

2024 Annual Report



FUNDAÇÃO
Maria Cecília
Souto Vidigal



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A Letter From the Management

The year 2024 presented us with an inspiring challenge: to summarize the highlights of such a productive period for early childhood. In parallel with the six years that make up this stage of life we have selected six key achievements to celebrate in this section. Throughout this report, you will find a comprehensive overview of the Foundation's actions and developments.

The municipal elections represented a pivotal moment. While the Foundation's efforts to provide technical support to municipalities and raise awareness among leaders are ongoing, they intensify during election years—whether terms are renewed or new ones begin. The goal is to ensure that each of the thousands of municipalities places a high priority on early childhood in their government plans and budgets from the very first planning session. To support this, we consolidated a document featuring six key recommendations aimed at informing candidates and fostering debate on this critical issue throughout the election period. We further expanded these recommendations into detailed guides that explore the essential aspects of implementing high-quality, intersectoral public policies for early childhood.

Another significant achievement was the advancement of the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood ('PNIPI' in the Portuguese acronym), which was marked by the signing of the executive order that established the guidelines for its creation and the formation of an Intersectoral Committee. The Foundation played a coordinating role in preparing

Mariana Luz
(above) and
Tracy Francis
(to the side)



the technical report that served as the basis for the policy’s development and is an active member of the Committee, alongside 15 ministries, working to translate these guidelines into tangible actions. The policy is expected to be officially launched in the first quarter of 2025. In this report, we illustrate why the PNIPi holds the potential to become a national strategy for combating inequalities and protecting early childhood across the country.

The year 2024 also marked the second anniversary of ‘*Agosto Verde*’ (‘Green August’), Early Childhood Month. We invested in the “Caring for Each Child is Caring for the Whole Country” campaign, which presented a manifesto that sensitively emphasized the importance of every child for our society and the nation. The campaign was widely disseminated through various channels: images were projected onto a building in downtown São Paulo, and digital influencers shared content in public spaces. Our mascot, *Nelson, o Nenê*—a Brazilian animated character created to engage and educate young audiences about the importance of early childhood development—served as the main spokesperson for Agosto Verde. The character appeared on banners across the city, on trains, subways, and street clocks, was the star of an audiovisual campaign, and was featured on the TV show “*Encontro*,” both broadcasted on TV Globo.

On the international front, but with a focus on local impact, the Foundation achieved two significant milestones that directly contributed to our mission of promoting equity from the earliest years of life.

The first was Brazil’s inclusion in the IELS (International Early Learning and Child Well-Being Study)—an unprecedented OECD initiative that will assess the development and well-being of 5-year-old children worldwide. This diagnosis could serve as a basis for formulating and enhancing public policies, particularly in the area of early childhood education. Brazil’s participation was confirmed last October following more than two years of dialogue and

advocacy efforts led by the Foundation.

Another promising initiative was the launch of the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty during the G20 Summit in Brazil. The Foundation became a founding member of this initiative, which unites governments and organizations from various countries. As the most significant public commitment to reducing inequality globally, the Alliance has made early childhood care one of its core pillars. The proposals developed under this initiative are expected to impact over 200 million women with children in their early years.

The final highlight relates to one of our foundational pillars: governance. In 2024, we renewed our Board of Trustees and marked the first year of the new Intelligence Committee, which brought in technical expertise and strengthened our governance capabilities. This commitment to best practices influences how we organize our work, refine processes, and solidify the Foundation’s foundations to make these achievements possible.

We close this letter with heartfelt thanks to all our collaborators, who have dedicated themselves with commitment and passion to another cycle focused on our cause. Our gratitude also extends to the Souto Vidigal family, our governance, our partners, and the entire early childhood ecosystem. The contributions and support of each one of you have been fundamental in transforming what we present in the following pages into reality.

Thank you very much, and enjoy the read!

Mariana Luz, CEO

Tracy Francis, Chairwoman of the Board of Trustees

Fundação Maria Cecília Souto Vidigal



Governance



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Early Childhood

The most decisive stage of human development

Early childhood is the period during which children develop most rapidly. During these years, the brain undergoes profound changes, forming up to 1 million synapses per second. With an inherent openness to exploring the world, children's development is profoundly shaped by each new experience. These first six years represent a window of opportunity in which the foundations of motor,

cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional development are established.

Scientific evidence confirms that a healthy and stimulating early childhood can help break cycles of inequality and intergenerational poverty, prevent various forms of violence, and, consequently, accelerate societal development.

THE ABSOLUTE PRIORITY OF THE CHILD

Article 227 of Brazil's 1988 Federal Constitution, the 1990 '*Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente*' ('Child and Adolescent Statute'), and the 2016 Legal Framework on Early Childhood collectively affirm that children are rights holders and must receive integral protection from the family, the state, and society—with absolute priority.





Given the significance of the first few years of life, early childhood must be considered a priority within a priority. The benefits of a nurturing and stimulating environment during this stage extend far beyond the first years of life, positively influencing health, emotional bonds, educational achievement, and even employment opportunities in adulthood. Investing in early life is not just about caring for the present—it is about building a fairer future for everyone.

This focus on the early years also means protecting every child, recognizing the diversity of childhood experiences across the

country, and supporting caregivers as they face challenges, threats, and rights violations. Poverty, racism, inequality, violence, neglect, climate crises, and limited access to quality services are among the factors that can hinder children's full development. In this context, equity is a fundamental principle—ensuring that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

It is with this conviction that the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation is working to make early childhood a priority for Brazil and society—not tomorrow, but today.

Investing in early life is not just about caring for the present—it is about building a fairer future for everyone



Our History

The Foundation has been working since 2007 to promote early childhood development

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation was founded in 1965 by Gastão Eduardo de Bueno Vidigal and his wife, Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal, in memory of their daughter, Maria Cecilia, who passed away from leukemia at the age of 12. Initially, the Foundation focused on promoting research and disseminating knowledge in hematology, working in partnership with the University of São Paulo Medical School until 2001.

In 2007, a new chapter began. Following an in-depth analysis of social needs, the Foundation embraced the cause of early childhood, recognizing that the first few years of life are fundamental to both individual child and societal development. This decision was grounded in scientific evidence,

demonstrating that care and investment in early childhood are among the most effective strategies for reducing poverty and inequality.

With the launch of the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda, the Foundation aligned its strategy with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Target 4.2 of SDG 4, reinforcing its mission to ensure that all children have the right to quality development from birth.

Through collaboration with partners and key stakeholders, the Foundation played a pivotal role in developing the Legal Framework on Early Childhood (2016)—one of the most advanced early childhood legislations





in the world—which has strengthened and supported public policies for families across Brazil. The Foundation was also instrumental in shaping the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood (‘PNIPI’ in the Portuguese acronym), recently launched by the federal government, which aims to coordinate multiple sectors and initiatives to support young children and their families, particularly those in situations of greater vulnerability.

By strategically engaging policymakers, the Foundation works to enhance public policies that support young children and their families, ensuring that early

childhood remains a national priority. To achieve this, it mobilizes our entire ecosystem and engages society as a whole in the cause, carrying forward the conviction that “caring for every child is caring for the whole country.”

As the Foundation approaches its 60th anniversary in 2025, it reaffirms its commitment to transforming lives and reducing inequalities—a journey that began as a tribute and has since become a mission.

Caring for every child is caring for the whole country



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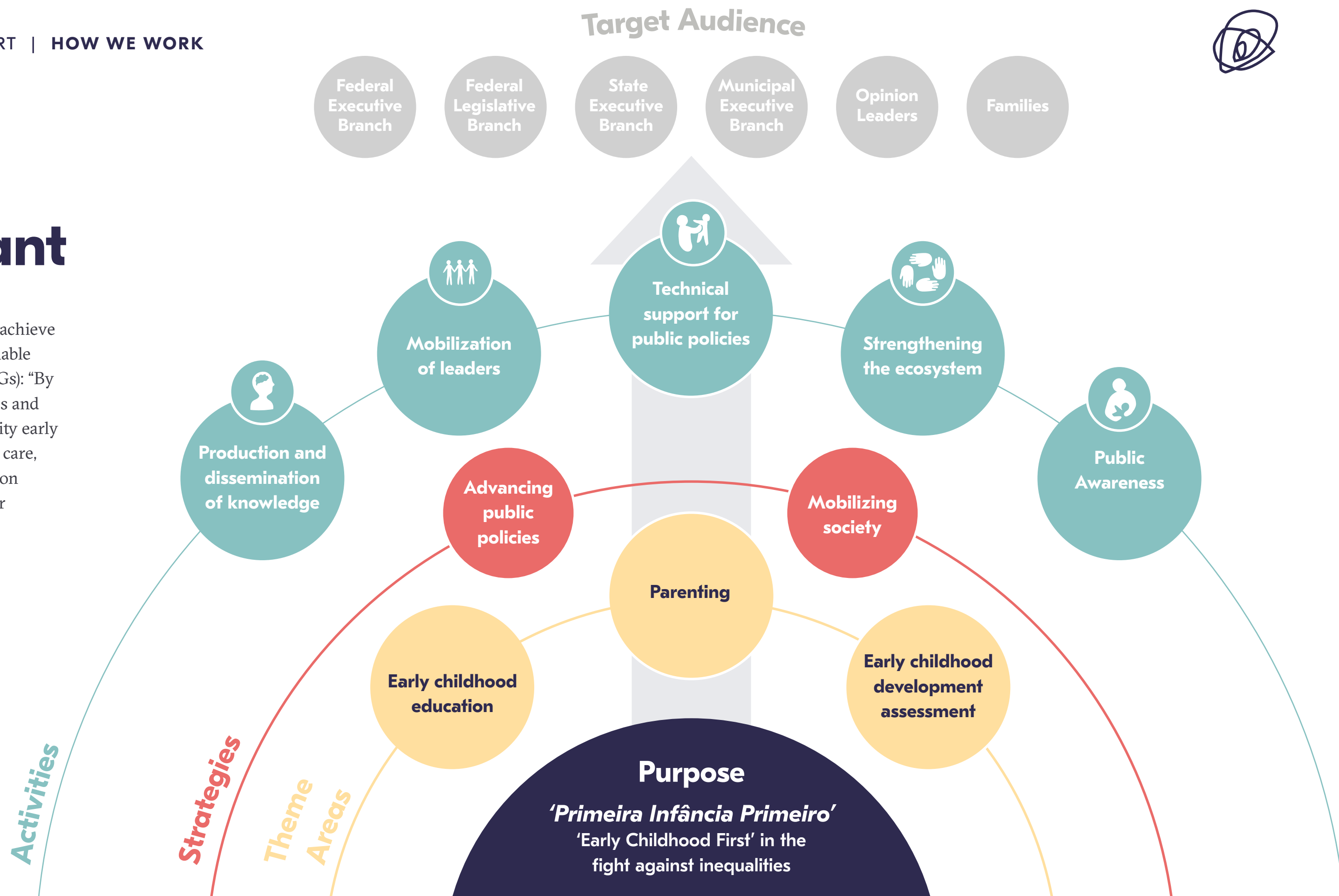
How We Work

Our initiatives focus on advancing
public policies and mobilizing
society for early childhood



What We Want

We aim to contribute to achieve Target 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): “By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.”





Activities

All projects developed by the Foundation are guided by two complementary strategies: **advancing public policies** and **mobilizing society**. A well-informed society understands the importance of the first few years of life and demands public policies that protect and promote children's rights. In turn, high-quality public services enhance child development and lay the foundation for a fairer and more inclusive country.

Building on this approach, the Foundation has established five coordinated and integrated action strategies to achieve its objectives:



Production and dissemination of knowledge

Generates and translates knowledge across multiple scientific disciplines, producing analyses, data, and information that support, enhance, and strengthen the Foundation's strategies and early childhood research.



Mobilization of leaders

Engages, mobilizes, and trains decision-makers and influencers involved in public policies for early childhood.



Technical support for public policies

Contributes to the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of public policies that directly benefit children and their families.



Strengthening the ecosystem

Expands the network of organizations and partners dedicated to reinforcing policies and actions that support early childhood.



Public Awareness

Promotes public awareness of the importance of early childhood, engaging opinion leaders and society as a whole, and encourages affectionate parenting practices.



Theme Areas

Early Childhood Development Assessment

Monitoring each child's development is crucial to ensure they reach their full potential. This requires building a comprehensive care network capable of providing appropriate monitoring, screening, and stimulation. Such a network must work in partnership with caregivers, keeping them informed and engaged so they can offer the stimuli, encouragement, and support that every child needs in their first few years of life.

In Brazil, much of the available survey and database information focuses on survival indicators and biological metrics—such as weight and height—while critical milestones in child development often go unrecorded. Key data collection tools, including the Child Health Care Handbook and certain conditionalities of income transfer

programs, suffer from low adherence or data gaps.

The lack of comprehensive child development monitoring—both at an individual and population level—poses a significant barrier to public policy planning and effectiveness. Without robust data, it is difficult to ensure that children's needs are met and to address inequalities that emerge early in life and persist over their academic careers.

Recognizing the importance of a holistic approach, the Foundation has made child development assessment a priority. Beyond simply measuring weight and height, tracking all aspects of a child's development is crucial to ensure they receive the best possible care.



Monitoring children's development to better serve their needs





Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education, the first stage of basic education, includes daycare and preschool and is a constitutional right for all Brazilian children. It is also a key pillar for development and learning in the first few years of life. Research confirms that high-quality early childhood education plays a significant role in building foundational skills that positively impact future academic success. Conversely, inadequate practices can hinder development, reinforcing the urgency of investment in this area.

Although Brazil has made progress in recent decades, the National Education Plan (PNE) goals remain far from being met. The plan aimed for 50% of children to be enrolled in daycare by 2024. Yet, the current rate stands at only 38.7%—despite daycare not being mandatory. Meanwhile, for preschool, which is legally required for children aged 4 and 5, the goal was to achieve 100% enrollment by

2016. However, 441,000 children (7.1%) in this age group remain out of school. These figures come from Brazil's 2023 National Household Survey (PNAD) – Education, conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

Another pressing challenge is assessing quality. While 99% of municipalities have aligned their curricula with Brazil's National Learning Standards (BNCC), many studies focus primarily on access and infrastructure, neglecting fundamental elements such as pedagogical practices, child interactions, and the diversity of learning experiences.

As early childhood education lays the foundation for lifelong development and learning, it remains a strategic priority. The Foundation advocates for accessible daycare for those in need and preschool for all children, ensuring quality and equity.



Quality daycare for anyone who wants or needs it; quality preschool for everyone





**Strengthening
caregivers and
supporting families
with children in
early childhood**

Parenting

Parenting—the relationship between an adult and a child—is central to early childhood development. Care, stimulation, and affection during the first few years of life are essential for fostering strong and secure bonds and can have a lasting impact on a child's present and future. Conversely, exposure to adversities and risk factors such as poverty, food insecurity, and violence poses severe obstacles to child development.

Of the 18.1 million children in early childhood in Brazil, 10 million (55.4%) belong to the poorest families. Food insecurity affects one in three households with young children, and the country continues to face significant challenges related to gender, ethnic-racial, socioeconomic, and regional inequalities.

Public policies and initiatives that support adults in their caregiving role—such as cash transfer programs, parental support initiatives, and home visits—have proven effective in addressing these challenges. Expanding and enhancing these services is critical to ensuring that families, in all their diverse forms, receive the support they need.

