Educate | Engage | Inspire

KIDS CAN

COMMUNITY CENTER

2025-26
ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES, BUILDING A STRONGER FUTURE

As I reflect on the past year, I'm reminded that meaningful change rarely happens in the spotlight. It happens every day in classrooms, after-school programs, community centers, and homes. It's found in the teacher who greets a child by name, the mentor who shows up every week, the staff member who supports a family through challenges, and the donor who invests in a brighter future. These moments, though often unseen, are what strengthen children, families, and communities.

I am grateful for our staff, board members, partners, and supporters who make this work possible. Through early childhood education, out-of-school programming, mentoring, and community partnerships, we help children discover their potential and families access the support they need to thrive.

One of this year's defining moments was hosting the ceremonial signing of LB304, legislation that helps preserve access to childcare for thousands of Nebraska families. Standing alongside childcare providers, nonprofit partners, business leaders, and advocates was a powerful reminder of what can happen when a community comes together on behalf of children and families. While challenges such as childcare affordability, workforce shortages, and access to care remain, we are committed to being part of the solution through advocacy, workforce investment, and strong partnerships that strengthen the systems families rely on every day.

As you read this annual report, I hope you see the impact of a community that shows up for children and families day after day. Thank you for believing in this work and making it possible. Together, we are creating opportunities today and building a stronger future for Nebraska.



With gratitude,

Robert Patterson

ROBERT PATTERSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



10
sites serving
our communities



Our
programming
reached
1,707
kids



275+
books distributed
through
our mentor
reading program



12
whipped cream
pies in the face



1,376
volunteer service
hours supported
our programs



48,313
meals served



$175,000
in scholarships
supported
180 families



Early Childhood Education

For nearly a century, Kids Can has helped lay the foundation for lifelong learning through our Early Childhood Education program, serving children from 6 weeks to 5 years old. In FY26, we welcomed **117** kids to our center. Our state-licensed program provides a safe, nurturing environment where children learn, grow, and thrive through hands-on experiences guided by the Creative Curriculum. Every day, our educators partner with families to build strong foundations for kindergarten readiness and lifelong success, ensuring that each child receives the care, support, and opportunities they need to reach their full potential.







Step Up to Quality
Level 5 Center
Nebraska Department of Education & Health & Human Services

2025-26 EARLY CHILDHOOD READINESS OUTCOMES

82%
Academically Ready

93%
Socially-Emotionally Ready

96%
Physically Ready

"We are truly grateful to be part of such an exceptional program. Our experience has been nothing short of outstanding, not only for our full-time child who attends regularly, but also for our children who participate in the Daybreak program during school breaks and the summer program. The consistency of care, attention, and warmth across all programs speaks volumes about the dedication and passion of the entire team."

- Early Childhood Parent

Out-of-School Programs

Kids Can's Out-of-School Programs continued to grow with **1,590** children participating in 2025-26. From before and after school care to full-day programming during school breaks, we provide safe, supportive, engaging spaces where children can learn, build friendships, and thrive. During the summer, Kids Can extends full-day programming to both our South Omaha campus and Miller Park in North Omaha, ensuring children continue to learn, explore, and grow in a supportive environment.





Through partnerships with Collective for Youth and Nelson Mandela Schools, Kids Can provided on-site after-school programming at eight Omaha elementary schools: Benson West, Conestoga, Druid Hill, Gilder, Miller Park, Minne Lusa, Nelson Mandela, and Wakonda. Together, we are expanding access to quality out-of-school opportunities that help students succeed in the classroom and beyond.



