

Formal Organizational Chart

It is the philosophy of Children's Choice to operate as a "Learning Organization", which means in part that we try to be non-hierarchical in every possible way. The staff members operate as a team, so each member is responsible for expressing concern or disagreement with the actions of any other team member regardless of ranking within the organization. All staff members are strongly encouraged to be involved in the hiring process, curriculum design, policy development, etc. All aspects of the operation of Children's Choice are open to staff involvement at any level. All staff including "administrators" are actively involved with the children in the day to day operation of the program the majority of their time at work. Children's Choice is a not-for-profit corporation. The board of directors is legally responsible for actions of Children's Choice.



At the staff level, Mike and Chelsea Ashcraft are the directors who are responsible for the overall operation of the organization, and facilitating positive performance and professional development of the staff.

Mike and Chelsea supervise Leann Sommers-Templeman and Catherine McAllister - the Programs Coordinators

who supervise, and provide additional mentoring, guidance and support for the Site Directors. The Program Coordinators inspects the sites for licensing and accreditation standards.



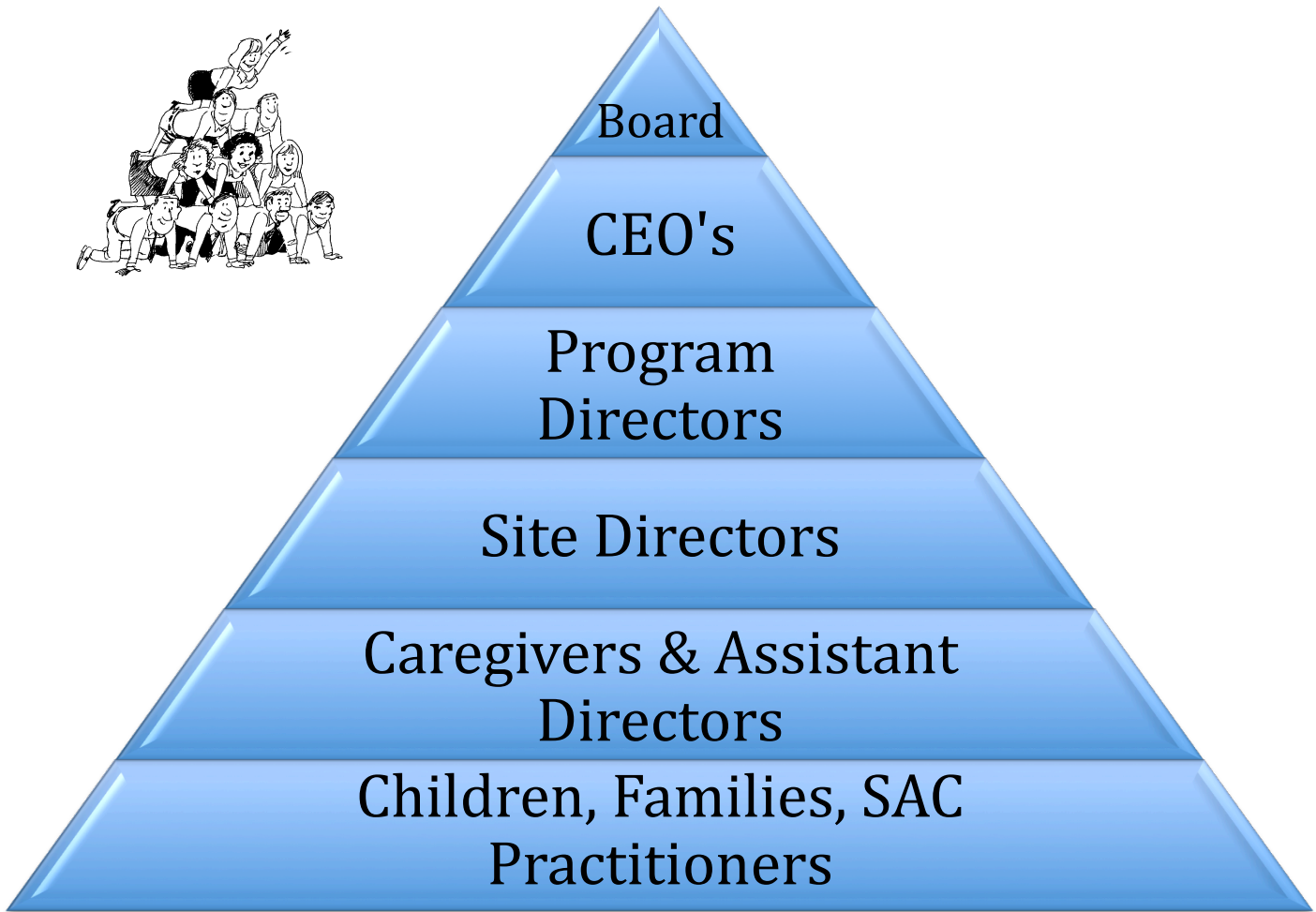
The Site Directors, who are responsible for the day-to-day operation of their individual afterschool programs, are full-time professionals which meet the qualifications of The NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care. The Site Directors are responsible for facilitating positive performance and professional development of the school-age teachers or school-age caregivers. The school-age caregiver is the entry-level position for Children's Choice.