The Foundation has made parenting one of its priority themes, recognizing the importance of strengthening caregivers and supporting families with young children, particularly those in vulnerable circumstances.



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Advancing Public Policies

Strengthening public policies
for early childhood and their
caregivers, ensuring equitable
access and quality care for
all childhood experiences





Federal Executive Branch

The year 2024 was marked by the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation's active participation in drafting the proposal for the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood. In partnership with government agencies and international organizations, the Foundation also became a founding member of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, launched during the G20 Summit in Brazil.

It was also a year of advancements in research and studies aimed at deepening the understanding of Brazilian children's development. Notably, the Foundation contributed to the country's participation in the International Early Learning and Child Well-Being Study (IELS). Additionally, the Foundation worked alongside federal ministries to update early childhood education parameters, restructure the '*Criança Feliz*' ('Happy Child') Program, and expand data collection on early childhood.





Click here to access the report with the recommendations for the construction of the PNIPi

The Foundation's commitment to the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood

A policy that prioritizes children, integrates initiatives, and combats inequalities is set to launch in 2025

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation played a key role in the Early Childhood Working Group (WG), one of the collegiate bodies within the '*Conselho de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social Sustentável*' (Council for Sustainable Economic and Social Development / CDESS in its Portuguese acronym)—known as the *Conselhão*—which advises the Presidency of the Republic on the development of public policies.

Established in 2023, the Early Childhood WG brought together specialists and civil society representatives for debates, public consultations, regional learning journeys, and technical discussions. These dialogues focused on advancing policies for children up to 6 years old and their families, as well as elevating

early childhood to a more prominent place on the federal government's agenda.

As an outcome of these discussions, the WG's member organizations developed a set of recommendations, with a technical report co-authored by the Foundation and '*Todos Pela Educação*' ('All for Education'). This document consolidated the guidelines for the creation of the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood ('PNIPi' in the Portuguese acronym).

The report was submitted to the President's Secretariat for Institutional Relations in June 2024. Later that month, during a plenary session of the *Conselhão*, President Lula signed the executive order establishing



the guidelines for the creation of the PNIPI and announced the formation of an Intersectoral Committee tasked with translating these guidelines into actionable strategies.

Following the appointment of its members, the Intersectoral Committee—established by the federal government—held its inaugural meeting on October 10th at the Planalto Palace in Brasília (DF). Among its members is the Foundation's CEO, Mariana Luz, who collaborates with representatives from 15 ministries, the Secretariat for Institutional Relations of the Presidency of the Republic, and civil society organizations to develop the action plan and policy proposal. The initiative is being coordinated by the Office of the Chief of Staff and was set to be completed within 120 days.

The PNIPI aims to strengthen essential services for children aged 0 to 6, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable. The policy is structured around three key areas: An integrated data system on early childhood; Sectoral services coordinated across different areas to ensure comprehensive

care; and Family engagement and communication, using the Child Health Care Handbook as a guidance tool, alongside other technological solutions.

Set to launch in the first quarter of 2025, the PNIPI has the potential to transform the lives of children, particularly those in situations of extreme vulnerability—including those exposed to poverty, racism, violence, and other threats to their rights. The policy reinforces the absolute priority of children's rights, as established in the Constitution and the Legal Framework on Early Childhood.



The Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood has the potential to reduce inequalities and prevent poverty from being perpetuated across generations





Global Partnerships for Early Childhood at the G20

The Foundation's pivotal role in elevating child development on the global agenda at the summit of the world's top economic powers

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation played a pivotal role in positioning early childhood as a priority in the fight against inequalities during the G20 agenda. This influential group, which brings together the world's largest economies, convened its 2024 meeting in Rio de Janeiro (RJ) in November. A key highlight of the event was the launch of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty—the most significant public commitment to combating global inequalities. Proposed by Brazil, the initiative unites government bodies, multilateral organizations, and civil society institutions from more than 80 countries, including the Foundation.

The commitments outlined by the Alliance include school feeding programs, socioeconomic inclusion and income transfer initiatives, support for children and families,

home-farming strategies, expanding access to drinking water, and scaling up home visiting programs for families with young children.

The initiative aims to support 200 million women and children in vulnerable social circumstances. Investing in early childhood has been identified as one of the group's key priorities, and it is recognized as an effective strategy for reducing inequalities from the start of life.

As a founding member of the Global Alliance, the Foundation is committed to sharing its expertise and knowledge on early childhood across three strategic areas: providing data; technical support for public policies; and raising the awareness of society to ensure that children remain a global priority.





Civil Society's Demands on Global Leaders

At G20 Social, an event preceding the G20 Summit that broadens civil society's participation in the bloc's activities and decision-making processes, the Maria Cecilia Soouto Vidigal Foundation hosted the panel “*O Alto Retorno do Investimento na Primeira Infância na Promoção do Capital Humano e na Estratégia de Combate à Pobreza e às Desigualdades*” (“The High Return on Investment in Early Childhood for Human Capital Development and the Fight Against Poverty and Inequalities”). Bringing together experts and policymakers, the discussion underscored how investment in early childhood public policies is a critical strategy for breaking inter-generational cycles of poverty. The session was held in partnership with TheirWorld, Brookings Institution, Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN), Family Talks, Alana Institute and ANDI – Comunicação e Direitos.

As part of its engagement within the G20 framework, the Foundation also contributed to shaping the recommendations of the C20, the official engagement group that amplifies civil society's global demands to the G20. This space reinforced the centrality of early childhood in sustainable development and human rights advocacy, with the Foundation actively participating in working groups focused on hunger, poverty, inequalities, education, and culture.





Participation in the International Early Learning and Child Well-Being Study (IELS): An unprecedented achievement for early childhood in Brazil

An OECD study on child development and well-being to strengthen Brazil's public policies

In 2024, Brazil's participation in the International Early Learning and Child Well-Being Study (IELS) was officially confirmed. This groundbreaking initiative by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) will assess the development and well-being of 5-year-old children across different countries. The IELS aims to provide a comprehensive diagnostic framework to guide the formulation and enhancement of public policies, particularly in early childhood education, while also enabling comparative analyses among participating nations.

Brazil's participation in the IELS has progressed with negotiations to bring the

'*Serviço Social da Indústria*' ('Social Service of Industry' / SESI) on board as a new sponsor. The initiative is also backed by B3 Social, Itaú Social, the Lemann Foundation, Fundação Lia Maria Aguiar, Instituto Beja, Instituto Tecendo Infâncias, and Perfin Wealth Management, as well as social entrepreneur Ticiania Rolim and Edson Queiroz through Colibri Capital.

In June 2024, the Foundation took part in the IELS National Project Managers Meeting in Leuven, Belgium. The event provided a valuable platform to discuss pre-test results, share experiences, and collaborate with other participating countries in preparation for the full-scale study.





Read the
Valor
Econômico
coverage on
IELS here



To facilitate communication with public administrators and the broader population, the Foundation has developed a comprehensive guide on IELS, detailing the study's objectives, the role of municipal education networks in its implementation, and the significance of its findings for Brazil.

In Brazil, the main data collection phase is set to begin in May 2025 across three states, involving approximately 3,000 children from 250 schools in nearly 100 municipalities. The 'Laboratório de Pesquisa em Oportunidades Educacionais' ('Educational Opportunities Research Laboratory' / 'LaPOpE') at the School of Education of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) will oversee the technical coordination of the study. The first results, expected in 2026, will provide insights into barriers and opportunities for education and child development.

**The study will involve
3,000 Brazilian children
from 250 schools across
almost 100 municipalities**

By participating in IELS, Brazil joins a global network of researchers dedicated to early childhood, creating opportunities for international collaboration and the exchange of best practices in public policies for this critical stage of life.



National Quality Parameters for Early Childhood Education

Updated guidelines, with participation and support from the Foundation, reinforce quality, equity, and diversity in early childhood education

The National Quality Parameters for Early Childhood Education serve as a reference framework for municipal education networks, supporting efforts to improve and monitor the quality of daycare and preschool services in collaboration with the Federal Government and state administrations. The document was initially published in 2006 and has undergone periodic revisions to reflect evolving standards and practices.

In 2023, the Ministry of Education (MEC) initiated a new revision cycle with strategic support from the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, which hosted the 1st Technical Meeting. The event brought together key stakeholders in the education sector, including representatives from the National Council of Education (CNE), the

Brazilian Municipal Education Directors Union (UNDIME), the National Union of Municipal Education Councils (UNCME), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), among others.

The revision process included a nationwide public consultation that gathered over 2,200 contributions from 1,717 institutions across the country. Based on this input, the Operational Guidelines for Quality and Equity in Early Childhood Education were approved by the CNE in July 2024 and ratified by the MEC on October 15 of the same year.

The approval of these updated guidelines underscores a shared commitment to early childhood education that recognizes the diversity of Brazil's multiple childhoods

and addresses persistent inequalities in both access and quality.

The next phase will focus on implementing the new guidelines, with technical support from the Foundation to ensure effective dissemination and adoption nationwide beginning in 2025.

The revision process included a nationwide public consultation that gathered over 2,200 contributions from across the country





Global Scale for Early Development (GSED): Strengthening data and policies for early childhood

A WHO-led initiative, supported by the Foundation, to monitor child development and enhance public policies

In 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation strengthened its role as a strategic partner of the Global Scale for Early Development (GSED). Led by the World Health Organization (WHO) and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this initiative brings together global partners and national stakeholders to develop universal tools for monitoring child development up to 36 months of age and assessing the impact of early childhood policies and programs.

Throughout the year, the Foundation collaborated with the Center for Child Development at the University of São Paulo Medical School to facilitate Brazil's participation in the development of global

child development standards and the adaptation of evaluation tools for clinical use in cases involving children at developmental risk. Notable progress includes the completion of standard operating procedures, manuals, and evaluation instruments, as well as the implementation of a pilot project in São Paulo (SP).

The next steps for the initiative involve further collaboration with global organizations, training and certifying professional teams, and conducting data collection in the municipality of Pelotas (RS) and São Paulo's capital.

The GSED tools will provide a comprehensive analysis of early childhood develop-

ment in Brazil, generating unprecedented data to support the strengthening of public policies that ensure comprehensive care for young children and their families.

**Universal tools
will monitor child
development up to
36 months of age**





The Profile of Early Childhood in the Federal Unified Registration

A groundbreaking study on children up to 6 years of age from low-income families

The Federal Unified Registration (CadÚnico in its Portuguese acronym) is the federal government's primary tool for identifying and profiling families with a monthly per capita income of up to half a minimum wage. In addition to serving as a key mechanism for selecting beneficiaries of social programs such as the Bolsa Família income-transfer program, CadÚnico is a valuable database containing information on family composition, education, employment, and housing conditions of low-income families.

To gain a deeper understanding of the children aged 0 to 6 enrolled in CadÚnico and their living conditions, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, Family, and Fight Against

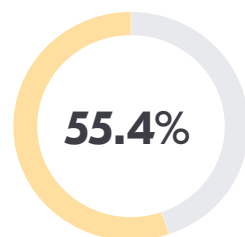
Hunger (MDS) and with the technical partnership of Akauã Consultoria em Dados e Pesquisa, conducted two studies in 2024.

The first of these, “Perfil Síntese da Primeira Infância e Famílias no Cadastro Único” (“Summary Profile of Early Childhood and Families in the Federal Unified Registration”)—a detailed socioeconomic analysis that builds a comprehensive profile of young children and their caregivers. The second, “Vulnerabilidade na Primeira Infância: Um perfil dos municípios brasileiros” (“Vulnerability in Early Childhood: A profile of Brazilian municipalities”)—a classification of municipalities into three broad categories, identifying regional similarities and specific challenges related to early childhood.





THE STUDY REVEALED:



Of the 18.1 million children aged 0 to 6 in Brazil, **10 million live in low-income families.**



73.8% of these families are **headed by single mothers**, the majority of whom are Black (74.3%) and young (47.9% between 25 and 34 years old).

Although early childhood accounts for 8,9% of Brazil's total population, this figure jumps to 15.9% within the low-income segment.



Eight out of ten children in these households rely on **Bolsa Família** as their **primary source of income.**

Access the column published on the O Globo newspaper website



Click here to view the Jornal da Cultura coverage



The findings, published in MDS **Study Notebook No. 36**, offer an in-depth perspective on the needs and challenges faced by children in vulnerable circumstances. This data is instrumental in shaping and implementing public policies that promote their well-being and development.

Due to the significance of these findings, the studies received extensive media coverage, with over 400 reports featured on TV, radio, print newspapers, and online news portals, as well as through official federal government communication channels.

Looking ahead to 2025, the next phase of early childhood studies based on CadÚnico data will focus on analyzing the supply and demand for early childhood education.



Expanding Early Childhood Support in the Brazilian Social Assistance System

Optimizing the '*Criança Feliz*' ('Happy Child') Program to enhance home visiting as a child development model

The Criança Feliz Program, coordinated by the Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, Family, and Fight Against Hunger (MDS), is one of Brazil's most significant early childhood initiatives. It focuses on strengthening family bonds and promoting child development through home visits to families in socially vulnerable circumstances with children aged 0 to 6.

In 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, in partnership with the Van Leer Foundation and other stakeholders, continued supporting the optimization of the program within the Brazilian Social Assistance System (SUAS).

This phase seeks to establish the program as a permanent social assistance service, integrating care for children and pregnant women into the Basic Social Protection Service at Home. It also prioritizes methodological improvements and stronger integration with Brazil's Unified Health System (SUS)—Brazil's public healthcare system.

These enhancements address challenges identified in the 2022 evaluation of the program's implementation and impact, conducted by the MDS and the Federal University of Pelotas, with support from the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, Itaú Social, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).





The Foundation's collaboration with the MDS's National Secretariat for Social Assistance spans multiple areas, including enhancing methodology and impact assessment, developing workflows and protocols for early childhood across SUS and SUAS, improving implementation frameworks, and strengthening information systems.

This initiative is being carried out in technical partnership with the Center for Child Development at the University of São Paulo and in institutional collaboration with the Van Leer Foundation, Grand Challenges Canada, and the Summit Institute for Development. These joint efforts have enabled revisions to methodological reference materials, the organization of workshops to

align home visits with the Primary Health Care (PHC) strategy, and the establishment of criteria for selecting municipalities for the program's impact evaluation.

The next phase of the project will focus on testing and assessing new practical applications, developing an implementation model for high-quality home visits, adapting methodologies to better serve traditional peoples and communities, and creating a digital application to support professionals in the field.

These actions aim to enhance early childhood care, strengthen the social protection network, and promote comprehensive child development in Brazil.

The initiative seeks to refine impact assessment methodologies, improve coordination between Health and Social Assistance, and refine the information system



PIPAS Monitors Child Development Actions in Capital Cities

The new study highlights challenges and opportunities in implementing early childhood initiatives

In 2022, the Ministry of Health conducted a **survey in 13 Brazilian capital cities to gather child development indicators** through the 'Primeira Infância Para Adultos Saudáveis' / 'PIPAS' Project ('Early Childhood for Healthy Adults'). This initiative was carried out in partnership with the São Paulo State Health Institute and with support from the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation.

Based on these key indicators, which provided insights into health, nutrition, learning, responsive care, and safety, the participating capitals designed and began implementing initiatives to promote child development.