"I have so many reasons I am grateful to have Kids Can be a part of my son's life. There are a variety of activities my son has access to; sports, field trips, reading and socializing with children his age."
-Laura, Out-of-School Program Parent



2025-26 Student Growth Outcomes

81%
Future Growth Mindset

73%
Positive Peer Relationships

77%
Support from an adult who cares

Mentoring Program

Sometimes, the most meaningful change begins with something simple: knowing that a caring adult is consistently there for you. Through Kids Can's mentoring program, students build trusted relationships that instill confidence, resilience, positive decision-making skills, and a stronger sense of belonging. With the support of dedicated mentors, they gain encouragement to navigate challenges, celebrate success, and recognize their potential.

The continued growth of our mentoring program reflects the importance of these relationships in the lives of the children we serve. By expanding mentoring opportunities to additional Kids Can sites, we have connected even more students with the support, stability, and encouragement that can make a lifelong difference.

Our mentoring program is accredited through MENTOR Nebraska. To learn more about our mentoring program, contact Julie Madsen at jmadsen@kidscan.org.

43
dynamic duos

1,376
mentoring hours

12
new mentors







Growing into Potential

A MENTOR MATCH STORY

When Michael and Joseph were matched, Joseph faced challenges managing his emotions and behavior, following directions, and participating in activities. Building positive relationships with peers and adults were not always easy. Through his mentor relationship, Joseph began to make meaningful changes. He developed healthier ways to manage his emotions and respond appropriately to difficult situations. As his confidence grew, so did his desire to be more engaged.



Joseph became eager to help teachers, looked out for younger children, greeted staff with a smile, and demonstrated respect through everyday acts of kindness. This past summer, Joseph officially aged out of the Kids Can youth program, but the relationship that helped spark his growth continues. Joseph and Michael remain matched through Big Brothers Big Sisters, allowing their mentorship journey to continue and build on the progress Joseph has made. Michael also remains active and a valued member of the Kids Can community. Stories like Joseph's remind us that lasting change often begins with a single caring relationship.



I was really happy when I was paired with Michael I knew me and Michael would be best friends I am so grateful I was paired up with Michael

Sincerly Joseph

STEMsmart Academy

STEMsmart Academy ensures students have access to high-quality, innovative learning experiences that spark curiosity, build confidence, and help them discover new possibilities. Through hands-on activities and meaningful enrichment opportunities, students are encouraged to explore, create, and grow in a supportive environment.

Our unique STEMsmart approach expands the traditional STEM framework of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics to also include Strength, Music, Art, Reading, and Tutoring. Beyond academic achievement, STEMsmart Academy helps students develop important life skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving.

Program participants voted technology as the highest ranked topic in STEMsmart programming followed by art and strength (sports science, health science, and anatomy).



