



Our Mission is to advance quality care and education of children in their early years. Think Small uses leading-edge knowledge from the early childhood field to create services and tools that support and strengthen the abilities of families and early childhood professionals. These include the following:

Preparing Early Childhood Professionals

- **Professional Development, Consultation, and Coaching:** Think Small provides metro-wide professional development opportunities focused on the essential elements of high quality care. Opportunities include: classes and workshops provided in English, Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Oromo, Amharic, and Korean; individual and site-based consultation and coaching support; business support to help maintain successful childcare business; and career guidance for certification and licensing. Enrollment in over 1,800 trainings during the FY16 was 27,287.
- **Community Outreach and Access:** Think Small's multilingual Outreach staff connects with historically underserved communities, including those in low-income neighborhoods, English Language Learners, communities of color, and immigrant and refugee families so they can fully engage in Minnesota's early childhood care and education system. Outreach staff work to expand the reach of Think Small services and identify needs and gaps within these communities. Staff assists families and providers navigating complex government systems, connecting them to resources and services available at Think Small and other organizations.
- **Publishing:** A leading publisher of curriculum, management, professional development, and business resources for adults who care for, teach, and nurture young children, Redleaf Press publishes on a broad range of topics. These products are designed to assist early childhood professionals in using stimulating, child-centered practices based on sound and proven theory about learning and child development. Redleaf publishes between 24 and 30 new titles a year and has more than 275 titles in print. Approximately 193,000 products are distributed annually to customers both in the U.S. and abroad. Redleaf books are translated into 14 different languages, with over 40 books in translation. Over 50% of titles have been converted into e-books and other digital formats. Redleaf Press books are being used in more than 90 foreign countries. Approximately 750,000 catalogs are mailed to customers annually.
- **Library:** The Debra S. Fish Early Childhood Library at Think Small is available statewide. Now numbering over 5,900 items, the library's collection is a part of Minnesota's public interlibrary loan system and materials can be delivered to all local libraries.

Strengthening Families

- **Family Education and Referral:** Referral specialists ensure that families are aware of the importance of school readiness, they provide vital information on how to identify the best care, and early education options for their children. Referral specialist's directly served approximately 2,200 families annually, with over 27% being non-English speaking. Referrals from Think Small to the parentawareratings.org provider search website results in 10,264 sessions.
- **Scholarships and other Financial Supports:** Think Small Serves providers and families with targeted financial supports. Think Small administers nearly 5,300 eligibility-based scholarships for families to enroll children in programs with Parent Aware quality ratings. We administer Basic Sliding Fee Child Care Assistance for eligible low-income families in Ramsey County. We connect providers with quality improvement grants and emergency funding for early childhood programs.

Catalyzing Change

- **Policy, Advocacy and Initiatives:** Think Small works across the state activating field leaders and other stakeholders across systems on issues that concern our youngest children. This includes civic engagement and parent empowerment training in a number of diverse cultural, refugee, and immigrant communities. Think Small also plays an important role in advancing policy initiatives such as Parent Aware and Early Learning Scholarships. By leading from the development of policy concepts through the piloting stages and helping take promising initiatives to scale, the agency has helped improve access to quality early learning opportunities and helped build accountability in the system.

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