Capital cities have implemented child development initiatives based on data and indicators

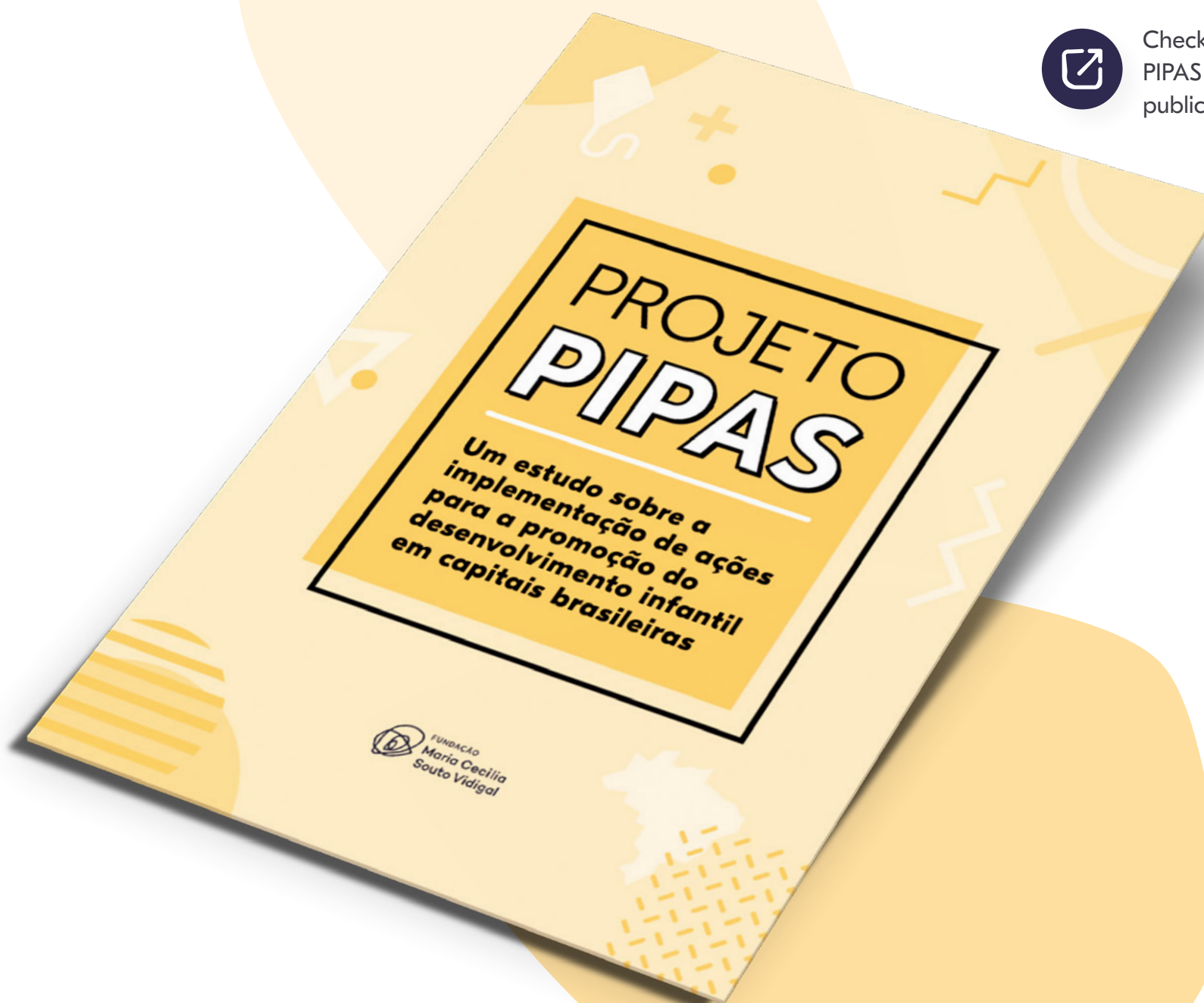
These efforts include programs to improve childcare, encourage breastfeeding, and reduce punitive disciplinary practices. To better understand the challenges encountered during implementation, between 2023 and 2024, a series of interviews with public administrators was conducted, and the project team closely monitored the progress of these actions. This process helped identify both barriers and enablers in the implementation of early childhood public policies.





The findings from this monitoring effort were compiled into a publication and presented at a seminar held in April 2024 in São Paulo (SP). The event brought together public administrators from all participating capital cities, project partners, and representatives from the Ministry of Health.

Beyond highlighting implementation challenges, the study provides valuable insights into the successful execution of early childhood programs, projects, and policies. The research underscores the importance of prioritizing early childhood on the public agenda, adopting integrated management approaches, grounding initiatives in scientific evidence, and ensuring ongoing planning and monitoring.



Check out the
PIPAS Project
publication here



Child Development Assessment in Brazil's National Household Survey

A partnership with the Ministry of Health and IBGE highlights the impact of inequality and pathways for public policies

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation supported the inclusion of an early childhood development assessment module in Brazil's National Household Survey (PNAD) during the third quarter of 2022.

Using the **PIPAS** project methodology, the initiative involved training field teams and adapting assessment instruments. The module collected data from over 4,600 children aged 25 to 36 months through questionnaires administered to caregivers.

Findings published in the 2024 report, **"Avaliação do Desenvolvimento Infantil: Experiência a partir da Pnad Contínua"** ("Early Childhood Development Assessment: Experience from Brazil's National Household Survey" / 'PNAD'), provided critical insights into developmental delays, measured using the Z score. This methodology compares individual results to a reference population, identifying variations from the population average.

The module collected data from more than 4,600 children across the country



The study highlighted social inequalities as a key determinant of child development outcomes, with suspected developmental delays being more prevalent among Black children (33.3%), children of caregivers with lower education levels (14.3% among those with only elementary schooling), and families in the lowest income quintile (15%).

This unprecedented initiative marks a significant step forward in collecting essential data on child development in Brazil. It

underscores the need for public policies that address inequalities from the earliest years, ensuring that sectoral and intersectoral interventions prioritize early childhood.

This experience can also serve as a foundation for the Brazilian government to develop a national strategy for large-scale child development data collection, aligning with global best practices already adopted in Latin America and other regions across the globe.



The study highlighted social inequalities as a key determinant of child development outcomes





Federal Legislature

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation engages with the federal legislature through pluralistic dialogue, supporting caucuses, mobilizing key stakeholders to advance legislation that benefits young children and their families, and coordinating efforts to prevent policy setbacks.

In 2024, a significant milestone was the approval of Law 14851, which enhances transparency regarding the demand for daycare enrollment. Additionally, the year was marked by intensive efforts to advance discussions on early childhood education targets within the framework of the new National Education Plan ('PNE' in the Portuguese acronym). The Foundation continues to monitor the progress of key legislative proposals, including the homeschooling bill (Bill 1.338/2022), the Budget Guidelines Act, the Annual Budget Act, and initiatives related to parenting, comprehensive child care, and active school search strategies.





New Law Expands Access to Daycare Centers

The Foundation supported legislation to improve transparency and equity in early childhood education

In 2024, a new law marked significant progress toward democratizing access to early childhood education in Brazil. Enacted in May, **Law 14851** requires municipalities and the Federal District to survey and publicize the demand for daycare centers for children aged 0 to 3, making waiting lists visible for the first time.

Beyond enhancing transparency, the law introduces prioritization criteria to ensure that the most vulnerable children receive access first, reinforcing the foundation for more effective and inclusive public policies.

The National Education Plan ('PNE' in its Portuguese acronym) set a target for 50% of children to be enrolled in daycare by 2024. Yet, only 38.7% are currently attending, according to Brazil's National Household Survey (PNAD).

Additionally, a survey conducted by the **Gabinete de Articulação pela Efetividade da Política da Educação no Brasil** (GAEPE), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other institutions, revealed that hundreds of municipalities still manage waiting lists manually, lacking digitalization and efficient communication between schools and education networks.

Law 14851 represents a milestone for transparency and equity in access to daycare centers, providing a crucial tool for mapping and planning expansion based on actual demand. The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation played an active role in its development, offering technical support and policy advocacy since 2020. Additionally, the Foundation collaborated with the Multi-party Caucus for Education to facilitate the law's approval in 2024.





Early Childhood Education in the New National Education Plan (PNE)

The Foundation engages with authorities and political leaders to strengthen early childhood goals in the next PNE

The National Education Plan ('PNE' in its Portuguese acronym), in effect for the past ten years, has led to significant progress in early childhood education, yet major challenges remain. The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation has been actively working to ensure that early childhood priorities are reflected in the goals and strategies of the next PNE.

Drawing from an analysis of the previous plan and dialogues with public administrators, professionals, and experts, the Foundation developed a position paper with recommendations for the federal government's proposed text submitted to Congress (Bill No. 2.614/2024).

Key recommendations include:



Expanding daycare enrollment

based on demonstrated demand, with priority given to low-income families



Universalizing preschool, with

targeted strategies for regions facing the greatest shortage of seats



Developing quality assessment

strategies that consider both infrastructure and teaching practices.



Check out the publication here



The proposals highlight the need for clear strategies to support the development of subnational plans, offering guidance on both objectives and implementation. They also advocate for the establishment of intermediate five-year targets to facilitate ongoing monitoring and necessary adjustments.

To advance these recommendations, the Foundation actively engaged with Congress, participating in two seminars organized by the Multiparty Caucus for Education, where it served as both a sponsor and advisory board member. One of these seminars

was held in partnership with the Education Committee of the Federal Chamber of Deputies (Brazil's Lower House). Additionally, the Foundation presented its position at a public hearing in the Senate's Education and Culture Committee and at an event organized in collaboration with the Multiparty Caucus for Education, which gathered various political leaders.

The Foundation remains committed to tracking discussions and legislative progress on the PNE, reaffirming its role in advocating for high-quality early childhood education that is accessible to all Brazilian children.



The document outlines recommendations for expanding daycare enrollment and universalizing preschools



Support for the Multiparty Caucus for Early Childhood

Strengthening engagement with legislators to prioritize early childhood policies

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation supports the executive secretariat of the Multiparty Caucus for Early Childhood, which works to enhance collaboration between government branches and political sectors, prioritize public policies for young children, and ensure their rights are upheld and strengthened within the legislative process.

In 2024, these efforts took center stage during a formal session in October, where children were reaffirmed as the absolute priority in policymaking. The session underscored the historic opportunity presented by the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood ('PNIPI' in its Portuguese acronym) and emphasized the urgent need for an intersectoral legislative agenda to address inequalities and promote equity from the first few years of life.





State Executive Branch

In 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation released unpublished data on access to daycare, equipping states and capitals with the insights needed to develop initiatives that improve early childhood education for children aged 0 to 3. That same year, in a pioneering partnership with the state of Pernambuco, state administrators and professionals received specialized training to strengthen early childhood policies for young children and their families.

In Ceará, the Foundation's collaboration with state and municipal administrators began in 2019 and continues to evolve, ensuring the sustainability of early childhood initiatives in areas such as education, parenting programs, equity, and public management. This ongoing work has positioned Ceará as a national benchmark for comprehensive early childhood policies.





INC Identifies Priority Populations for Daycare Access with State and Capital-Level Data

The indicator maps children in vulnerable circumstances and supports the government in expanding services

Building on the success of its 2020 and 2022 editions, the Maria Cecília Souto Vidigal Foundation launched the 2024 version of the '**Índice de Necessidade de Creche**' ('Daycare Needs Index' / 'INC'). This pioneering tool helps public administrators organize early childhood education efforts, quantifying the number of children aged 0 to 3 who meet priority criteria for daycare access.

Developed in partnership with Quantis Consultoria, the refined indicator now offers a more precise assessment of

children in vulnerable circumstances, taking into account four key factors: situations of poverty, single-parent households, economically active mothers or caregivers, and children with disabilities. The 2023 data, based on Brazil's National Household Survey (PNAD), revealed that 4.5 million children (45.9% of those aged 0 to 3) meet these priority access criteria. However, further analysis of daycare attendance showed that 57.1% of these children—those who would benefit most—remain outside the system, either due to a lack of available openings or other barriers.



Explore the INC folder with data on states and capital cities



Click here to access attendance figures for priority populations

With this update, the INC has become a strategic tool for designing more equitable and effective public policies, providing input that enables public administrators to plan daycare expansion in alignment with local socio-demographic characteristics.

Launched during the election period, the INC proved its relevance beyond public administration, drawing widespread media attention with over 700 reports and sparking public debate on the challenges of early childhood education access in a country still grappling with regional inequalities.



More than half of children in vulnerable circumstances are still not enrolled in daycare



Integrated Initiatives in Ceará

Strengthening education, combating racism, and promoting safety

The successful coalition between the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, Porticus Latin America, the Van Leer Foundation, and the Ceará state government made significant strides in 2024.

As part of this progress, the State Department of Education (SEDUC) trained its team to assess the quality of early childhood education, a core component of the '*Sistema de Avaliação Permanente da Educação Infantil*' ('Permanent Early Childhood Education Assessment System' / 'SAPI'). Implemented by the state in partnership with the '*Laboratório de Estudos e Pesquisas em Economia Social*' ('Laboratory for Studies and Research in Social Economics' / 'LEPES') at the University of São Paulo, this initiative enhances the quality of early childhood education

by fostering equitable management and tailoring strategies to local needs.

The '*Programa ACT – Educar Crianças em Ambientes Seguros*' ('ACT Program: To Educate Children in Secure Environments') has advanced efforts to institutionalize violence prevention methodologies and strengthen governance within the State Secretariat for Social Protection. This initiative aims to expand strategies that create safer, more nurturing home environments, reducing violence in caregiver-child relationships.

On another front, the '*Avaliação da Coalizão pela Primeira Infância no Ceará*' ('Evaluation of the Coalition for Early Childhood in Ceará') was completed, highlighting best practices and key lessons learned. These insights will

help refine and enhance early childhood policies within the state and beyond.

Additionally, the '*Primeira Infância Antirracista*' ('Antiracist Early Childhood Project' / 'PIA'), launched in 2024 through a partnership between the coalition, the '*Secretaria da Igualdade Racial*' ('Secretariat for Racial Equality') and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Brazil, mobilized leaders and professionals to address structural racism. The project focuses on ensuring equitable early childhood care, particularly for Black and Indigenous children.





Ceará Territory

Permanent Early Childhood Education Assessment System

In partnership with SEDUC and LEPES, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation is working to strengthen the '*Sistema de Avaliação Permanente da Educação Infantil*' ('Permanent Early Childhood Education Assessment System' / 'SAPI').

This initiative utilizes two key tools: '*Escala de Avaliação dos Ambientes de Aprendizagens*' ('Scale for Assessment of Early Childhood Learning Environments' / 'EAPI') and the '*Instrumento de Aprendizagens da Primeira Infância*' ('Early Childhood Learning Instrument' / 'INAPI'). These tools assess and monitor the quality of early childhood education across Ceará. In 2024, efforts focused on training SEDUC personnel to independently implement the system, with plans to gradually expand its reach to all municipalities.

SAPI provides a data-driven approach to identifying and addressing educational

system vulnerabilities, including inequality issues and limited data availability.

The evidence generated from these evaluations will guide teacher training, resource acquisition, and continuous professional development, ensuring the delivery of high-quality and equitable early childhood education throughout the state.



The evidence generated from the assessment informs initiatives designed to ensure quality and equity in educational provision.



Ceará Territory

ACT Program — To Educate Children in Secure Environments

Designed to strengthen parenting practices and prevent violence, the '*Programa ACT - Educar Crianças em Ambientes Seguros*' (ACT Program: To Educate Children in Secure Environments) was developed by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2001, drawing from national and international scientific evidence recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).

