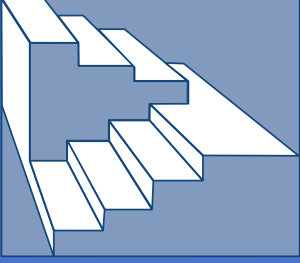


CRYSTAL



STAIRS, INC.



Annual Report 2013

2000 Saint 22nd St

Annual Report 2013

A Letter From Our CEO

Crystal Stairs has made many positive strides over the past three decades. Our heritage as an early education and child care leader - locally and throughout the state - has been noticeable in our solid leadership, ability to overcome community and economic hurdles and our strong commitment to empowering families and training providers.

Our accomplishments are the direct result of a vibrant network of people throughout the city, region and state dedicated to helping make child care accessible and affordable. Our board leadership and management team are experts in the field, and have positioned Crystal Stairs to advance in the areas of early education and child care. As a result of securing additional contracts, we have increased our services, reaching more than **40,000** children and families annually. Not only were we able to expand the number of families we support yearly, we have expanded our services to reach the communities of Compton, Long Beach and Lynwood.

While we have implemented new programs and made programmatic enhancements, we are still in alignment with our mission. The Crystal Stairs mission has not changed – and given the challenges our communities are facing, our work of **“improving the lives of families through child care services, research and advocacy”** remains relevant. This is an exciting time for Crystal Stairs. As we begin **“Preparing to Take Our Next Steps,”** we are continuing to evolve to better meet the needs of the families in our communities.



I am very proud to be leading an organization with a long and rich history and a future filled with tremendous opportunity. One of my key goals as CEO of Crystal Stairs is to maximize the impact of our work to strengthen children, families, and communities. 2013 was a year with many rewarding moments and we have made solid progress on many fronts. Our success is built on the strong relationships we have with our families, providers, contractors and donors.

In this annual report, you will see snapshots of how we are working together every day to help a growing population of hard-working, low-income families in the Crystal Stairs service area achieve self-sufficiency and family empowerment. Crystal Stairs seeks to continue to serve as the bridge to connect thousands of families with resources critical to self-sufficiency and help transition low-income families to their next landing in life. We are eagerly **“Preparing to Take Our Next Steps”** as a testament to our sound mission, solid infrastructure, stable funding, strategic leadership, superior performance and stellar reputation.

Jackie B. Majors

Jackie B. Majors
Chief Executive Officer



Agency Overview

Mission Statement:

Improving the Lives of Families through Child Care Services, Research and Advocacy

Our Values:

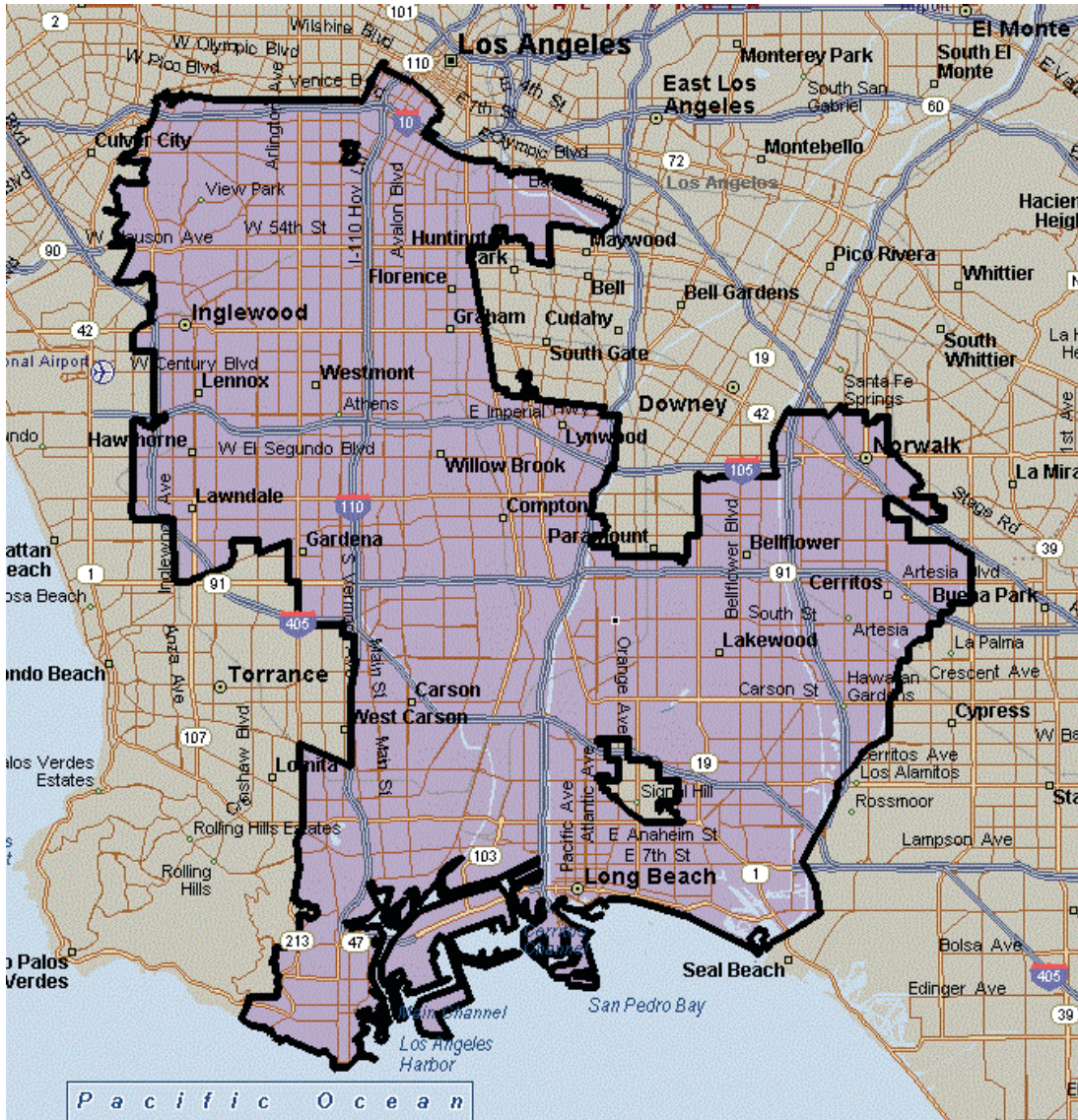
Excellence • Relationships • Integrity • Empowerment

