



2022-2023 Annual Report



Vision & Mission

Tandem, Partners in Early Learning® is a nonprofit working at the intersection of social justice and early childhood education. We envision a just society where children thrive. Our mission is to co-create equitable, high-quality early learning experiences in partnership with families, educators, and community partners.

Programming

We know that investing in early learning is key to interrupting patterns of racial and economic exclusion, and we prioritize work with communities disproportionately impacted by systemic oppression.

Tandem builds a society supportive of children's development by partnering with families and educators through classrooms and community-based settings. We work alongside preschools, child care providers, and community-based organizations to engage families through workshops and play-and-learn groups, distribute multilingual, multicultural books, and provide professional development for educators and nonprofit staff.



"The Tandem books provide more topics for me to connect with the parents. The parents say the kids are talking more now which is helpful for their speech development. There is a Tandem book about a mom who takes the baby to the market. Some parents tell me that the kids did not talk that much before but now they are more verbally expressive. When the parents take them to the market, the kids are able to express more and name different items."

– Read & Play Club Educator

A Letter from our Executive Director

I am delighted to share our 2022-2023 Annual Report with you! In the next few pages, we give you a snapshot of the last program year: the highlights about our reach and impact, the lessons we learned, and how we are contributing to ongoing field-building conversations about early care and education.

Results from the most recent [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#) are a sobering indicator of the pandemic's impacts children's reading and math skills. Tandem's role is to ensure that children arrive in kindergarten with a robust foundation for future learning.

Throughout the year, our team worked closely with classrooms and community organizations to grow and enhance programming. A few key accomplishments include:

- Expanding StoryCycles in Oakland Unified School District to all preschool and transitional kindergarten classrooms (136 classrooms and 2,000 children)
- Providing 29 Give Me 5 playgroups across Contra Costa County through libraries, family resource centers, and other community-based partners
- Broadening the Read & Play Club to implement math-focused programming with 100 family child care providers, reaching 875 children and families

We are also living in a time when books, including [picture books](#), are under attack. At Tandem, we believe that book bans are a threat to democracy, and we responded by turning to our commitment of maintaining a book collection that reflects the communities we serve and publishing [recommendation lists](#) that focus on history, race, gender, and the freedom to be who you are.



In 2022-2023, as in prior years, we continued to advocate for high-quality early care and education at local and national levels. We joined partner organizations in San Francisco to [protect voter-approved 'Baby Prop C' funds](#), and we co-authored articles to illuminate the ongoing impact of the [the child care crisis on all Americans](#) and the need for [wraparound care in the statewide expansion of transitional kindergarten](#).

A commitment to equity is at the heart of Tandem, and we are confident that the upcoming year will be no different. Guided by strong values and ambitious goals, we are dedicated to thoughtful, responsible innovation both in our programs and in the organizational culture we want to nurture and sustain. Our north star is the belief that caring for children, families, and communities is simply the right thing to do to create a just society where children thrive.

Thank you, as always, for being Tandem's partner. We couldn't do what we do without you.

In community,

Savitha Moorthy

Executive Director

Tandem, Partners in Early Learning

Tandem by the Numbers

Through Tandem’s programming, children build solid early learning foundations and are increasingly ready for successful educational journeys. At the same time, schools and educators are well-equipped to support all children through multilingual resources and strengths-based practices.



19,000

Children and families served

Adults engaged in workshops, professional development, and early learning experiences

4,607

Parents and caregivers

2,519

Educators and staff at family-serving community organizations

Partnerships

815

StoryCycles and Read & Play Club classrooms

75

Nonprofits, school districts, and education agencies

Books and resources

24,000

Multilingual, multicultural books distributed

40,000

Books rotating through StoryCycles classrooms

26

Languages represented in the Tandem book collection

62

New activity guides created to connect distributed books to the [California Preschool Learning Foundations](#)

84% of StoryCycles families report reading for at least 15 minutes each day with their children, compared to 32% of Americans with young children.

Theory of Change

The foundations for learning are built during the first five years of life. We partner with families, educators, and communities to co-create interactive learning experiences for children 0-5.