In Ceará, ACT has been implemented across 24 municipalities within the coalition and has been accompanied by ongoing implementation and impact assessment studies conducted by the '*Laboratório de Pesquisa em Prevenção de Problemas de Desenvolvimento e Comportamento da Criança*' (Research Laboratory on the Prevention of Child Development and Behavior Problems' / 'Lapredes')

at the Ribeirão Preto Medical School of the University of São Paulo. The program consists of eight interactive weekly sessions, during which parents and caregivers receive guidance and participate in activities aimed at fostering secure, stable, and nurturing home environments.

Building on initial findings, the adaptation and transfer of the program's methodology to Ceará were strategically planned. In 2024, this plan advanced significantly, with structured governance consolidated within the State Secretariat for Social Protection and the training of master trainers in the methodology. For the first time, the APA authorized the training of trainers to support the large-scale implementation of the program as a public policy in Brazil.





Ceará Territory

Evaluation of the Coalition for Early Childhood in Ceará

The study evaluated the Coalition for Early Childhood's model of action in Ceará between 2020 and 2022, focusing on 24 pilot municipalities and directly benefiting children aged 0 to 6 in vulnerable circumstances. The analysis examined the development of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, assessing key inputs, processes, and overall results of coalition efforts. It also evaluated collaboration between the state and municipalities, program governance, and the effectiveness of actions in achieving Ceará's strategic objectives.

This initiative highlights how collaborative governance and integrated public policies can promote the well-being of children and their families, offering valuable lessons for similar contexts across the country.



**Collaborative
governance and
integrated public
policies can promote
the well-being of
children and their
families**



Ceará Territory

***‘Primeira Infância Antirracista’* (‘Anti-Racist Early Childhood’)**

The *‘Primeira Infância Antirracista’* (‘Anti-Racist Early Childhood’ / ‘PIA’) Project, implemented in Ceará in partnership with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), has mobilized public administrators, social organizations, and professionals from the health, education, and social assistance sectors. The initiative aimed to promote equity in early childhood services for children aged 0 to 6—particularly Black and Indigenous children—by integrating anti-racist practices into public policies and service delivery.

To achieve this, the project facilitated virtual workshops to mobilize municipal leaders and organized in-person sessions in Fortaleza, Crato, and Sobral, providing training on the impact of racism on child development.

Structural and institutional racism profoundly affect children’s development,

making it essential to take immediate action to reduce inequalities and ensure equitable care. In this context, PIA was key in equipping leaders and professionals with actionable strategies to foster diversity and implement inclusive public policies rooted in social justice.

Among the project’s key achievements were the training of professionals and leaders from 34 municipalities in Ceará, the development of local action plans, and the dissemination of best practices for combating racism. The workshops, which combined theoretical and practical approaches, encouraged participants to reflect on racism and adopt strategies to make public services more inclusive and equitable.



Racism profoundly affects children’s development, making it essential to take immediate action to reduce inequalities and ensure equitable care





Intersectoral Residency in Early Childhood — Pernambuco

Training public administrators to strengthen early childhood policies

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation provided technical cooperation to the Pernambuco state government in the *‘Residência Intersectorial em Primeira Infância’* (‘Intersectoral Residency in Early Childhood’), a pioneering initiative carried out in partnership with the University of Pernambuco (UPE). This program trains public administrators and professionals from state and municipal agencies to strengthen policies for children aged 0 to 6, emphasizing intersectoral collaboration in health, education, and social assistance.

In 2024, the Foundation played a key role in advancing the program by offering technical support in curriculum design, the development of teaching materials, and the structuring of the Residency’s evaluation framework. The initiative also involved the

School of Government and Public Administration of Pernambuco (EGAPE).

With 380 hours of training, the Residency combines distance-learning theoretical courses with practical activities aligned with participants’ professional responsibilities. Future plans include expanding the training program and potentially replicating it in other states.





Other Initiatives

‘Panorama das Políticas de Primeira Infância dos Estados Brasileiros’

(‘Overview of Brazil’s State Policies on Early Childhood’)

Published by the Foundation, this study presents a comprehensive mapping of actions and programs aimed at early childhood across all 27 states, highlighting initiatives that promote children’s holistic development.

‘A Pobreza na Primeira Infância - O potencial das políticas estaduais de transferência de renda no desenvolvimento infantil’

(‘Poverty in Early Childhood - The potential of state cash transfer policies for child development’)

This publication examines the relationship between early childhood poverty, child development, and the role of state governments. A particular focus is given to the impact of cash transfer programs, culminating in a guide outlining key takeaways and recommendations for improving these policies.



Municipal Executive Branch

Ahead of the 2024 municipal elections, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation intensified efforts to position early childhood as a priority in candidates' agendas. These actions also aimed to raise awareness among elected officials about the importance of prioritizing policies for young children and their families during their terms. To support this effort, the Foundation developed policy recommendations and guides for candidates, engaged the press to highlight early childhood in election coverage, facilitated dialogue with political party foundations, and expanded advocacy efforts through digital channels.

Beyond election-related efforts, the Foundation updated data, indicators, and tools on the '*Primeira Infância Primeiro*' ('Early Childhood First' / 'PIP') digital portal. This platform serves as a comprehensive resource for public administrators, researchers, journalists, and the general public, offering insights to support local policy planning and implementation.





2024 Elections: Early Childhood in the Political Debate

The Foundation mobilizes candidates to prioritize early childhood in their government plans

During the 2024 municipal elections, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation intensified efforts to position early childhood at the center of the electoral debate. To achieve this, the Foundation engaged diverse stakeholders and implemented strategies to raise awareness among candidates and elected officials about the importance of public policies for young children. The following are the year's key initiatives:



Check out the publication with the six recommendations

2024 Elections

Policy Recommendations for Candidates

The Foundation updated its policy recommendations for mayoral candidates nationwide, emphasizing six priority areas: institutionalized public policies, quality early childhood education, parenting and family support, health, anti-racism initiatives, and public safety. Available both online and in print, these recommendations have received over 8,000 digital engagements. Aligned with the campaigns of Agenda 227 and the 'Rede Nacional Primeira Infância' ('National Early Childhood Network' / 'RNPI')—two key partners—this initiative underscores the importance of public policies that safeguard the rights of children and their families.



2024 Elections

Early Childhood in Municipalities Collection

To support elected mayors and municipal management teams, the Foundation developed **six in-depth guides** that expand on the themes outlined in the recommendations. These guides offer strategic insights for planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and services for children aged 0 to 6 and their families. Launched in early 2025, these materials are part of a broader effort to mobilize newly elected officials and municipal teams during their first 100 days in office.



Access the PIP digital portal here

2024 Elections

Early Childhood First digital portal

The '*Primeira Infância Primeiro*' ('Early Childhood First' / 'PIP') digital portal, a comprehensive platform for early childhood data, underwent a complete update in 2024. New pages and expanded datasets were added to provide valuable insights for candidates, policymakers, researchers, journalists, and the general public. The digital portal now features more than 40 detailed indicators covering federal, state, and municipal data. With over 780,000 visits in 2024—a 69% increase compared to the previous year—the platform reinforced its role as a leading resource for early childhood information.



2024 Elections

Debate with Leaders

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation took part in events hosted by training institutes of different Brazilian political parties, including RenovaBR, Fundação Índigo, Perseu Abramo and Ulysses Guimarães. During these sessions, the Foundation shared its recommendations for prioritizing early childhood in government plans, engaging approximately 1,500 participants and fostering informed dialogue on the subject.

The Foundation also held over 15 meetings with prominent journalists from outlets such as TV Globo, GloboNews, BandNews FM, CBN, Eldorado, Carta Capital, O Estado de S. Paulo, and Folha de S. Paulo. This media engagement yielded tangible results: the Foundation was

invited to submit early childhood questions for use in electoral debates and was referenced as a reliable source in other discussions.

Participation in key events that addressed early childhood in the electoral context—such as the Focas from the newspaper The State of São Paulo training program and the annual conferences of the ‘*Associação Brasileira de Jornalismo Investigativo*’ (‘Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism’/ ‘ABRAJI’) and the ‘*Associação de jornalistas de educação*’ (‘Association of Education Journalists’ / ‘JEDUCA’)—further broadened the reach of this work. As a result, the Foundation was featured in more than 260 media reports, including articles, interviews, and debate segments.



2024 Elections

Communication and Digital Engagement

Early childhood also featured prominently in the Foundation’s digital strategy. Through social media campaigns, newsletters, and partner communications, the Foundation ensured broad dissemination of its content and helped raise public awareness. The campaign promoting recommendations to candidates reached over 100,000 people on social media platforms.

Together, these efforts underscore the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation’s ongoing commitment to advancing public policies for early childhood and fostering a well-informed electoral debate on child development. They reinforce the urgency of placing young children and their families at the heart of government plans, budgets, programs, and services.



Early Childhood, A Top Priority



Structuring policies for children can transform cities



Elections: Is guaranteeing childcare places part of your candidate’s platform?



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



FUNDAÇÃO
Maria Cecília
Souto Vidigal

Mobilizing Society

Raise awareness among families, opinion leaders, and the entire society about the importance of the first few years of life—and mobilize them around this cause





Families

Families with young children—especially those in vulnerable circumstances—are the main focus of the public policies that the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation works to strengthen. These families are also a priority audience for awareness-raising efforts aimed at ensuring they have access to reliable information about their rights and the significance of early childhood development.

To engage directly with these families, the Foundation created a character named ‘Nelson, o Nenê.’ Nelson is a Brazilian animated baby character created to engage and educate young audiences about the importance of early childhood development and has become a familiar spokesperson for early childhood. He appeared in mass media and public spaces and participated in a communication campaign launched in communities across four Brazilian states.





Families

‘Nelson Neto, o Nenê’

The character continues to grow his role as a spokesperson for early childhood —across digital channels, mainstream media, and within communities

Created in 2020 to raise awareness among families and caregivers of young children, **Nelson, o Nenê** expanded his reach in 2024 through three strategic pillars of action: digital engagement by producing content for social media platforms; mass dissemination through audiovisual productions developed in partnership with TV Globo; and community outreach via a communication campaign implemented in communities experiencing vulnerable circumstances.

Digital

With accessible, lighthearted content, Nelson promotes practical behaviors aligned with the five pillars of the Nurturing Care Framework, developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, and the World Bank: health, nutrition, responsive caregiving, safety, and opportunities for early learning.

In 2024, his content reached an average of 7 million people per month through platforms including **YouTube**, **Facebook**, **Instagram** and **TikTok**.





Click here to
watch Nelson
Neto on TV
Globo's Encontro
program

Mass Awareness Campaign

As a key voice for early childhood, Nelson played a central role in several high-impact initiatives, including 'Agosto Verde' ('Green August')—Early Childhood Month—capturing the attention of families and reinforcing the importance of nurturing child development. The character is featured in TV programming, advertising campaigns, and out-of-home media to increase visibility.

Key highlights of 2024 included the creation and launch of the LEDinho space at Globo's Luz na Educação (LED) festival, as well as Nelson's appearance on Globo's Bem-Estar segment within the Encontro program. From July through December, the show *Mi e Nelson, o Nenê* covered topics such as vacation games, breastfeeding tips, and the vital role of affection and bonding in a child's first few years of life.



Territories of Care

This year, Nelson traveled around Brazil with the expansion of the ‘*Territórios do Cuidado*’ (‘Territories of Care’) project in partnership with the nongovernmental organization Gerando Falcões. The initiative reinforces the importance of positive interactions and nurturing care during the first few years of life for families living in vulnerable circumstances. It brought knowledge and information to five communities across the states of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and Ceará. The project also continued its presence in Ferraz de Vasconcelos (SP), supporting the Favela dos Sonhos initiative launched in 2023.

As a spokesperson for the campaign, Nelson appeared on T-shirts, in street art, and across community walls—delivering messages about the importance of early childhood under the theme, Children are everyone’s responsibility.





In 2024, the campaign placed grassroots organizations at the center of implementation, giving them greater autonomy. Following a training workshop on early childhood, community leaders led local mobilization efforts using activities and materials developed by the Foundation. More than 40 leaders were trained, 48 activities were delivered, and a wide range of digital and print communication materials were distributed.

A post-campaign survey conducted in the participating territories revealed that 95% of the leaders felt satisfied and accomplished with their contributions. Moreover, 85% observed positive changes in

their communities, with 46% noting an increase in conversations about child care. Among residents, there was a heightened interest in early childhood information and a greater appreciation for learning, and 43% reported improved interactions with their children.

These findings were reinforced by a study conducted by Ideafix during the campaign's implementation in Cidade de Deus, Ferraz de Vasconcelos. Following awareness-raising activities, more than 80% of the residents interviewed stated they had become more attentive to children's needs and well-being.



Opinion Leaders

Journalists, communicators, and digital influencers play a critical role as opinion leaders in shaping public discourse around the importance of early childhood. A well-informed society is more likely to recognize the value of the first few years of life and demand robust initiatives and public policies that protect and promote children's rights. For this reason, one of the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation's key pillars of action is raising awareness of the cause through digital platforms and the media while also investing in training efforts, developing tools and materials, and advancing the agenda in collaboration with diverse partner organizations.

In 2024, this effort gained further momentum with the expansion of the 'Agosto Verde' ('Green August')—Early Childhood Month—campaign, which was widely disseminated across digital channels, mainstream media, and public spaces. The Foundation also broadened its journalism training and engagement strategy, promoting 12 initiatives throughout the year that deepened opinion leaders' understanding of early childhood and further strengthened the surrounding ecosystem.





Opinion leaders

Green August

The Foundation launched a awareness campaign across digital platforms, television, urban fixtures, and public transportation

In August 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation celebrated Early Childhood Month through its campaign ‘*Cuidar de cada criança é cuidar do país inteiro*’ (‘Caring for Every Child is Caring for the Whole Country’), driving initiatives that mobilized a wide range of actors—from families and civil society organizations to influencers and the press.

The theme of this year’s campaign was drawn from the manifesto ‘*Cada passo do começo*’ (‘Every Step from the Beginning’), written exclusively for the Foundation by poet and author André Gravatá. This piece inspired an audiovisual production launched to commemorate the month, alongside the creation of a

public seal—‘*Agosto Verde*’ (‘Green August’): Early Childhood Month—to promote and elevate the visibility of this important date.

The campaign aimed to raise awareness about the importance of the first few years of life—not only for each child’s development but as a foundation for a fairer and more equitable society.

To amplify this message, the Foundation’s digital platforms published daily content under the hashtag #CuidarDeCadaCriança, reaching approximately 900,000 people. Influencers also joined the campaign, sharing posts and insights on early childhood themes by the Foundation’s invitation.