Organization Description:

Based in Los Angeles, Crystal Stairs, Inc. is one of the largest nonprofit child development corporations in the State of California. Guided by our mission and values, thousands of children and their families benefit from our services each day. Our purpose is to promote empowerment and self-sufficiency, helping families ascend the metaphoric staircase of life.



Our Service Area



Crystal Stairs Serves the Communities of:

South Los Angeles
Compton
Gardena

Hawthorne
Inglewood
Lawndale

Lennox
Long Beach
Lynwood

“The future belongs to those who prepare for it today.” – Malcolm X



*“The vision must be followed
by the venture. It is not
enough to stare up the steps –
we must step up the stairs.”*

– Vance Havner





Program Highlights

Crystal Stairs Offers Five Major Programs and Services:

1. Child Care Resource & Referral Program
2. Health Outreach Program
3. Child Care Subsidy Program
4. Early Care and Education Centers
 - » Nickerson Gardens SAGE Children's Center
 - » Head Start
5. Community Voices

Child Care Resource and Referral Program

The Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) Program, our longest-running program, helps connect families, regardless of income, with information on available child care services within the Crystal Stairs Service Area. The R&R Program also trains child care providers – licensed and family providers – on best practices and quality care through professional development events to help them improve their services, their relationships with parents and their business. Crystal Stairs has become a trusted resource for families and providers within the communities served.

During this past year, 233 child care providers received coaching services to support the development of the early childhood education field. Additionally, 30 child care providers were awarded the 2013 Karen Kaye Achievement Award.



The R&R Program conducted the annual Science Symposium for Educators, a continuing education credit training that focuses on early child brain development, held in partnership with the California Science Center. More than 150 early childhood educators, K-4 elementary teachers and parents attended the event held in April 2013. Additionally, the R&R Program operates the Resource Library, which offers monthly trainings and resources as well as lends educational materials to local child care providers.



Highlights (FY 2012-13)

7,385 parents provided child care resources and information

83 provider trainings offered through the R&R program

562 visitors to the Resource Library

Provider Profile

Ms. Ana Vera Ana E. & Mario Vera Family Child Care Home

For more than 20 years, Ms. Vera and her husband, Mario, have operated a licensed family child care home in South Los Angeles, serving children ages 0-12. A former teacher in Mexico, Ms. Vera loves preparing children and watching their development. She truly enjoys her work and believes that early care and education is her life's calling.

On any given day at the **Ana E. & Mario Vera Family Child Care Home**, you will witness children singing, dancing, reciting their ABC's, participating in dramatic play and completing arts and crafts activities. Also, the children have a backyard oasis with a puppet theatre, mural and various settings for learning.