Families



- Access multicultural books and learning materials in their home languages
- Connect with supportive networks of peers and trusted experts
- Are confident in their strengths and knowledgeable about child development
- Strengthen and sustain joyful learning practices

Educators



- Access high-quality instructional materials that reflect the languages and cultures of children in their care
- Connect with professional communities that promote continuous learning
- Implement research-based practices that support child development through joy and play
- Engage with families as partners in their children's learning

Communities

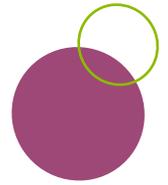


- Support children and families with early learning resources and co-create experiences at libraries, parks, health clinics, family resource centers, and more
- Commit to advancing children's early learning and development
- Advocate for equitable policies that center the well-being of children & families

Tandem's programs are grounded in up-to-date research on the most impactful early interventions. Review our detailed logic model [here](#).

What We Do

Using multilingual, multicultural picture books as a starting point, Tandem supports early development across language, literacy, math, social-emotional learning, and more.



StoryCycles Program



Sharing books, connecting school and home

- Access to diverse, multilingual books (up to 100/year)
- Family engagement
- Educator professional development

The **Read & Play Club** adapts this program to support in-home family child care providers.

Early Learning Everywhere



Engaging families, fostering learning outside of the classroom

- Family workshops
- Give Me 5 play-and-learn groups
- Community events and book giveaways

Network Capacity Building



Strengthening the early education ecosystem

- Educator and staff professional development
- Community leader cohorts
- Innovation and curriculum development



Highlights from 2022-2023

100+ New StoryCycles Classrooms

2022-2023 was a big year for StoryCycles! We worked with educators to launch in over 100 new classrooms across the Bay Area.

With Oakland Unified School District and educators, our Alameda team launched StoryCycles in 71 new classrooms. We are proud that this program is now in every preschool and transitional kindergarten classroom in the district!



“We love having someone read in Spanish. We mostly have dual language learners in our classrooms, and it is wonderful that they can hear their home language and that their families can also share books in their home language.”

– StoryCycles Educator



“Before I got the Tandem books, I seldom taught kids about math. I mainly counted with them in a boring way. After I got the Tandem books, I now can connect the Math concepts using story-telling and games.”

– Read & Play Club Educator

Read & Play Club - Early Math

100 San Francisco in-home family child care providers and nearly 900 families participated in Tandem’s Read & Play Club in its second year. Knowing that early math skills are strong predictors of children’s overall school success, even more so than early literacy, year two focused on building math skills through book-sharing and play.

Each family received 10 picture books that connect to fundamental early math skills like counting and number sense, shapes, pattern recognition, and comparison. Each provider received a set of the same books for their classroom library, helping to build a strong connection between the classroom and home and reinforcing learning habits. To see an example, check out the early math activity guide for *Baby Goes to Market* [here](#). Just about any book can be a “math book” if you incorporate [these 3 tips for sharing early math with books!](#)

Highlights from 2022-2023

Building Community Connections through Early Learning Everywhere

Through **200+ play-and-learn groups and family workshops**, our community-based Early Learning Everywhere program focused on supporting children who are not in formal classroom settings. We connected with families at community events like parades and resource fairs, and facilitated multi-session workshops and playgroup series at local family-support organizations including family resource centers, libraries, parks, and other community spaces.



Over 70% of 3-year-olds are not enrolled in preschool. Beyond just classroom-based programs, supporting families through community-based programs and resources is critical.



Expanding our Book Collection

To celebrate and foster multilingualism, our team and volunteers work hard to source books that reflect the many languages spoken by families in the Bay Area. This year we focused on expanding our book collection to include more titles in Tigrinya, Amharic, Burmese, Farsi, Arabic, Dari, Pashto, Vietnamese, Tamil, and Tagalog. Additionally, where we find limited availability of published books in specific languages, we highlight books that represent the experiences of cultures. This year, this included titles reflecting Cambodian, Hmong, Nepalese, and Guatemalan communities.

Are you interested in building access to high-quality picture books in multiple languages? [Reach out](#) to share title recommendations or volunteer as a multilingual book reviewer.



Highlights from 2022-2023

Celebrating Early Learning Across the Community: Lil' Libraries Around Town

Tandem has been lucky to participate in community events throughout the year, and most recently, to bring book collections into small businesses in East Contra Costa County.