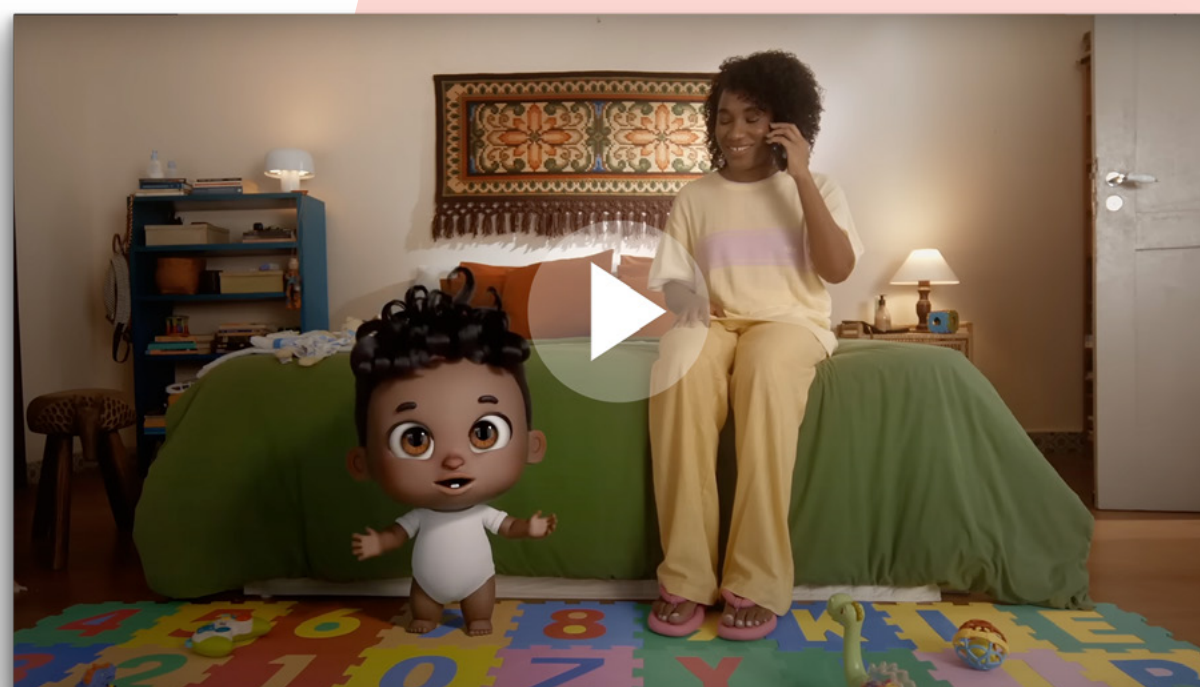




Collaborations with other organizations further expanded the campaign's reach. One such partnership was with the Mauricio de Sousa Institute, featuring *Turma da Mônica* characters. In partnership with Projetemos, the campaign visuals were projected onto a central São Paulo (SP) building with accompanying digital dissemination across social channels.

Nelson, o Nenê, a Brazilian animated character created to engage and educate young audiences about the importance of early childhood development, starred in the campaign's audiovisual piece, which aired in more than 160 spots on TV Globo, reaching an estimated audience of 11 million people. The campaign also extended into public spaces, with nearly 90 panels featuring Nelson's image installed throughout the São Paulo metropolitan area—on digital clock signs, in train stations, and across the subway system.

In addition, the Foundation reissued its 2019 publication *'Os Primeiros Anos em Suas Mãos'* ('Early Childhood in Your Hands'), featuring updated data and new chapters on early childhood. To support awareness-building, the Foundation engaged the press, resulting in national and regional media coverage highlighting the relevance and urgency of early childhood development.



Check out the updated early childhood publication here



Watch the televised campaign video



Opinion Leaders

Promoting Journalism that is Sensitive to Early Childhood

For more than a decade, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation has supported and trained journalists and strengthened media outlets to expand coverage of early childhood

The Foundation has broadened its strategy for journalism training and engagement to promote qualified, in-depth, and sensitive reporting on early childhood. Through open calls and strategic partnerships, the Foundation has supported journalists from major national outlets, independent reporters, and early-career professionals with access to training programs, mentoring, tools, research, and data. These efforts are designed to encourage robust reporting on child development and help connect early childhood to broader societal issues, such as economic inequality, structural racism, and challenges in education and social protection.

Beyond training, the Foundation has also invested in journalistic projects that prioritize the production of impactful, diverse content focused on early childhood. This dual approach—capacity building and direct support—contributes to a press that informs and mobilizes society, influences decision-makers, and helps foster public policies that benefit young children and their families. By mobilizing journalism as a driver of transformation, the Foundation continues to advance its commitment to making early childhood a central issue in Brazil's public agenda.





Opinion Leaders

Journalism for Early Childhood: Training in Partnership with Columbia University

In 2024, the Foundation reaffirmed its commitment to early childhood by supporting the Dart Center's Early Childhood Journalism Initiative. This included participation in the Global Institute for Reporting on Early Childhood and Caregivers—an intensive training program designed to equip journalists and editors with the tools to produce ethical, evidence-based reporting on child development.

Held in March at Columbia University in New York (USA), the training brought together 30 journalists from 17 countries, including seven from Brazil. Through a series of panels and workshops, participants explored the lasting impact of early childhood and the importance of approaching the topic with depth, care, and journalistic rigor.

In August, the Dart Center launched a Brazilian edition of the program in Rio de Janeiro (RJ), aimed exclusively at editors. Supported by the Foundation, the event convened 23 editorial leaders from major national media outlets to examine the development of children aged 0 to 6 and the broader challenges within the Brazilian context.

Sessions led by national and international experts addressed the country's diverse childhood realities, the role of journalism in shaping public discourse, and the potential of reporting to influence effective public policies.

Since 2017, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation has supported this initiative in collaboration with the Dart Center, Two Lilies, and the Van Leer Foundation, continuously working to elevate the standard of journalism on early childhood and reinforcing the role of quality reporting as a catalyst for shifting societal perceptions and priorities.





Opinion Leaders

Covering Early Childhood from the Start of a Journalistic Career

In 2024, the Foundation expanded its training initiatives on early childhood and its intersections with other pressing issues, targeting early-career journalists in collaboration with major national media outlets.

In May, the Foundation conducted a session during the 68th edition of Folha de S.Paulo's Daily Journalism Training Program, engaging 20 trainees. With the participation of economist Naercio Menezes from the Núcleo Ciência Pela Infância (NCPI), the session explored the connection between early childhood, economics, and journalism, raising awareness among young professionals about the profound economic and societal impacts of early childhood development.

That same month, the Foundation also delivered a masterclass on early childhood and the municipal elections to more than 30 journalists enrolled in the 34th Estadão Journalism Course. During the class, the “focas”—a nickname for journalists at the start of their careers—examined early childhood development through the lens of public policy and its relevance in the electoral context.

In October, the Foundation was invited to participate in the Valor Econômico Economic Journalism Course, which brought together 25 journalists from nine Brazilian states. The session emphasized the importance of incorporating early childhood into economic reporting and presented compelling evidence of its strategic role in addressing inequality. The ***‘Primeira Infância Primeiro’*** (‘Early Childhood First’ / ‘PIP’) digital portal was also introduced as a valuable data resource for journalists covering this agenda.





Opinion Leaders

Independent Journalism and Anti-Racist, Place-Based Approaches to Early Childhood Coverage

An initiative by the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, developed in partnership with 'Nós, Mulheres da Periferia' ('We, the Women on the Margin'), Alma Preta, and Marco Zero Conteúdo, the project 'O papel do jornalismo periférico e antirracista na proteção das infâncias negras' ('The Role of Underserved and Anti-Racist Journalism in the Protection of Black Children') implemented strategic actions to improve the coverage of Brazil's multiple Black childhoods. The project aimed to deepen the public conversation on diversity, inclusion, and early childhood.

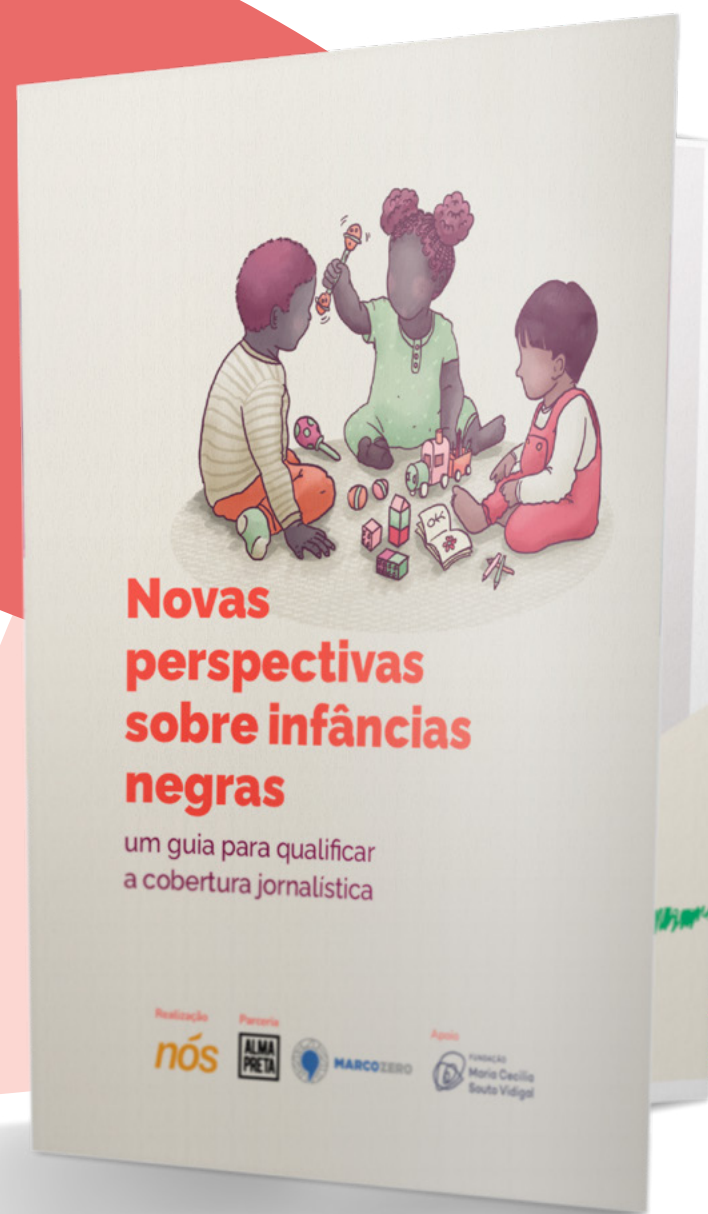
Structured across four areas between 2023 and 2024, the initiative included a virtual launch event, a training program for 28 professionals, a call for proposals that

awarded four reporting grants, and the production of the guide 'Novas Perspectivas sobre Infâncias Negras' ('New Perspectives on Black Children'). This publication has become an essential resource for communicators addressing topics such as racism, inclusion in early childhood education, and the challenges experienced by Black and Indigenous mothers and children.

The reports funded and published through independent media channels helped amplify a more grounded and empathetic portrayal of early childhood in Brazil's underserved territories. These stories contributed to a more representative and nuanced understanding of the realities Black children face across the country.



Check out the guide here



Check out the content created by Nós, Mulheres da Periferia



Read an article produced by Alma Preta



Opinion Leaders

Special Series on Early Childhood in *Folha de S.Paulo*

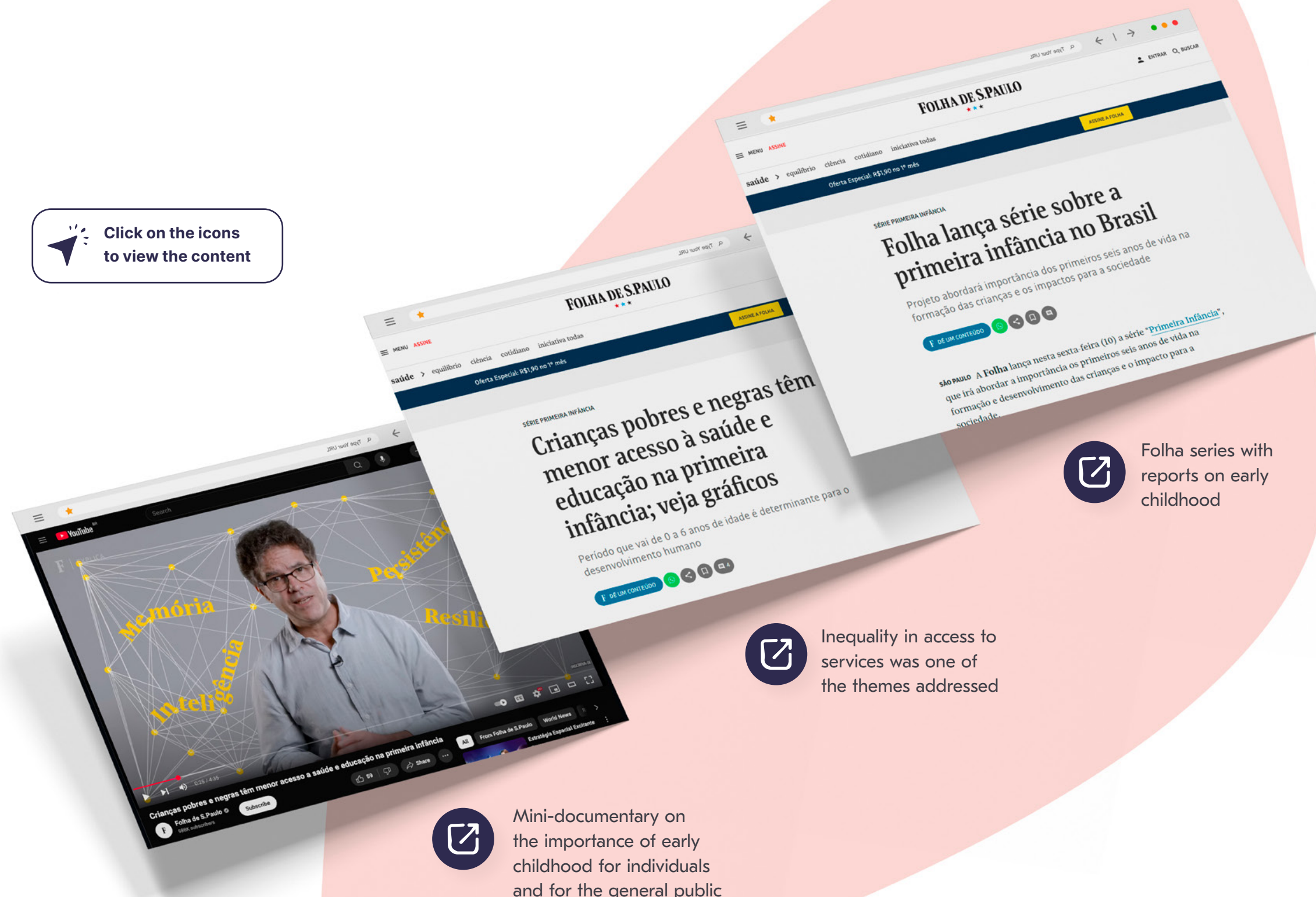
Recognizing the importance of expanding journalistic coverage of the impact of early childhood development—both on individuals and on society—the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, in partnership with *Todos Pela Educação*, supported the creation of **a special editorial series on early childhood** in the newspaper *Folha de S.Paulo*.

From May to October 2024, ten articles and a mini-documentary were published, exploring key themes such as racism, toxic stress, food insecurity, and epigenetics. Each story focused on children aged 0 to 6 and their families. The Foundation provided technical support, offering data, sources, and editorial suggestions to enrich the content produced by the newspaper's team.

In a year marked by municipal elections, the project aimed to raise awareness among opinion leaders, public administrators, and the broader public about the role of early childhood in the country's development.



Click on the icons
to view the content





Opinion Leaders

Rebuilding Education: Debates and reports on quality in practice

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation supported O Estado de S. Paulo newspaper in organizing another edition of *'Reconstrução da Educação'* ('Rebuilding Education'), an initiative dedicated to exploring pathways toward high-quality public education in Brazil.