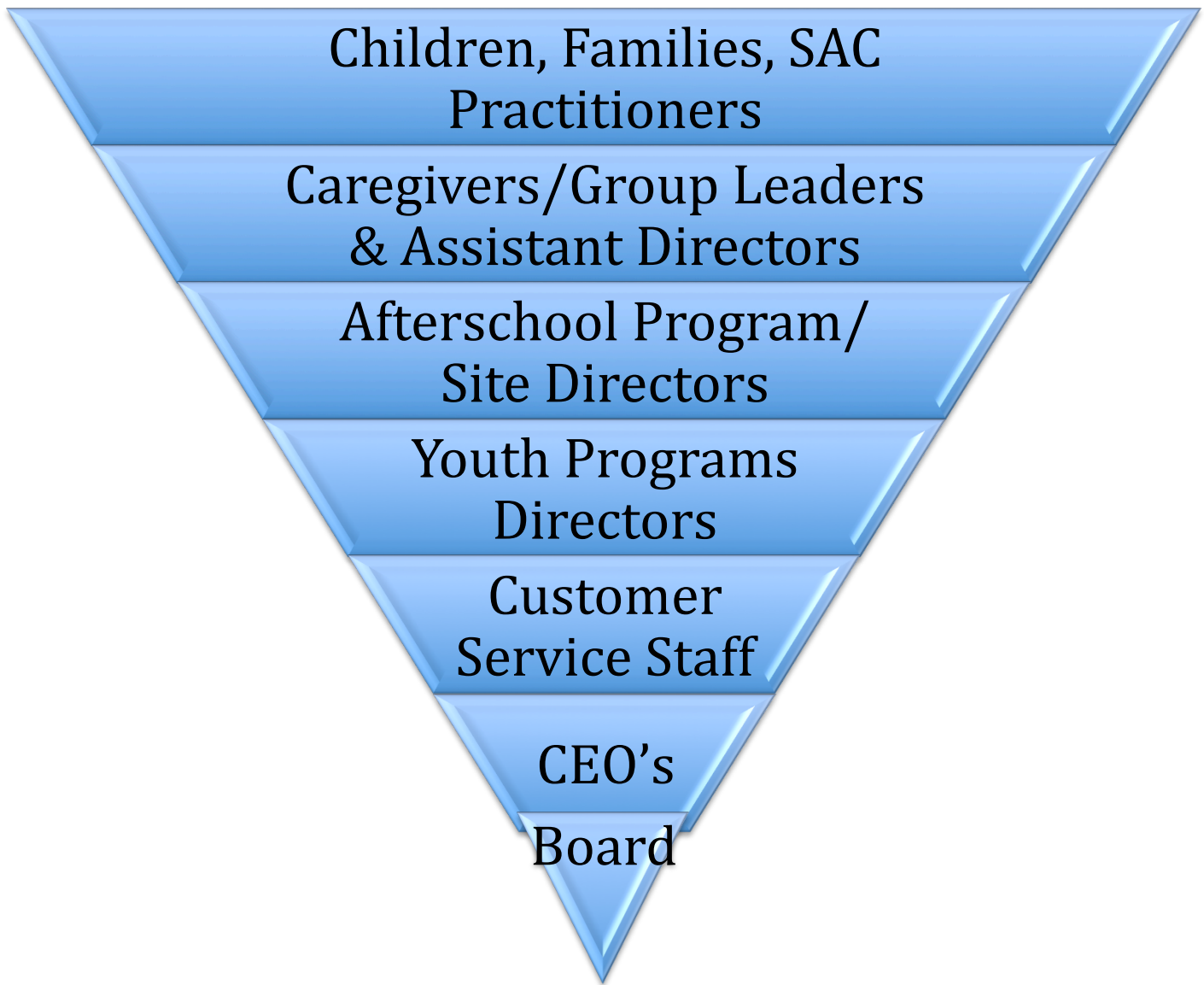
Individuals within this organization communicate directly with others at different levels within the organization instead of following a clear and vertical chain of communication. There are many communication meetings. All of the staff members receive a biweekly staff newsletter.

