

**Los Angeles Department of Public Health  
Nutrition and Physical Activity Program**

**Annual Summary Report  
CONTRACT TERM 2  
10/1/2021- 9/30/2022**

**SECTION 1: COVER PAGE**

<b>AGENCY NAME:</b>	The Children's Collective, Inc.	
<b>CATEGORY:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Early Childcare & Education <input type="checkbox"/> K-12 Schools <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare Clinics <input type="checkbox"/> Food Pantries and Food Banks <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Healthy Food <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition Education & Physical Activity	
<b>CONTRACT #:</b>	PH# 000440	
<b>DATE:</b>	9.6.22	
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Emily Menzer	[REDACTED]
	Print Name	Telephone

The foregoing information is true and/or correct to the best of my knowledge.

[REDACTED]

**Authorized Signature** (Executive Director or authorized designee)                      Date

**SIGNATURE MAY BE SIGNED IN BLUE INK OR MAY BE AN ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE**

<b>Title:</b>	Executive Director	<b>Telephone:</b>	[REDACTED]
---------------	--------------------	-------------------	------------

**INSTRUCTIONS:**  
**Annual Summary Report**  
 Email: A draft **Annual Summary Report** shall be emailed to the agency's assigned Program Manager. The e-mail must be sent by Wednesday, September 15, 2022

All information provided in this report shall be documented on file and maintained at the agency's facility for DPH review.

<b>County Use Only</b>	
Date received: 9/8/2022	Received by (Initial): [REDACTED]
Date approved by Program Manager: 9/12/2022	



## SECTION 2: ANNUAL REPORT

1. For each sub-strategy that you are working on, list *major* accomplishments during Term 2 (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022) and how these accomplishments helped you reach your stated project goal(s) and objective(s) in the Scope of Work. Please note any significant project partners and their role in project activities. (500 words maximum | Bullet points accepted)

Throughout Term 2, we were able to develop our program in various capacities. For produce distributions, we continued the schedule established in Term 1, delivering produce to each TCCI childcare site every other month. Thanks to our produce partner, Seeds of Hope, we were able to provide a wide variety of produce to our families – including everything from mangos to maitake mushrooms. Below are a few produce distribution highlights from Term 2:

- Distributed produce at 10 different preschool sites, serving the families of children in 19 different classrooms
- Held 56 (30 were required) different produce distribution events
- Sorted and distributed 2,022 individual bags of produce
- Reached an estimated 1,653 unique individuals through distributions
- As of June 30, 2022, 18,914 pounds of produce were distributed

Like our distributions, we continued to build on the foundation established in Term 1 for implementation of our CATCH sub-strategy. We continued to provide our CATCH Champion Teachers with a monthly stipend in exchange for teaching at least one CATCH class per week. We were much more equipped to hold teachers accountable this term with regular in-person CATCH observations conducted by TCCI educators, in addition to consistent reminders and feedback regarding classes tracked each week. The following are CATCH statistics from Term 2:

- As of 8/31, TCCI Champion Teachers have taught 691 (480 were required) CATCH classes
- As of 8/31, TCCI Champion Teachers have taught 68 CATCH nutrition classes
- Held all-day CATCH training on 7/8/22 for two new Champion Teachers
- Developed a system of accountability and provided recurrent feedback for CATCH teachers

Of our three sub-strategies, our Smarter Mealtimes program had the most opportunity for growth. In Term 2, we were able to start using the menu board tools we set up the previous year. We began working with five of our sites to incorporate the menu board into lunchtime and start introducing the food component magnets to kids. We developed several materials to aid teachers in their use of the menu board, including a Menu Board Tutorial and a Lunchtime Nutrition Guide. These guides provided different activities and ways to use the menu board with their students. The Lunchtime Nutrition Guide explained the nutrient benefits of certain lunchtime fruits and vegetables and provided sample dialogue as a way for teachers to communicate these benefits to their preschool kids (for example, dialogue for spinach included quips like “Helps us build strong bones and muscles!”). Some notable SMT achievements from Term 2 include:

- Supplied each classroom with a set of new colorful serving bowls for mealtimes
- TCCI educators provided gardening opportunities and implemented 68 (requirement was 50) *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* (GITILI) classes with children in all 19 preschool classrooms
- Fruit and vegetable taste tests were conducted at all 10 childcare sites

- Healthy nutrition messaging was displayed in every classroom
2. What challenges did you face implementing your SOW activities during Term 2 (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022) and what actions did you take to address these challenges? If applicable, please note in your response any changes to your project goal(s), objective(s), or activities that were made as a result of the challenges you faced. (500 words maximum | Bullet points accepted)

Like many of the other funded partners, we struggled to gain some momentum with our parent nutrition classes. For more than half of Term 2, parents weren't allowed inside the childcare sites, leaving us very few opportunities to engage with them or begin developing a rapport with families. As COVID restrictions began to lift in the spring, we were able to start reaching out to parents and begin holding in-person classes. Although we've held at least 25 parent nutrition classes throughout Term 2, we haven't had participation at many of them, thus we will likely end up recording less than 25 classes for the term.

Towards the end of summer, our preschool sites began holding in-person parent meetings for the first time since the start of the pandemic. These meetings provide wonderful opportunities for the CFHL team to partner with our preschools and provide a parent nutrition lesson or food demonstration in addition to the meeting. Our educators are motivated to continue summer outreach efforts into Term 3. We're hopeful that with consistent scheduling of parent classes, we will eventually establish a discernible presence at our sites and develop ongoing relationships with parents and families.

Another challenge we faced in Term 2 was short staffing and staff turnover. With new employees, we needed to reorganize staff roles and tweak some of our programmatic processes. While this takes initial time and energy, the result is an efficient and confident team of staff that's excited about the work we do.

More challenging than short staffing on the CFHL team, our childcare department has faced, and is continuing to face, an unprecedented shortage of childcare teachers, teaching assistants (TAs), and site supervisors. With so many roles left unfilled, there were many classrooms who didn't have the capacity to conduct CFHL activities. Throughout the term, several classrooms either lost their CATCH teachers, or didn't have enough staff to train someone in CATCH. Prioritizing flexibility and patience, we worked with childcare staff to provide a stand-in CATCH teacher whenever possible. We were also able to train two new Champion Teachers at our CATCH training in July, allowing two more classrooms regular exposure to the CATCH curriculum.

Although CATCH classes were being regularly implemented, we initially struggled with teachers consistently reporting the classes they taught each week. We approached this issue from multiple angles. Once we had enough staff, we were able to delegate the tracking of CATCH classes to one person. This allowed one of our educators to devote enough time to monitor the weekly tracking of lessons and report back to each Champion Teacher regarding the number of classes reported. This accountability allowed us to be consistent in enforcing the weekly reporting of classes. We made the online tracking process even quicker by creating a flyer with a QR code that linked directly to the online tracking form. We posted these flyers in all childcare classrooms, making it possible to report a class in less than thirty seconds.

3. During Term 2 (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022), did you create any items or products (see below for examples) that were not expected in your Scope of Work? If so, what was created and how have these products been disseminated? Products may include articles, issue

briefs, fact sheets, presentations, newsletters, sponsored conferences and workshops, websites, audiovisuals, and other informational resources (please include links to these products, if applicable, or attach a copy to this report). (500 words maximum | Bullet points accepted)

We created several materials throughout Term 2 that helped us achieve our objectives and work towards sub-strategies. For our Smarter Mealtimes initiative, we developed the Menu Board Tutorial and disseminated it to childcare sites at the end of Term 1/beginning of Term 2. This tutorial contained a brief introduction to Smarter Mealtimes strategies and introduced the menu board tool, its components, and how to start using it in the classroom.