Held between October and November 2024, the series of livestreams, articles, and debates brought together experts and public figures to discuss pressing issues such as artificial intelligence, anti-racist education,

disinformation, and fake news. The content was broadcast on TV Estadão, with significant visibility on the media group's social networks and through feature articles in its print edition.

The initiative concluded with an in-person event at the Ipiranga Museum in São Paulo, attended by Brazil's Minister of Education, Camilo Santana. The Foundation took part in the discussion on early childhood education, highlighting challenges and solutions for expanding access to and improving the quality of daycare and preschool services. The Núcleo Ciência Pela Infância (NCPI) participated in another panel, contributing to the conversation on the importance of full-time education.



Click on the icons
to view the content



Opinion Leaders

Alma Preta Promotes Early Childhood With an Anti-Racist Approach

In 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation entered into a pioneering partnership with Alma Preta—an information and entertainment portal focused on Black audiences—to align early childhood development with an anti-racist approach. Together, they produced more than 30 original pieces of content, including videos, reports, and social media materials to support families, educators, and professionals in the social protection network who work with Black children. The initiative aims to raise awareness around both child development and racial equity.

The content was widely disseminated through Alma Preta's channels, which reach an audience of over 800,000 followers. Through the Foundation's sponsorship, the initiative delivered high-quality content that shed light on the structural challenges faced by Black children and offered viable strategies to address them.

This partnership illustrates how anti-racist principles can be effectively embedded into child development policies and reinforces the power of communication as a driver for a more just and inclusive society.

Exposure to racism from childhood increases the risk of mental disorders throughout life



Less than 50% of vulnerable children have access to daycare centers in Brazil

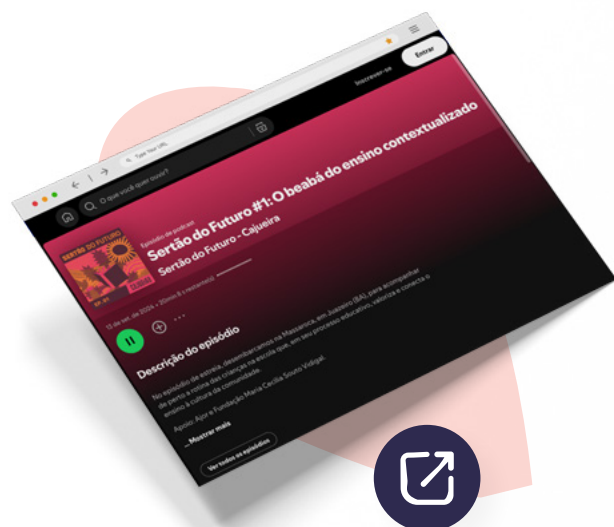


Active parental involvement in breastfeeding supports healthy early childhood development





Click on the icons
to view the content



Brazilian Backlands of the future #1: The basics of contextualized teaching



Comprehensive Nurseries and Pre-Schools Fail to Serve Rio de Janeiro's Black Population



Capoeira Angola: A Learning Tool in Early Childhood Education



In Bahia, Community Libraries Encourage Anti-Racist Education in Early Childhood



Managing the Future



How Good Practices Transform Early Childhood Education on the Outskirts of Salvador

Opinion leaders

Reporting Grant Boosts Independent Journalism on Early Childhood

The partnership between the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation and the 'Associação de Jornalismo Digital' ('Association of Digital Journalism' / 'AJOR') took a major step forward in 2024 with the launch of a new call for proposals titled '*Bolsa de reportagem, mentoria e jornalismo de soluções: a primeira infância como pauta prioritária*' ('Reporting, Mentoring, and Solutions Journalism: Early childhood as a priority agenda'). The initiative was designed to strengthen journalistic coverage and enrich public debate around policies focused on children aged 0 to 6 and their families.

To foster participation across the country, the program included two preparatory workshops—one on solutions journalism methodologies and another on early childhood concepts. Outlets from 16 states submitted proposals, and ultimately, six organizations were selected to produce 12 pieces of content in various formats, including reports and podcasts.

The selected works addressed early childhood education and parental support, combining solutions journalism with creative storytelling to increase public engagement. Projects by Cajueira, Conquista Repórter (BA), Desenrola e Não Me Enrola (SP), Entre Becos (BA), Gênero e Número (RJ), and Manda Notícias (SP) made significant local impact, mobilized community action, and elevated public dialogue—especially in electoral contexts—by connecting grassroots narratives to national policy debates.



Opinion Leaders

ABRAJI's 19th International Conference on Investigative Journalism

To strengthen journalism's role in advancing children's rights, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation sponsored the 19th edition of the International Conference on Investigative Journalism, organized by the '*Associação Brasileira de Jornalismo Investigativo*' ('Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism'/ 'ABRAJI'). The event is recognized as the largest journalism gathering in Brazil.

Held in a hybrid format from July 11 to 14 in São Paulo (SP), the conference brought together 1,800 participants and 366 speakers across more than 100 sessions. Topics included elections, artificial intelligence, politics, human rights, and corruption.

The Foundation was invited to speak on the panel "How to Investigate: Public Education," where it emphasized the importance of robust, well-informed journalism on early childhood development as a means to expand public debate, shape policy decisions, and mobilize society.





Opinion Leaders

JEDUCA's 8th International Conference on Education Journalism

In September, the Foundation sponsored the 8th International Conference on Education Journalism hosted by the 'Associação de jornalistas de educação' ('Association of Education Journalists' / 'JEDUCA') supporting the panel '*Como Cobrir Educação Infantil e a Importância em Ano Eleitoral*' ('How to Cover Early Childhood Education and its Importance in an Election Year').

Held in a hybrid format in São Paulo (SP), the event brought together more than 400 participants, including journalists, public figures, researchers, teachers, and international experts, fostering a broad and informed dialogue on education.

Through this sponsorship, the Foundation aimed to encourage more comprehensive coverage of early childhood education and enhance journalists' capacity to report on this critical stage of development.





In the Media

Press

In 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation continued to expand its visibility across Brazil's leading national and regional media outlets, with 3,669 articles published—a 10% increase over 2023. This growth was further strengthened by the publication of nine op-eds authored by CEO Mariana Luz on the country's most prominent media platforms.

The Foundation's rising media presence was driven by the release of new studies and data, along with strategic efforts to support, train, and guide journalists in covering early childhood development. These efforts encouraged coverage that connects early childhood to broader social issues, including economics and politics—particularly in the context of municipal elections

and the development of the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood ('PNIPI' in the Portuguese acronym).

Among the year's most impactful publications were the 'Índice de Necessidade de Creche' ('Daycare Needs Index' / 'INC') for states and capitals and the report '*Perfil Síntese da Primeira Infância e Famílias no Cadastro Único*' ('Synthesis Profile of Early Childhood and Families in the Federal Unified Registration'). Together, these studies were featured in more than 1,157 media stories.

This increasing presence has helped solidify the Foundation's position as a leading voice in the national conversation on early childhood and a key player in advancing strategies to reduce inequality.



Click on the icons to view the content



Deaths of Indigenous Children Twice as High as the Rest — Folha de S. Paulo



Investment in Early Childhood — O Globo



The Value of Childhood — Crescer



Click on the icons to view the content

Anti-Racism in Early Childhood Public Policies— *Prefoteca*



Urgent Action Needed on Early Childhood, Says Expert — *Valor Econômico*



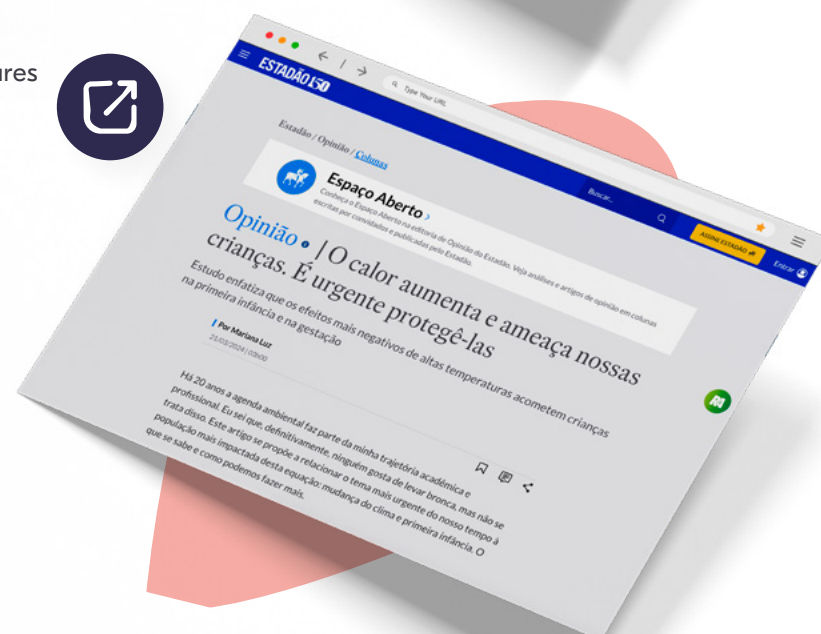
Lack of Daycare Spots Affects Over 4 Million Vulnerable Children — *TV Cultura*



Opinion: Brazil is showing leadership on supporting early childhood — *UNESCO*



Rising temperatures threaten children's well-being. They must be protected — *Estadão*



Let's Not Miss the Chance to End Poverty at Its Roots — *Carta Capital*





In the Media

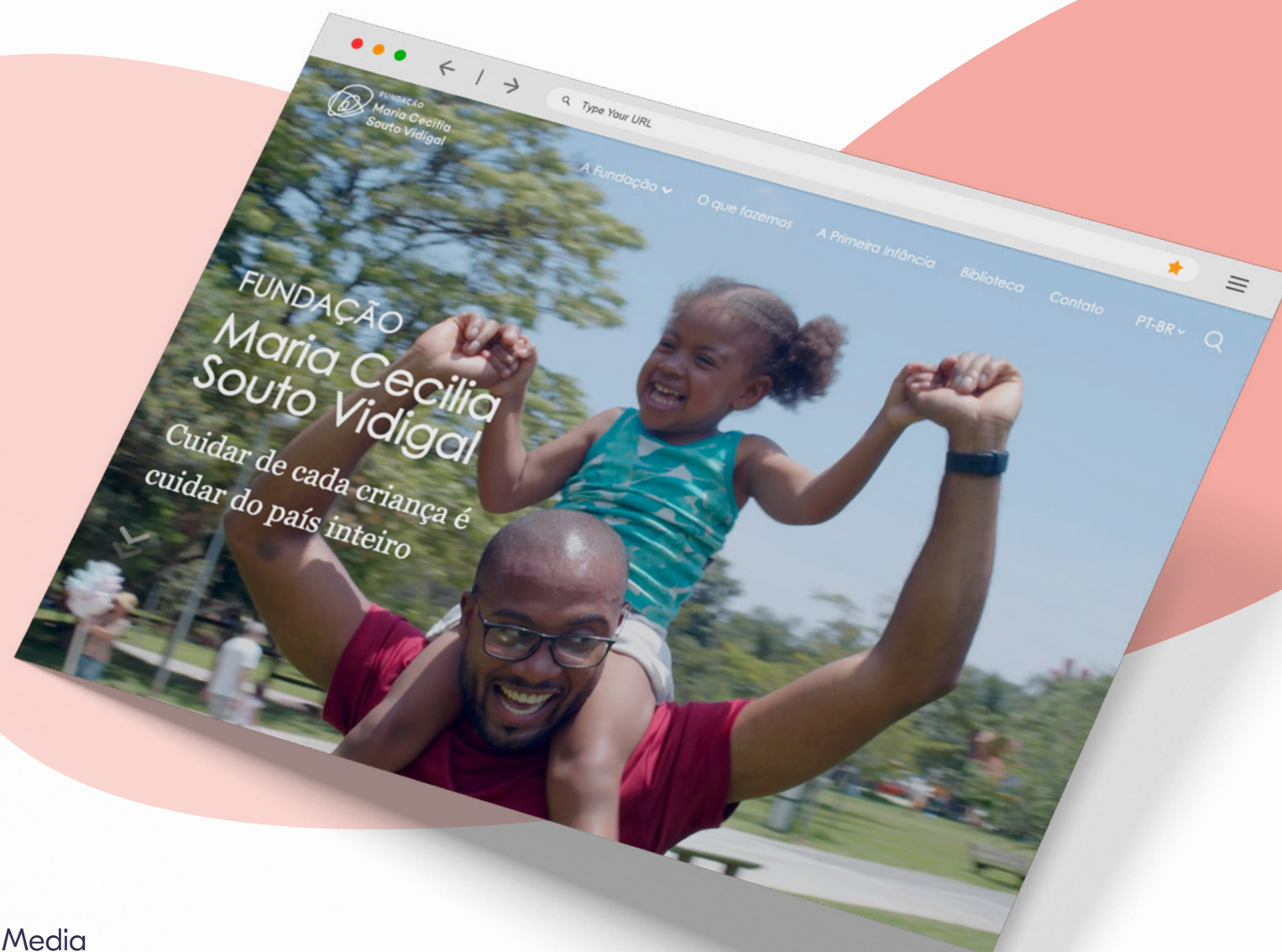
Digital Communication

To help the public understand how experiences in the first few years of life shape the course of a lifetime, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation has maintained an active digital presence, engaging diverse audiences daily through multiple formats and channels.

Content production spans social media platforms, newsletters, websites, and an extensive online library. This integrated digital ecosystem is designed to expand the Foundation's reach and reinforce its position as a national reference in early childhood development.

The digital strategy is grounded in responsible information curation, a consistent and impactful visual identity, fostering community engagement, and ongoing data analysis to optimize performance.

In 2024, the Foundation strengthened this approach by focusing on deeper engagement and reaffirming its commitment to maintaining consistent, accessible, and inclusive communication.



In the Media

New Institutional Website

To mark Early Childhood Month in August, the Foundation launched a new website featuring updated editorial content, a refreshed portfolio, and dedicated pages for key audiences such as public administrators and journalists. The redesigned digital library—the largest of its kind in Brazil—was also unveiled, offering enhanced navigation with filters by category, format, and theme. The platform now provides easy access to more than 600 free resources on early childhood.