Just before the summer, our team installed eight literacy stations at barbershops throughout East Contra Costa County. These libraries feature high-interest books that reflect the diversity of East Contra Costa and include titles by local literacy advocate and author, Ms. Phelicia Lang.

We always say that a book is just the beginning, and it's the interaction between young children and their grownups that matters most. That's why the majority of books in these Lil' Libraries include QR codes linked to corresponding activity guides to keep the fun and learning going beyond the pages.



"I grew up in the community, and I know the importance of promoting reading and math. I am excited to be a part of your program!"

– Barbershop owner and Lil' Library host

Professional Learning

We are proud to partner with hundreds of early educators each year to build a stronger early learning ecosystem. Tandem's [professional development](#) addresses a variety of topics in a timely and easily-implementable way, designed to work in a range of settings from small in-home family child care providers to larger center-based agencies. We had the honor of presenting "The Magic of Storytime" interactive workshop in three languages at the California Family Child Care Network Annual Conference.

"After I use these new ways of telling stories, the kids are very quick to learn and I have more interactions with them in the process of story-telling."

– Workshop attendee



Community Learning Specialist, Susan Chen, facilitated the "Magic of Storytime" workshop for family child care educators from the Bay Area and Los Angeles.

Our Impact

Standardized tests show that a majority of students in California continue to fall below grade-level literacy standards. Children who have not been provided the necessary support to achieve reading proficiency by the third grade face ongoing barriers throughout their educational experience.

This is why Tandem works with educators and families to set kids up for success, even before they enter elementary school. **Early learning and book-sharing sets kids up with pre-reading skills like phonological awareness, print awareness, letter knowledge, print motivation (love of books) and more, all of which are key components of ongoing literacy instruction.**



In addition to the data we collect, community-wide reports such as the [Study of School Readiness in the Mission Promise Neighborhood](#) show the impact of our collective work with partners. This study demonstrates that 71% of children attending pre-kindergarten and participating in Mission Promise Neighborhood programs like ours were 'ready' for kindergarten as compared to an average of 47% for Mission District children who did not attend pre-kindergarten or participate in other early childhood programming.

We envision an ecosystem where early learning opportunities are **equitable, ample, and accessible**. We will continue to work alongside families, educators, and community partners towards a society in which children and families are met with the resources they need for successful learning journeys from day one.

★ **84% of educators learned a new early literacy engagement skill or increased their use of an existing skill because of StoryCycles.**

★ **95% of adults felt more connected with the school or their child because of StoryCycles.**

★ **91% of families who participated in workshops learned new information about how sharing books helps children's brain development.**

★ **84% of StoryCycles families report reading with their child more than 15 minutes per day compared to only 32% of Americans with young children.**



Book Bans and How We Think About Them

With the unprecedented rise of book bans nationwide, picture books are a [surprising focus of the spike in efforts to restrict literature](#). Picture books accounted for [317 of the 1,648 titles](#) that were banned during the 2021-22 school year. Titles focusing on history, racial justice, gender identity, and the freedom to love were predominantly under attack. In many areas, [state laws add pressure](#) by dictating the types of books allowed in school and the policies districts must follow to add books to their collections.

Censoring books is a threat to democracy. Families should be able to raise children in environments that cultivate curiosity, compassion, and the freedom to read; children deserve access to a diverse range of stories and perspectives; and children from historically marginalized communities deserve books that reflect and speak to them. Moreover, the majority of parents (and voters) [oppose book bans](#), affirming instead that a variety of books should be available to children on an age-appropriate basis.

Book bans are motivated by fears about what children should not know or talk about. Picture books that adults sought to remove from classrooms and libraries have been described as [‘dangerous,’ ‘grooming,’ ‘reckless,’ ‘racist,’ and ‘lying.’](#) For example, *Julian is a Mermaid*, a beloved book in Tandem’s collection, has come under fire because it might “confuse a child ... to use drag clothing and makeup”—even though dramatic dress-up play is a time-honored practice in preschool classrooms and has been shown to foster healthy gender identities.

At Tandem, we ask a different set of questions. What do we want young children to know about complex topics? How can we talk with children about these topics in age-appropriate ways? Research shows that conversations between children and caring adults promote curiosity, critical thinking, and open-mindedness—all of which are key components of a democratic society.