Top 2 Programs

Forces & Motion

Food Science

STEM SMART ACADEMY

Implemented

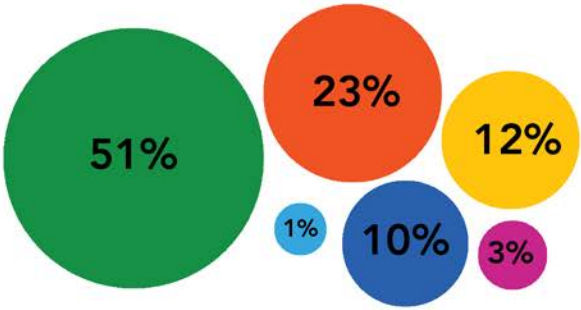
17

unique programs





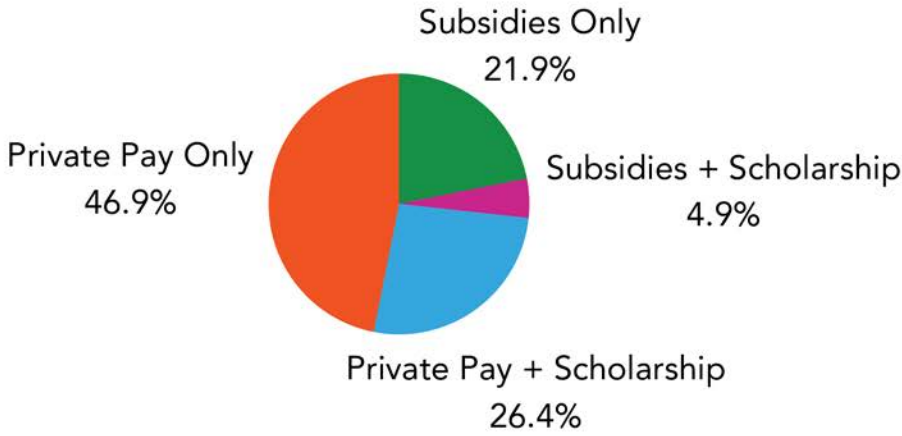
Kids Can by the Numbers



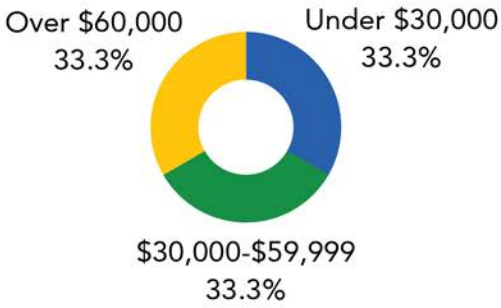
Race and Ethnicity

Asian
Black or African American
Hispanic
Native American
Two or More
White

Center Subsidy and Private Pay



Household Income



Age

9%

6 weeks - 5 years old

91%

6 - 13 years old

Kids Can Financial Statements

Kids Can Community Center's 2025-26 audit was conducted by Bland & Associates. The full audit and Form 990 are available upon request.





Statement of Activities 2025-26

Operating Revenues and Support:	
Earned Revenue	3,301,911
Foundation Support	2,527,836
Special Events	131,064
Investment Income	118,535
Contributions	43,032
Gain on Disposal of Property	16,695
Total:	**$6,139,073**

Operating Expenses:	
Early Childhood Education	1,712,227
Out Of School Programs	3,040,678
Community Programs	30,205
Management and General	278,375
Fundraising	164,608
Operating Subtotal:	5,226,093
Depreciation	615,593
Total:	**$5,841,686**

Statement of Financial Position 2025-26

Assets:	
Current Assets	5,402,767
Property & Equipment	8,864,502
Other Assets	864,777
Total:	**$15,132,046**

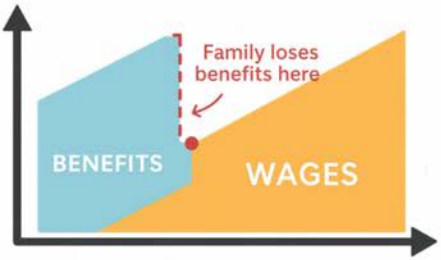
Liabilities & Net Assets:	
Current Liabilities	336,708
Net Assets w/o restrictions	13,502,881
Net Assets w/ restrictions	1,292,457
Total:	**$15,132,046**



One Raise. One Lost Benefit. One Big Challenge.

WHAT IS THE CLIFF EFFECT?

The Cliff Effect occurs when a family's income increases enough to make them ineligible for benefits, but not enough to fully cover the cost of the support they lose. A raise, promotion, or additional work can be a positive step. However, if child care is expensive, many families may face a sudden new expense that their higher income does not yet cover.



For many working families, a modest increase in income can lead to the loss of childcare assistance, creating a financial cliff that is difficult to overcome.

THE COST OF CARE

A family with a 12-month-old and an 8-year-old may need full-time infant care, an after-school program, and summer camp. The estimated annual cost is $30,000. Without childcare subsidies, those costs may represent more than one-third of a family's gross income.

$59,478
income threshold for a Nebraska family of four (Nebraska DHHS)

$18,147
estimated annual cost of care for two children (First Five Years Fund)

7%
Percentage of income where childcare is considered affordable (Federal DHHS)

PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITY

In 2026, LB304 maintained the childcare subsidy eligibility rate at 185% of the federal poverty level. This helps preserve access to care for many Nebraska families. Continued attention is needed to help ensure that working families can stay in the workforce as wages, as well as cost of living, continue to rise.