Results



Instagram

9.3 million views in 2024

Engagement grew by 133% year-over-year



Top-performing post: the projection of the ‘*Cuidar de cada criança*’ (‘Caring for Every Child’) campaign, which reached more than 118,000 people organically



In the Media

Results



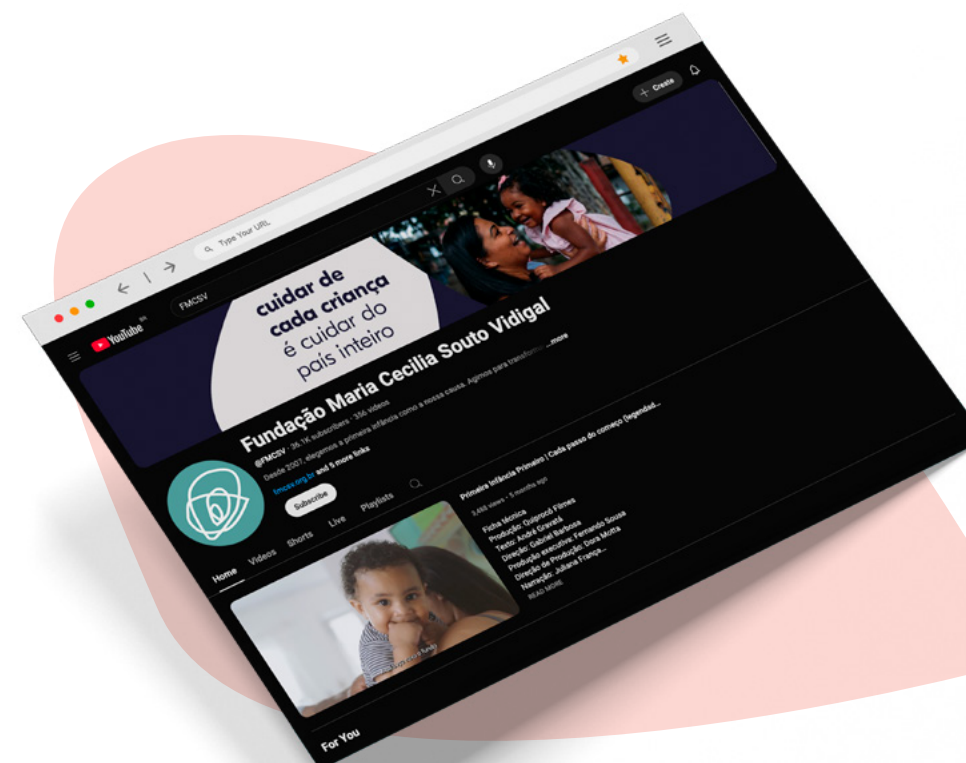
LinkedIn

Gained **20,000 new followers**

Reached more than 194,000 people over the year

Most engaging content: working groups on the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood (PNIPI)

Most far-reaching post: the announcement of the PNIPI decree



YouTube

5.9 million views in 2024

36,000 subscribers



Facebook

4.9 million views in 2024

Over **257,000 followers**



In the Media Results



Digital Library

Among the most downloaded materials from the Foundation's digital library in 2024 were *'BNCC na Educação Infantil'* ('Brazil's National Learning Standards –BNCC– in Early Childhood Education'), the *'Sumário Executivo da Avaliação da Qualidade da Educação Infantil'* ('Executive Summary of the Early Childhood Education Quality Assessment'), and the *'Catálogo de Jogos e Brincadeiras Africanas e Afro-brasileiras'* ('Catalog of African and Afro-Brazilian Games and Play').



Early Childhood Radar

The most notable newsletter edition of the year was released on October 10th, highlighting efforts to promote and train journalists on covering Brazil's diverse early childhood realities. The edition achieved over 91,000 opens.



Websites

In 2024, the Foundation's platforms continued to expand their reach:

Early Childhood Guide attracted **48,000 users**

'Primeira Infância Primeiro' ('Early Childhood First' / 'PIP') digital portal recorded **780,000 users**

The Foundation's main website and digital library reached a combined total of **964,000 users**

In addition, more than **313,000 words were translated using accessibility tools** across the Foundation's websites



Our Ecosystem

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation plays a key role in strengthening the early childhood ecosystem by providing donations and sponsorships to organizations, coalitions, events, and initiatives that help scale its collective impact



Agenda 227

To enhance the broader public policy landscape, the Foundation reaffirmed its support in 2024 for **Agenda 227**, a coalition of over 400 civil society organizations working to ensure children and adolescents are prioritized in policymaking, in line with Article 227 of Brazil's Federal Constitution.

The Foundation's support focused on financing strategic actions to ensure early childhood was included in the political debate during the municipal elections. One major outcome was the collaborative development of the publication '**Prioridade Absoluta nas Eleições 2024**' ('Absolute Priority in the 2024 Elections'), a document offering recommendations to help municipal governments prioritize early childhood and youth agendas. The document reached candidates across 22 states in all regions of Brazil.

CONGEMAS National Summit

The Foundation supports the **National Council of Municipal Social Assistance Managers (CONGEMAS)**, an organization that coordinates social assistance policies at the municipal level. This support helps strengthen the formulation and implementation of policies focused on parenting and child development, ensuring care and protection for children aged 0 to 6.

In 2024, the Foundation once again sponsored the CONGEMAS National Summit, its 24th edition. Held in July in São Paulo (SP), the event featured the distribution of communication materials by the Foundation, participation in the opening panel, and a dedicated presence in the session titled '*Primeira Infância no Suas: Reordenamento do Programa Criança Feliz, aspectos metodológicos na gestão do território e no atendimento*' ('Early Childhood in the Brazilian Social Assistance System-SUAS: Optimization of the Happy Child Program, methodological approaches in local management, and care').





UNDIME and Conviva Educação

In 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation deepened its partnership with the **Brazilian Union of Municipal Education Directors (UNDIME)** to strengthen early childhood education systems across municipalities. A central pillar of this collaboration was supporting the Conviva Educação platform, which offers free tools and resources to assist municipal education departments in navigating financial constraints and accessing technical guidance.

The partnership also includes the dissemination of reference materials on early childhood education and the production of live broadcasts on strategic topics in the field.

‘Movimento pela Base’ Movement for Brazil’s National Learning Standards (BNCC Movement)

In 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation reaffirmed its commitment to **‘Movimento pela Base’** (‘Movement for Brazil’s National Learning Standards / BNCC Movement’), a non-governmental, non-partisan organization focused on implementing high-quality education policies in Brazil.

The Foundation’s support centered on efforts to promote coherence and quality in the implementation of Brazil’s National Learning Standards (BNCC). Joint initiatives included the dissemination of a study on literacy, policy positioning on early childhood education—particularly in the context of the new *‘Plano Nacional de Educação’* (‘National Education Plan’ / ‘PNE’)—and enhancements to Brazil’s National Learning Assessment (SAEB).



‘*Todos Pela Educação*’ ('All for Education')

The Foundation also provided institutional support to ***Todos Pela Educação***, a civil society organization dedicated to transforming Brazil’s public basic education system and ensuring quality learning for all children and adolescents.

The partnership reinforces the Foundation’s commitment to early childhood education as a cornerstone of holistic development. Through the ‘*Educação Já!*’ (‘Education Now!’) agenda, Todos Pela Educação advocates for evidence-based public policies and addresses the key challenges impacting more than 48 million students across the country.

‘*Rede Nacional Primeira Infância*’ ('National Early Childhood Network' / 'RNPI')

Since 2017, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation has worked to strengthen the reach and influence of the ‘***Rede Nacional Primeira Infância***’ (‘National Early Childhood Network’ / ‘RNPI’)—a coalition of civil society organizations, government entities, the private sector, other networks, and multilateral organizations committed to promoting and securing the rights of young children.

This strategic partnership has supported the implementation of RNPI’s Tactical Plan, which includes fostering the development of state-level networks, strengthening ties with Latin American coalitions, expanding the network’s impact on public policy, and building closer relationships with State Accounting Courts and caucuses in both the Brazilian National Congress and state legislative assemblies.

RNPI’s work reinforces local and national networks, encourages social participation, and disseminates knowledge on the importance of this critical stage of child development.





Núcleo Ciência Pela Infância (NCPI)

The NCPI is a coalition dedicated to generating and disseminating scientific knowledge on early childhood development, with the goal of equipping leaders in public administration, civil society, and the academic community. Its efforts aim to advance public policies that reduce racial, regional, and socio-economic inequalities affecting Brazil's children.





As NCPI's backbone organization, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation plays a central role in its structure, supported technically, strategically, and financially by four additional partner organizations: the Van Leer Foundation, the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University, Insper, and Porticus Latin America.

In 2024, NCPI advanced its mission through key initiatives such as the Scientific Committee, the Science for Early Childhood Award, the Executive Leadership Program in Early Childhood Development, and the Leadership Community formed by alumni of the program.



Scientific Committee

A multidisciplinary group dedicated to producing and disseminating knowledge to inform public policies and engage decision-makers on behalf of early childhood

The NCPI's Scientific Committee remains a cornerstone in advancing scientific knowledge on early childhood in Brazil. Established in 2011, the Committee is composed of 27 volunteer researchers from fields such as education, medicine, psychology, economics, and public policy. Its mission is to translate scientific evidence into accessible knowledge, shaping public policies that safeguard the well-being of children—especially those living in vulnerable circumstances.

In 2024, the Committee launched two working papers, reinforcing its contribution to informed debate and evidence-based decision-making.



Working Paper 12: **Inequalities in the Health of Indigenous Children**

Released in April during a virtual meeting of the NCPI's 'Comunidade de Lideranças para o Desenvolvimento Infantil' ('Child Development Leadership Community')



Working Paper 13: **Intersectoral Collaboration in Public Policies for Early Childhood: Challenges and opportunities**

Released in November at the closing session of the 11th Executive Leadership Program in Early Childhood Development

It also began the development of a new working paper focused on the intersection of early childhood and the climate crisis, slated for publication in 2025.

The Committee further advanced its commitment to regional and ethnic-racial diversity by welcoming two new members: professors Dandara Oliveira Ramos and Juliana Prates of the Federal University of Bahia. Their addition enhances the Committee's ability to address early childhood challenges through a more inclusive and representative lens.

Throughout the year, members participated in both national and international events, including the G20 Social and the drafting process of the Integrated National Policy on Early Childhood ('PNIPI' in the Portuguese acronym). With robust publications and an active presence in strategic forums, the Committee remains a key reference in informing public policies and engaging managers and stakeholders across sectors.



2nd Science for Early Childhood Award

Recognizing innovative doctoral and master's-level research and advancing regional and thematic diversity

Following its successful debut in 2022, the second edition of the Science for Early Childhood Award was held in 2024 to identify and recognize outstanding research on early childhood. This new round focused on broadening the reach of the call for submissions and increasing the number of entries, with an emphasis on enhancing regional and thematic diversity across the selected studies. Priority topics included reducing inequalities, valuing plural perspectives, and evaluating public policies—key areas of interest for the NCPI.





A notable feature of the second edition was the eligibility of both doctoral and master's-level researchers. The approach proved successful, yielding 150 submissions from 25 Brazilian states—nearly twice as many as the first edition.

Winners were selected based on criteria such as methodological rigor, relevance, and applicability of the research. The process also prioritized Black and Indigenous scholars, as well as those conducting work in Brazil's North and Northeast regions. Ultimately, 15 finalists from all regions of the country were selected to receive training on disseminating scientific knowledge applied to public policy. These researchers

also participated in an in-person meeting on October 23 at Itaú Cultural in São Paulo (SP), fostering connections among peers, the NCPI, and its institutional partners.

Two master's-level researchers each received a R\$5,000 prize, while five doctoral-level researchers were awarded individual prizes of R\$15,000, which were to be used for professional development and enhancement activities.

In addition, the award-winning doctoral research underwent a visual editing process to better communicate its findings, which will be disseminated through NCPI's digital platforms.



Executive Leadership Program in Early Childhood Development

In partnership with Harvard and Insper, the program reaches its 11th edition, training leaders to strengthen public policies

A strategic initiative to engage and prepare leaders in developing and implementing public policies for early childhood in Brazil, the Executive Leadership Program continued in 2024 through a partnership with the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Insper. The program's core objective is to equip professionals from various sectors to lead actions that generate a positive impact in the lives of children aged 0 to 6.

In 2024, in its 11th edition, the program was delivered in three modules. The first took place from June 10 to 14 at Harvard University in the United States, under the coordination of Professors Marcia Castro and Aisha Yousafzai. The second module was conducted remotely over two months, followed by the final in-person session held on November 28 and 29 at Insper in São Paulo (SP), led by Professor Ana Diniz, PhD.





This edition brought together 40 participants from a wide range of fields, including federal and state governments, the legislative and judicial branches, the media, academia, and civil society. It was the most diverse class since 2018, with notable representation from the Midwest region, where 43% of the participants are active. The 2024 edition also saw an increase in the participation of congresspersons, who made up 25% of the cohort.

Despite ongoing efforts to foster greater ethnic and racial diversity, the percentage of Black and Indigenous participants declined from 46% in 2023 to 39% in 2024— highlighting the need for targeted

strategies to ensure more inclusive participation in future editions.

At the conclusion of the training, participants submitted seven action plans aligned with their professional contexts, focused on implementing initiatives to advance early childhood agendas.

With more than 650 alumni across different regions of Brazil and ten other countries, the Executive Leadership Program continues to serve as a catalyst for meaningful change in early childhood. Its impact is further amplified by two national editions that expanded the program's reach and influence.



Child Development Leadership Community

A network fostering ongoing exchange among early childhood leaders

In 2024, alumni of the Executive Leadership Program reconnected through the Child Development Leadership Community, a dedicated space for exchanging knowledge and strengthening professional networks. Two sessions were held during the year, each centered on content produced by the NCPI's Scientific Committee. The first meeting, held in April, featured the launch of Working Paper 12: '*Desigualdades em Saúde de Crianças Indígenas*' ('Inequalities in the Health of Indigenous Children'). The second took place in November, during the closing of the 11th Executive Leadership Program, and introduced Working Paper 13: '*Intersetorialidade nas Políticas Públicas para*

a Primeira Infância: Desafios e oportunidades' ('Intersectoral Collaboration in Public Policies for Early Childhood: Challenges and opportunities').

This strategic approach to sharing high-priority issues with innovation and urgency has led to the re-engagement of past participants, revitalizing the network.

The Community remains a vital platform for strengthening evidence-based public policies and fostering continuous learning among leaders committed to advancing early childhood development.





Communication

NCPI launches redesigned website and image bank celebrating Brazil's diverse childhoods

In 2024, the NCPI marked two major milestones in its communication efforts: a complete redesign of its institutional website and the launch of a new image bank reflecting the country's diverse childhoods.

The updated website, launched in August during Early Childhood Month, brought improvements in structure, usability, and accessibility. The publications section was enhanced to spotlight the Scientific Committee's working papers, while the search function was made more intuitive and mobile-friendly. Visually, the redesign introduced a lighter, more vibrant, and colorful interface, providing a more engaging user experience.

Complementing this, the newly launched image bank made a strong impact on NCPI's communication strategy, particularly across social media platforms. By showcasing real Brazilian families, the collection emphasized cultural authenticity and helped forge a more immediate connection with audiences, further amplifying awareness around early childhood issues.

It was also a standout year for media visibility, with NCPI featured in 484 news stories across a range of national and regional outlets. A key highlight was the broad coverage of the working paper *'Desigualdades em Saúde de Crianças Indígenas'*

(*'Inequalities in the Health of Indigenous Children'*), released in April, which drew significant attention from journalists and reinforced the relevance of the topic on the national policy agenda.