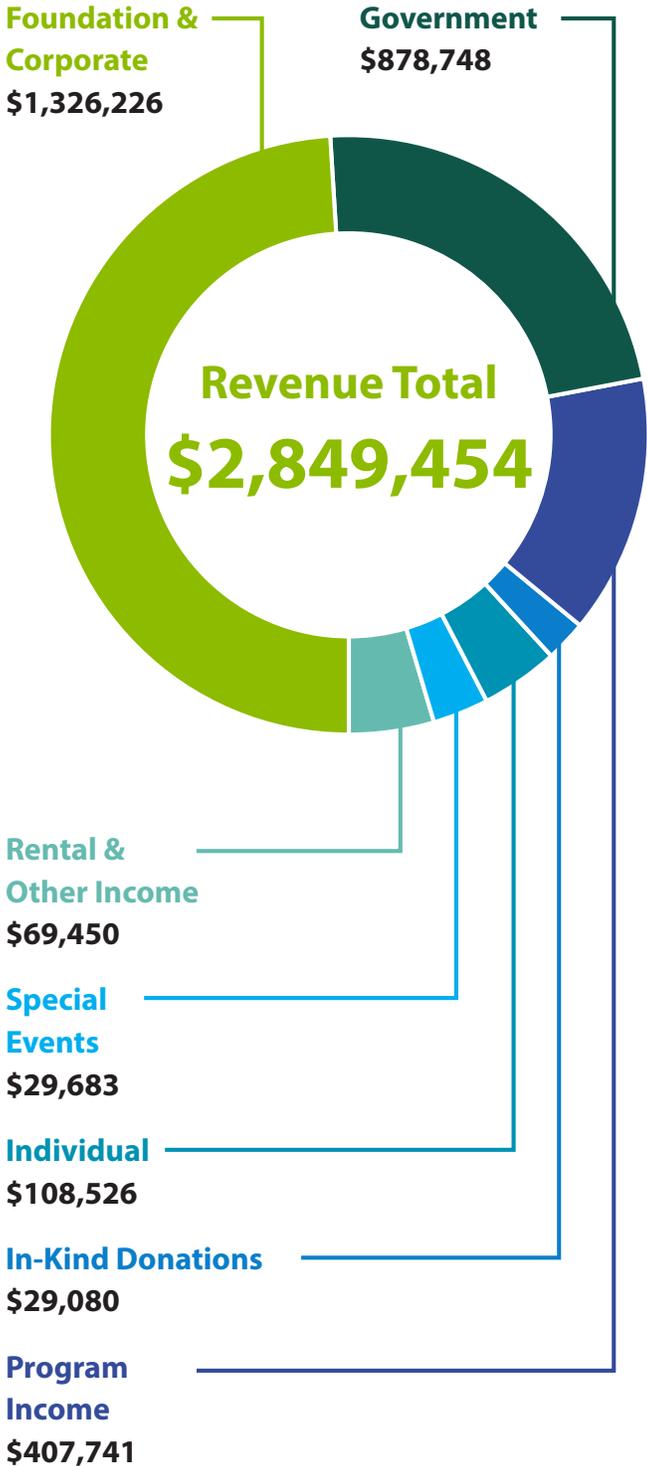
Many of the most-banned picture books are in Tandem’s collection, which includes titles in over 26 languages, focuses on creators of color, and prioritizes titles featuring diversity across race, gender identity, disability representation, and family structures. We hold ourselves accountable for sourcing a book collection that reflects families’ home languages and cultures in the communities we serve. All of the titles in Tandem’s collection are high-quality and age-appropriate, and help caregivers set children up for a lifelong love of reading and learning.

You can find book recommendations to celebrate [Pride Month](#), [AAPI Heritage Month](#), [Black History Month](#), and more curated lists on our [blog](#); visit Tandem’s [open resources](#) page to view a selection of our favorite books along with accompanying activity guides and read aloud videos.



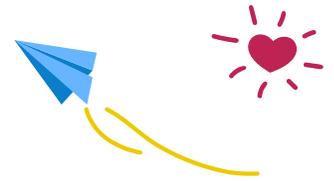
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023*

Financials



* This represents unaudited financials as a reflection of revenue and expenses for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. To view or download audited financial statements, visit www.tandembayarea.org.