A Nebraska family of four would need a combined annual household income below $59,478—185% of the federal poverty level—to quality for childcare subsidies. For two parents working full-time, that is about $14.30 per hour each: $0.70 less than minimum wage.

A Year of **Advocacy**, A **Milestone** for Nebraska Families







We were incredibly proud to have been part of the fight for LB304 and its passage. This legislation, brought by Senator Wendy DeBoer, helps Nebraska families maintain access to affordable childcare, ensuring children can continue to learn, grow, and thrive while their parents work.

It was an honor to have Kids Can host the ceremonial bill signing by Governor Pillen. This was a win for Nebraska's children, families, and future—and a powerful reminder of what we can accomplish when we advocate together.

Thank you to our community partners, donors, and supporters for your advocacy and commitment to this work!

CAN DO AWARDS

The Can Do Awards Luncheon celebrates the power of community and the belief that every child can succeed when given the opportunity. In May 2026, Omaha came together to celebrate five deserving awardees, all while raising money to help working families access affordable, high-quality childcare.

The 2026 Can Do Awardees

Can Do Future presented by Wells Fargo:
Carmen Tapio, North End Teleservices

Can Do Mentor presented by Union Pacific:
Tasha Bonner, Nebraska Medicine

Can Do Educator presented by the Lozier Foundation:
Dr. Jennifer Lemke

Can Do Volunteer presented by Mutual of Omaha:
Susan Colvin, Bellevue Public Schools

Can Do More Here presented by American National Bank:
Jake Shaddy, Different Approach Sober Living

Thank you to our Honorary Chairs, Terri & Tim Burke!

Save the Date! We hope you will join us for the next Can Do Awards on May 4, 2027.







Board of Directors & Advisory Council

We appreciate our Board of Directors and Advisory Council for their leadership, guidance, and commitment to Kids Can's mission. Their advocacy, expertise, and support help strengthen our organization and expand opportunities for the children and families we serve.

2025-26 Board Members

Hannes Zetzsche, Chair
Alex Wachholtz, Vice Chair
Jaikrit Kandari, Treasurer
Shannon Hite, Secretary
Jane Franklin
Brad Hove
Sammi Kaiser
Angie Kelso
Aida Lamelas Hernandez
Kristin Lund
Lindsey Munro
Kimara Snipes
Maria Valentin
Yesenia Valenzuela
Monica Wells

Advisory Council Members

Avi Atholi
Cristina Castro-Matukewicz
Nancy Edick
Cesar Garcia
Roger Garcia
Jo Giles
Laura Jana
Sarah Ann Kotchian
Emiliano Lerda
Mary Lopez
Dianne Lozier
Carol Russell
Katie Weitz

Kids Can is proud to be at Platinum level on Candid/Guidestar, a Best Practice Partner though the Nonprofit Association of the Midlands, and a Four-Star Organization on Charity Navigator.









Stay **Connected** with Us.
Make an **Impact** Meaningful to You!

We invite you to connect with us, and invite others to join the Kids Can Community! Through your shared time, talents, and resources, you are helping strengthen the mission of Kids Can. Thank you for investing in children and families and helping us create opportunities to educate, engage, and inspire our community.

Every child who walks through our doors has a story. Every family comes to us with hope, challenges, and dreams for a better future. Each of us has the opportunity to play a small part in what comes next. Thank you for your continued support of our mission!

LIKE, FOLLOW, AND CONNECT WITH US!
@KIDSCANOMAHA

Support
or
Give Today!











At **Kids Can Community Center**, our mission is to **educate**, **engage**, and **inspire** children through early childhood care and out-of-school experiences.

KIDS CAN COMMUNITY CENTER
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