Transparency

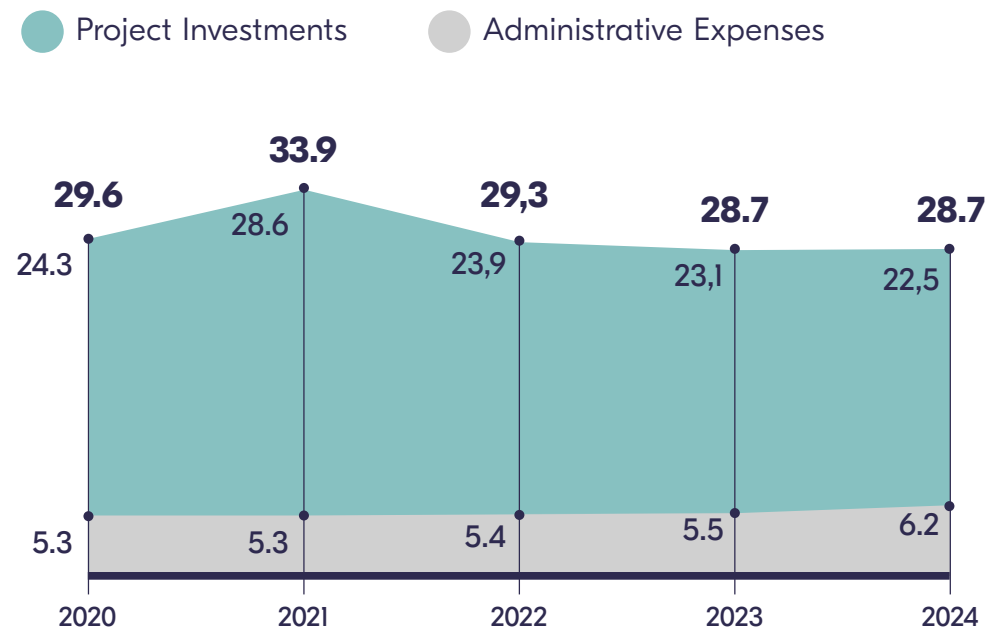
Committed to transparency, the Maria Cecília Souto Vidigal Foundation consistently publishes its annual financial and budgetary statements, all of which were approved by independent auditors without reservations



Budget Execution

Budget Execution¹

(in R\$ million)

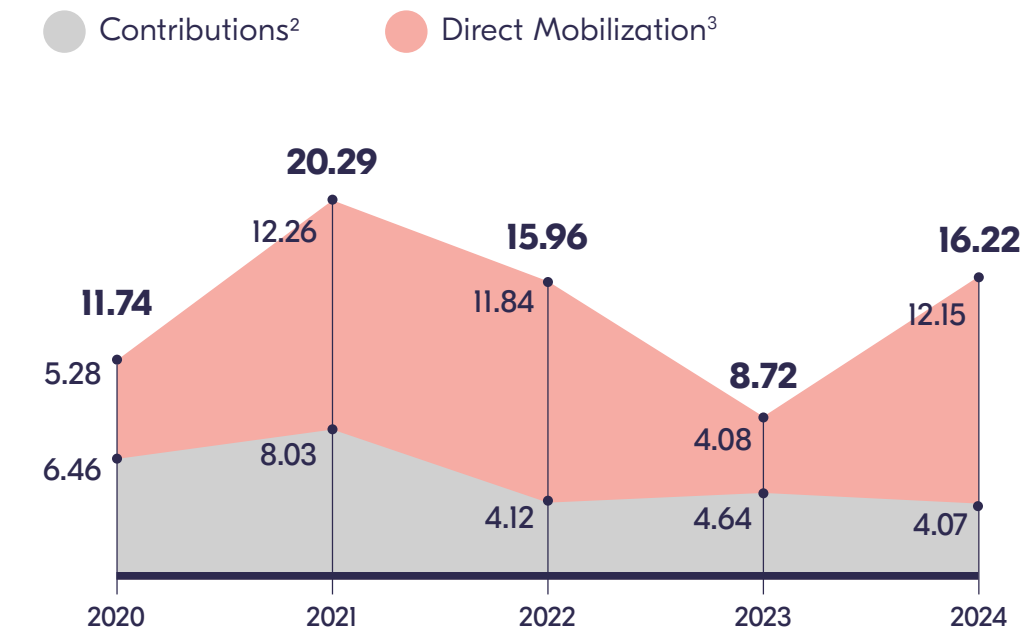


For every R\$ 100 invested, R\$78 was allocated directly to initiatives advancing the Foundation's mission

1 - Management budget refers to resources operated by the Foundation, including endowment redemptions approved by the Board of Trustees and partner contributions

Co-investment 2024

(in R\$ million)

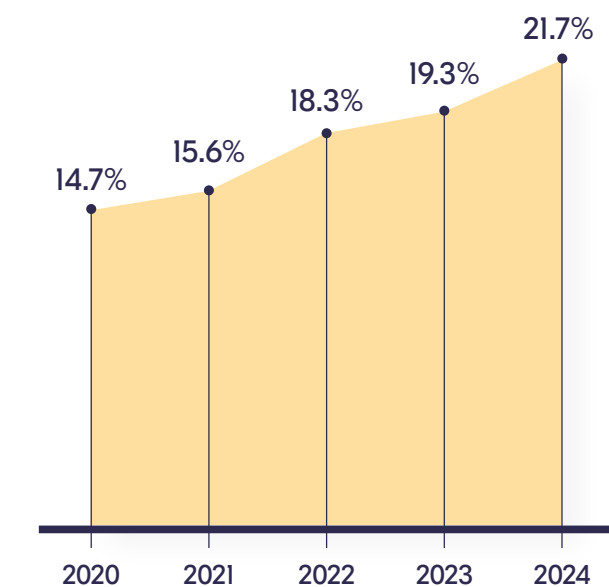


For every R\$100 invested by the Foundation in its projects, an additional R\$57 was invested by partners

2 - Contributions: refers to resources from partners managed directly by the Foundation
3 - Direct Mobilization: refers to resources contributed by partners directly to the cause

Efficiency Index

The Efficiency Index measures how effectively the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation utilizes its resources. It represents the ratio between administrative expenses and the total amounts managed by the Foundation. A lower index indicates greater efficiency in allocating resources to the cause.





Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2023 and 2024 (in R\$ thousands)

Assets	2024	2023
CURRENT		
Cash and cash equivalents	520	394
Earmarked funds	279	1.591
Sundry credits	260	276
Bonds and Securities (Endowment Fund)	622,828	652,338
Total current assets	623,887	654,599
NONCURRENT		
Court deposits	6,223	6,223
Net fixed assets	1,294	1,762
Net intangible assets	9	13
Total noncurrent assets	7,526	7,998
Total assets	631,413	662,597

Check out the full 2024 audit report [here](#)

Liabilities and Net Capital	2024	2023
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	2	45
Payroll charges	1,131	932
Investable funds	279	1.591
Leasing liabilities	277	261
Total current liabilities	1,689	2,829
NONCURRENT		
Provision for contingencies	6,223	6,223
Leasing liabilities	600	900
Total noncurrent liabilities	6,823	7,123
NET CAPITAL		
Net Assets	652,645	590,925
Fiscal Surplus (Deficit)	(29,744)	61,720
Total net capital	622,901	652,645
Total Liabilities and Net Capital	631,413	662,597



Income Statement

Fiscal Years Ended December 31, 2023 and 2024 (In R\$ thousands)

	2024	2023
OPERATIONAL REVENUE		
Donations	2,577	3,866
Other revenue from initiatives	112	-
Volunteer work	1,379	774
	4,068	4,640
COSTS OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES		
Advisory, rights advocacy		
PROGRAM AND PROJECT COSTS		
Personnel	(5,620)	(5,569)
Third-party services	(11,112)	(10,073)
Travel	(1,441)	(1,280)
Sponsorships and donations	(3,849)	(6,022)
Taxes and fees	(20)	(37)
Volunteer work	(418)	(149)
	(22,460)	(23,130)

	2024	2023
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES		
Personnel	(3,336)	(3,105)
General and administrative	(667)	(635)
Third-party services	(858)	(833)
Travel	(130)	(86)
Taxes and fees	(11)	(8)
Depreciation and amortization	(520)	(531)
Volunteer work	(961)	(626)
	(6,483)	(5,824)
FINANCIAL INCOME AND EXPENSES		
Expenses	(46,529)	(22,099)
Expenses	41,660	108,132
	(4,869)	86,033
Fiscal Surplus (Deficit)		
	(29,744)	61,720



Endowment Fund

The income generated by the Foundation's endowment guarantees long-term social investment in early childhood and supports the organization's financial sustainability



Endowment Fund

The activities and long-term sustainability of the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation are supported by an endowment fund established with resources from its founders. This initial capital has been strategically managed to preserve its purchasing power and ensure the enduring capacity to invest in early childhood initiatives. The fund enables the Foundation to consistently support the design, monitoring, and enhancement of high-impact projects focused on early childhood development.

The endowment is governed by a dedicated oversight structure that includes two advisory and supervisory bodies: the Investment Committee and the Board of Trustees. Operational management and resource allocation are handled by specialized asset management firms, selected and monitored by the Foundation with support from independent experts.

Investment decisions are guided by the Foundation's Investment Policy, which sets clear allocation parameters and risk thresholds. This policy aims to ensure optimal long-term returns while maintaining prudent risk management.

Macroeconomic Context

In 2024, Brazil faced a sharp deterioration in fiscal risk perception. A sustained increase in public spending—from 18% to 20.4% of GDP over 12 months—stimulated consumption and heightened inflationary pressures. The IPCA (Brazil's benchmark inflation index) closed the year at 4.83%, once again exceeding the target range set by the '*Conselho Monetário Nacional*' ('National Monetary Council' / 'CMN').

In response to mounting fiscal concerns and limited progress on debt stabilization, the Central Bank adopted a more aggressive monetary policy stance, raising the benchmark interest rate in the latter part of the year. Long-term interest rates also climbed, leading to negative market adjustments in sovereign bonds with extended maturities.

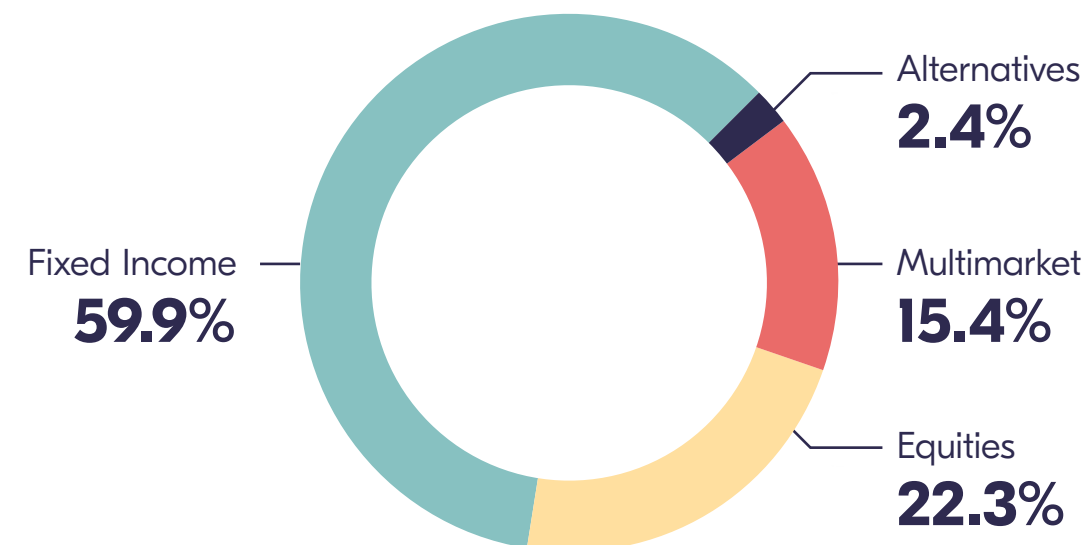
As a result, several asset classes and market indices experienced downward pressure. The Ibovespa (Brazil's benchmark stock index) dropped more than 10% over the year, and some federal government bond maturities recorded nominal losses. The IMA-B Index—which tracks the performance of IPCA-linked government bonds—declined by 2.44% in the 12-month period. Meanwhile, the interbank short-term rate (CDI) rose from 11.65% at the start of the year to 12.25% at year-end.

In this challenging environment, the Foundation's equity fund posted an annual return of -0.87% in 2024.



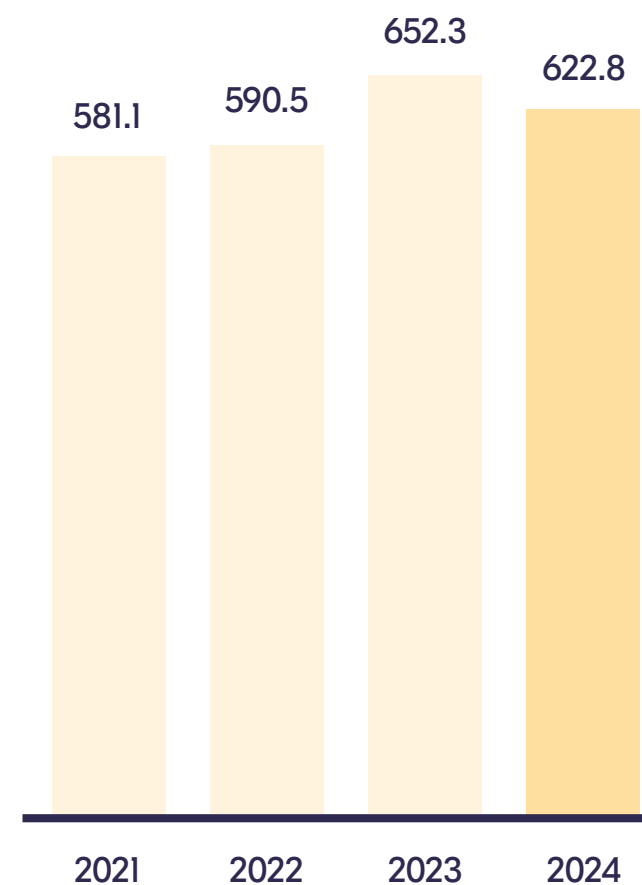
Composition

The Foundation's Investment Policy defines clear guidelines for managing the resources that comprise the endowment fund, particularly regarding risk exposure limits by asset class. Designed to generate returns that ensure the Foundation's perpetuity and sustain its long-term social impact, the endowment is currently allocated across the following asset classes:



Net Capital

(in R\$ million)



Sustainability and Responsible Investment

In 2024, the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation became a signatory to the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI)—a United Nations-supported initiative that brings together over 5,300 signatories across more than 100 countries committed to integrating sustainability into their investment analysis and decision-making processes.

This move reinforces the Foundation's ongoing commitment to sustainable development, as reflected in its Investment Policy.

Signatory of:





Partners

The Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation benefits from a robust network of partners who contribute talent, institutional connections, and collaborative actions that strengthen the Foundation's initiatives





A B R Δ J I

act FOR
Early Years

agenda²²⁷
Prioridade Absoluta para
Crianças e Adolescentes

AJOr
ASSOCIAÇÃO
DE JORNALISMO
DIGITAL

alana 

ALMA
PRETA

ANDI
Comunicação
e Diretor


ATRICON

[B]³ SOCIAL

 WORLD BANK GROUP

BEJA
INSTITUTO


Casa Civil
da Presidência da República

B | Center for
Universal Education
at BROOKINGS

 Coalizão Brasileira
pelo Fim da Violência
contra Crianças e Adolescentes

COLIBRI  CAPITAL


CONASEMS


COLEGIADO NACIONAL
MUNICIPAIS DE GESTORES
DE ASSISTÊNCIA SOCIAL

 CONASS
Conselho Nacional de Secretários de Saúde

 CONSEC
CONSELHO NACIONAL DE SECRETÁRIOS
DE EDUCAÇÃO DE CAPITALIS

 cdess
Conselho de Desenvolvimento
Econômico Social Sustentável



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ESTADÃO

family talks

FOLHA DE S. PAULO
★ ★ ★

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**CEARÁ
GOVERNO DO ESTADO**









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Ingrid Novais – Intern
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This Annual Report was produced and edited by the Maria Cecília Souto Vidigal Foundation team. Photography credits: Maria Cecília Souto Vidigal Foundation Collection and partner publicity materials.

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