strong Start is partnering with the Public Health Management Corporation on two projects. One supports a deep-dive analysis of the economics of operating and sustaining child care centers to develop financial management models and standards that can be replicated across the child care sector. A second project supports the evaluation, coordination, and mapping of parenting programs to identify practices that can be replicated across interagency systems and within other multiservice agencies in Philadelphia.
8	National Nurse-Led Care Consortium	\$1,000,000	National Nurse-Led Care Consortium (NNCC) is dedicated to maternal and child health and is one of the country's most-researched home visiting models. Home visitors are registered nurses who begin working with expectant mothers during pregnancy to support healthy birth outcomes and healthy development of infants and toddlers. Since 2017, Strong Start has supported 297 families to receive NNCC home visiting services in previous grants. This grant continues support for home visiting, helps all NNCC families connect to additional resources, and provides a new service assisting families interested in child care with locating safe, quality care and accessing subsidy programs.
9	Esperanza	\$992,100	Strong Start welcomed Esperanza as a new partner in late 2020. For more than 30 years, Esperanza has been empowering its community by offering programs that cultivate self-belief, grit, and knowledge, allowing clients to develop agency, voice, and influence over their own lives. With support from Strong Start, Esperanza will implement enhancements to the early childhood education program at Esperanza College of Eastern University, provide resources to students to sustain enrollment, offer coursework to prepare students for career advancement opportunities, and establish Esperanza as a resource for Latinx early childhood professionals in Philadelphia.
10	Campaign for Grade-Level Reading	\$922,650	In 2020, Vanguard crew had the opportunity to compete in the Strong Start Challenge by submitting ideas on creative ways to engage children and families in activities that promote school readiness and family engagement. This grant represents the implementation of the winning idea of providing microgrants to families with young children in Philadelphia, Charlotte, and Phoenix to engage in local cultural institutions and experiences that cultivate learning and family attachment.

Percentage of closed projects
that met primary objectives

94%



Crew giving kids a Strong Start

Vanguard crew demonstrate their commitment to helping children have the best chance for success by donating their time, talent, and treasure in a variety of ways.

Pivoting to meet need

In a normal year, thousands of Vanguard crew members would be out supporting our Strong Start partners. Vanguard offers crew ample opportunities to support Strong Start and other causes they care about through programs such as Volunteer Time Off, Skills-based Volunteering and more. This past year forced many of us to think beyond traditional volunteer models and

virtually respond to urgent needs. From taking on complex projects, such as creating a client manual for one of the largest Strong Start partners, to spending 90 minutes making support bags for front-line workers in hospitals, Vanguard crew continued to show up for our partners.

Vanguard Gives Back Campaign

During the volunteer-led, virtual Vanguard Gives Back Campaign in 2020, crew participated in service projects, online learning events, and more, in addition to donating millions to support the Strong Start for Kids program.

Crew participated in virtual for 5K events in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Arizona. Crew, family, and friends also virtually volunteered at local agencies. The campaign raised \$4.4 million for Strong Start for Kids.

Investment committee and staff

Strong Start for Kids Investment Committee

Mortimer J. Buckley

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer,
Vanguard

John James

Managing Director,
Institutional Investor Group,
Vanguard

(completed term Summer 2020)

Chris D. McIsaac

Managing Director,
International,
Vanguard

(completed term Fall 2020)

Karin Risi

Managing Director,
Planning and Development,
Vanguard

(began term Winter 2021)

Anne Robinson

Managing Director and General Counsel,
Vanguard

Pauline Scalvino

Principal, Global Risk & Security,
Vanguard

Lauren Valente

Managing Director and
Chief Human Resources Officer,
Vanguard

(began term Fall 2020)

Carra Cote-Ackah

Director, Community Stewardship,
Vanguard

Investment committee and staff

Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program staff

The team overseeing Strong Start has expertise in early childhood education, community organizing, philanthropy, and business leadership. It stewards Vanguard's investments with the utmost care by partnering with nonprofit leaders, government officials, and other funders, sourcing evidence-informed models, and shepherding project ideas to prepare them for philanthropic investment. Grantees are selected on an invitation-only basis. The team uses a rigorous diligence process, benchmarking, and active engagement in the field to monitor funded grants. With funding and connection to Vanguard's robust pool of volunteers, Strong Start for Kids partners are given support that promotes social change in our communities.



Crystal Shannon, Principal and Program Officer

Ms. Shannon is responsible for governance of The Vanguard Group Foundation and co-leads the Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program. She proposes funding and evaluates grantmaking strategies to ensure that philanthropic investments achieve maximum impact.



Rashanda Perryman, Program Officer

Ms. Perryman is a program officer for Vanguard's Community Stewardship team and serves as co-lead for the Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program. She proposes funding and evaluates support for programs that enable young children and families to thrive.



Marnie Anderson, Grant Operations Lead

Ms. Anderson is a grant operations lead for the Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program. She manages the daily functions of the program and supports the program officers in achieving strategic metrics and funding programs that provide young children the opportunity to grow, thrive, and learn.

To learn more about Vanguard, visit [vanguard.com](https://www.vanguard.com).

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