Thank you to our Community of Partners



Core to Tandem's model is working alongside partner organizations across a diverse range of settings that serve children and families. Through our network of partner organizations and funders, we are able to create something together that we would not be able to do on our own.

Program Partners

4Cs of Alameda County

Alameda County Office of Education

Aspire Education Project

BANANAS Inc.

BMAGIC & Mo'Magic

Boston College, Lynch School of Education

Brilliant Baby - Oakland Promise

Center of Excellence for Immigrant Child Health and Wellbeing

Children's Council of San Francisco

Children's Fairyland

City of Oakland Head Start

CocoKids

Contra Costa Community Services Bureau, Head Start Program

Contra Costa County Public Library

C.O.P.E. Family Support Center

Development and Research in Early Math Education

Early Childhood Mental Health

Early Literacy Network

East Bay Agency for Children

East Oakland Little Free Library

Edgewood Family Resource Center

Education for Change

Expecting Justice

Family & Child Empowerment Services San Francisco (FACES SF)

Family Connections Centers

Fatherhood Initiative of San Francisco

Felton Institute

Fierce Advocates

First 5 Alameda

First 5 Contra Costa

GLIDE

Good Samaritan Family Resource Center

Hawthorne Family Resource Center

Hayward Promise Neighborhood

Hayward Public Library

Heron's Head Park EcoCenter

Homeless Prenatal Program

Kai Ming Head Start

Lincoln Family Services

Los Medanos College Child Study Center

Lotus Bloom

MNC Inspiring Success (Mission Neighborhood Centers)

Mission Promise Neighborhood

Mount Diablo Adult Education

Preschool Programs

Oakland Housing Authority

Oakland Literacy Coalition

The Oakland Public Education Fund

Oakland Public Library

Oakland Starting Smart and Strong

Oakland Unified School District

PBS SoCal

Pittsburg Unified School District

Potrero Hill Family Support Center

Urban Services YMCA

Refugee & Immigrant Transitions

Roots Community Health Center

San Francisco Department of Early Childhood

San Francisco Department of Public Health

San Francisco Education Fund

San Francisco Public Library

San Francisco Recreation and Parks

San Francisco Unified School District

San Francisco Family Support Network

San Jose Public Library

Support for Families

The Unity Council

Volunteers of America Los Angeles

Welcome Home Baby

West Contra Costa Unified School District

WuYee Children's Services

YMCA of the East Bay

YMCA San Francisco

Youth Uprising



2022-2023 Institutional Funding Partners

Anonymous Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation

Bella Vista Foundation

Bernard E. and Alba Witkin Charitable Foundation

Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment

Chamberlin Family Foundation

Clorox Company Foundation

Couric Family Fund of the East Bay Community Foundation

Crescent Porter Hale Foundation

Dean and Margaret Leshner Foundation

Dodge & Cox

Ray & Dagmar Dolby Family Fund

Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation

First 5 Alameda

First 5 Contra Costa

First 5 San Francisco

First Tech Federal Credit Union

Fremont Group Foundation

Hall Capital Partners

Heising-Simons Foundation

Intero Foundation

James Irvine Foundation

Joseph & Mercedes McMicking Foundation

Kenneth Rainin Foundation

Lemala Fund

Lesbians for Good

Mimi and Peter Haas Fund

Mission Economic Development Agency

Oakland Fund for Children and Youth

Quest Foundation

San Francisco Department of Early Childhood

San Francisco Foundation

Schroeder Family Fund

Stocker Foundation

Warriors Community Foundation

StoryBlocks Partners

Thank you to all who joined us for our StoryBlocks corporate volunteer events over the past year!

Salesforce

Nasdaq

Walmart

Instacart

Adobe

SOHA Engineers

Fremont Group

Presence

Google

Juniper

To our community of individual donors and volunteers:

Thank you for generously supporting Tandem through time, knowledge, and resources.



Thank you for partnering with us to support equitable access to high-quality early learning opportunities in the Bay Area.

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t: 415.683.5460
e: info@tandembayarea.org

San Francisco Office
1275 Fairfax Avenue, Suite 201
San Francisco, CA 94124

Alameda County Office
129 Filbert Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Contra Costa County Office
1350 Arnold Drive, Suite 200
Martinez, CA 94553