For Term 2, we created a second menu board resource – the Lunchtime Nutrition Guide. The customized guide includes the fruits and vegetables that are served as part of the children’s lunch menu. For each fruit or vegetable, a set of information is listed: the key nutrients; general health benefits; and a quote section that gives teachers suggested dialogue on how to talk to kids about the benefits of nutrients offered by each fruit/vegetable. The Lunchtime Nutrition Guide also offers a small section with tips on encouraging kids to try new fruits/vegetables, and how to nurture a positive relationship with food in preschool-aged children.

In early spring of Term 2, we began implementing GITILI lessons at the sites and helped childcare staff to develop a garden for growing fruits and vegetables as well as conducting activities that are part of GITILI. To go along with these activities, we wanted to develop a tool for sites to continue maintaining their gardens independently. Our Garden Guide gives simple steps with functional pictures to explain the basics of planting. It includes several graphs that make it easy to learn when to plant a fruit/vegetable; how much sun it may need; and the appropriate distance for sowing seeds. We also included a section that provides detailed care instructions for planting, growing, and maintaining the fruits and vegetables that are used in the GITILI curriculum.

In the second half of our term, we were able to present trainings to both our childcare staff and our Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) staff that gave other TCCI staff a deeper understanding of the CFHL team and program, and an introduction to various activities that we implement as part of our scope of work. We also continued to develop our website throughout Term 2 and made the aforementioned materials available for download, amongst other resources and tools we developed throughout the year.

4. During this reporting period, were there any other accomplishments related to CalFresh Healthy Living Program implementation that are not included in your Scope of Work? Examples include, but are not limited to, receiving additional funds to support your sub-strategies, implementing additional CalFresh Healthy Living activities, forming a new community partnership or joining a workgroup/collaborative, or having a press release event. (500 words maximum | Bullet points accepted)

We conducted several activities beyond our scope of work objectives. At TCCI’s annual preschool picnic, the CFHL team provided a “noodle hockey” station for all preschool children at TCCI. We set up two outdoor fields with soccer nets at each end. We cut pool noodles in half and inflated about 25 beach balls. Preschoolers used their pool noodle to hit the beach balls around the field. We also provided several dispensers (over 15 gallons) of water for children and staff to drink throughout the day, encouraging everyone to hydrate without sugary beverages.

We were also able to conduct multiple trainings with different internal departments, which was a significant accomplishment and a partnership we’ve been working to strengthen for several years. At

the beginning of the term, TCCI hired a new manager for the CACFP program and CFHL staff have been able to work with her and begin building a partnership between our programs.

In April, we held a first-ever training for TCCI's CACFP staff. We introduced kitchen staff to various aspects of our program including:

- Smarter Mealtimes and the scorecard items we've been targeting
- Menu board project and custom magnets we've been working on with childcare staff
- *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* lessons we've implemented at all the sites and the various food demo and gardening activities that coincide with the curriculum
- The most successful snacks and taste tests we've done with TCCI kids at all 10 sites (strawberry pizzas, spinach cream cheese rolls, summer squash "lunchable", etc.)
- Tips for making food kid-friendly, and sharing of kid-friendly recipes and new ideas for the lunch menu (i.e. presentation of food, pairing veggies with a dip, etc.)
- Explanation of how we can partner in the future including:
  - Food waste audits, reporting of findings to the CACFP manager
  - Food demonstrations with children to introduce new items/meals the kitchen might be adding to the menu

In August, we were also able to hold a training for the entire TCCI childcare staff, which we've been striving to arrange for a few years. We wanted to address the staff collectively, with the support of the childcare manager, so staff could better understand our mission and the nature of our program. We presented on different programmatic topics, including:

- Major program components (produce distributions, CATCH, SMT, etc); not all childcare staff were aware that the CFHL program is collectively responsible for all of those initiatives)
- CATCH and class tracking updates
- A more in-depth explanation of SMT, the SMT Scorecard, and the menu board
- A few tips on healthier mealtime practices (including not rewarding kids for cleaning their plates, how to encourage kids to try new fruits and vegetables, etc.)
- Notification that we'll begin more hands-on SMT trainings beginning in October and introducing staff to the SMT stipend opportunity that will be available in Term 3
- Reminder of our CFHL website and all the resources available to childcare staff on our site