The site directors supervise the assistant directors, and care-giving staff. Individual sites have meeting to discuss site-specific issues. Multi-level design teams meet to design curriculum or work tools such as evaluation criteria. The site directors meet with the program director and founders each week to disseminate information, create program development strategies, lead change efforts, make decisions and solve organizational problems. The entire organizational staff comes together once a year for a leadership and teambuilding retreat.

At Children's Choice, all members of the organization spend some time in the program, with the children. This practice keeps all members of the organization focused on the mission of facilitating positive development. No one works strictly in an office or on administrative duties to the complete exclusion of interaction with the children and the caregiving staff. Design teams and task forces function to strengthen integration and collaboration and decrease isolation and differentiation. These teams bring members of administration together with caregivers from different sites to work on coordination of tasks and creation of systemic solutions to problems.

In many organizations, the organizational structure is depicted like a human pyramid, with the managers at the top and the workers at the bottom. The people at the top hoard the power and control and withhold much of the knowledge and information about the organization. It looks like this – with the people who work with the kids and who actually accomplish our mission at the bottom. We don't like that.





We believe that it is better to put our kids and the people who work directly with them at the top of the pyramid. We believe it is our job to give these people all of the knowledge and information about child development, education, planning, budgeting – all of the information typically withheld by the people at the top. We also believe good leaders empower their staff by giving them control and power over decisions that affect the children and the organization, so we flip this pyramid upside down – like this.

Still, structurally speaking, this upside down pyramid doesn't **look** very secure. It seems like it might topple over. So we prefer to view the organizational structure of Children's Choice like the one on the next page – like a building with support columns build on a foundation of our mission and our values.

In this model of organization structure the hierarchy of the organization is flipped upside down. The line staff who may be considered menial, entry-level workers are viewed as the most influential and most powerful members of the team. The staff members who work directly with the kids and families are viewed as the most important. The administrative/managerial staff are viewed as support staff who work for the line staff, supporting them and getting them the resources they need to accomplish the mission.

***Power Staff =
Top of the Organization***

**Caregivers, Group Leaders, Assistant
Directors, & Site Directors:**

Those who facilitate the positive development
of children, and create the model of quality.

***Executive Director
of Finances &
Customer Service
Staff:***

Build Capacity,
Payroll
Financial Resources,
Fiscal Management,
Accounts Receivable
Information,
Budget Forecasting

***Youth Programs
Directors:***

Safety Control,
Quality Control,
Curriculum Support
Field Trip Scheduling
Mentoring &
Guidance to Staff,
Improvement and
Accreditation
Assistance

***Executive Director
of Operations:***

Leadership &
Management,
Partnerships,
Advocacy
Research,
Resource
Development,
Outreach, &
Training

Mission: Facilitating the positive development of children by developing and maintaining school-age care programs that are a model of quality care – programs where children play, learn, grow, and make friends – programs where children are nurtured and develop life skills. Children's Choice will use these programs as a source of training and technical assistance for the larger community of school-age care practitioners.

Values: The people – all of the people that make our organization strong, long-term, systems thinking, lifelong-learning, thinking, continuous quality improvement, children and families, ethical standards, fairness, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, citizenship, and our five basic foundations: Empowerment, Playfulness, Self-Discipline, Community-Building, and Maturity.