The majority of children enrolled in the Ana E. & Mario Vera Family Child Care Home receive subsidized child care benefits from Crystal Stairs. Through her relationship with Crystal Stairs, Ms. Vera participates in trainings and resources offered by the R&R Department.



Jackie B. Majors, CEO & Ms. Ana Vera

Ms. Vera has become a mentor to other local providers, especially providing assistance to other family child care providers. Most recently, Ms. Vera was awarded the 2013 Karen Kaye Achievement Award.

Ms. Vera incorporates three fundamental teachings, "tres puntos fundamentales" into her child care business: 1) daily routine for children; 2) creative curriculum that is age and developmentally-appropriate; and 3) organizing learning environments to enhancing teaching and building trust with parents. Her overall goals are to improve the children's well-being, to prepare children for kindergarten and to provide a safe space to support families.

"I like children. These three fundamental points are very important for the children's well-being and education," said Ms. Vera.

Health Outreach Program

The Health Outreach Program, a component of the R&R Department, strengthens the connection between access to health care coverage and services within community, towards supporting the overall improvement of families. The Health Outreach Program focuses on conducting outreach and agency partnerships, helping to overcome the hurdles for eligible low-income families to enroll in free and low-cost health care coverage.



Building upon deeply-rooted community connections, the Health Outreach Program provides families with access to health information and services, and advocates for public health policies by addressing major issues, such as childhood obesity and access to good nutrition for children and their families within the Crystal Stairs Service Area. The Health Outreach Program staff partner with other community-based agencies, including child care centers, schools and clinics. Deploying The Health Outreach Program staff at community agency sites, such as WIC centers, as well as participating at community events, such as health fairs, have become successful outreach approaches. The Health Outreach Program staff deliver these services in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways, seeking to reach the most vulnerable families.



Highlights (FY 2012-13)

5,119

children and families were enrolled into health care services

25

locations (WIC Centers, medical centers, courts, schools), covering the Crystal Stairs service area in addition to the communities of Bell Gardens, Huntington Park, Paramount, Pico Rivera, South Gate and Wilmington among others, where The Health Outreach Program staff conducted ongoing outreach

30,972

individuals reached through The Health Outreach Program outreach efforts



“It's like climbing a staircase. I'm on the top of the staircase, I look behind me and I see the steps. That's where I was.”

– Jeanne Moreau



Child Care Subsidy Programs

Crystal Stairs administers state-funded child care subsidy programs through the California Department of Education, including the CalWORKs Alternative Payment Program for eligible families. California's welfare reform program provides child care in three different stages to support families while transitioning from CalWORKs benefits. Families must meet income and other program requirements, including employment or participation in an educational/training program, to qualify to receive child care vouchers. In addition to the CalWORKs programs, California supports the Alternative Payment Program, which is available to all low-income families regardless of CalWORKs eligibility.

Eligible families apply directly to Crystal Stairs for certification and can select child care providers that meet their needs. Child care providers are paid for their services directly from Crystal Stairs.

Child care subsidies allow parents to work or attend school/training. The impact of child care subsidies is directly seen in the earning power created by ensuring that parents can seek, secure and maintain employment, which helps low-income families achieve greater economic self-sufficiency.



Highlights (FY 2012-13)

24,500

children received subsidized child care services

5,699

parents maintained employment as a result of subsidized child care services

1,850

parents enrolled in school/training as a result of subsidized child care services

8,797

child care providers were paid to care for children



*“What saves a man is to take
a step. Then another step.”*

– C.S. Lewis



Early Care and Education Centers

Nickerson Gardens SAGE Children's Center

Opened in 1994, the Nickerson Gardens SAGE Children's Center delivers quality preschool and after-school child care services and academic enrichment to low-income children in South Los Angeles, allowing Crystal Stairs to more fully execute the family services mission of improving lives through child care services, research and advocacy. SAGE is an accredited child care center that provides a quality preschool setting to children, ages 3-5 years, and after school child care to children, ages 5-12 years, living in the Nickerson Gardens public housing development and in surrounding communities.

The philosophy of the SAGE Children's Center is to develop a well-balanced and confident learner using high quality curriculum.

Children are cared for in a safe, positive environment, which includes a wide-ranging curriculum covering math, science, music, dance and computer experiences. A key component of the SAGE curriculum is to help children learn how to make good choices as well as facilitate opportunities to encourage children to develop a positive sense of self.



Highlights (FY 2012-13)

77

children experienced the
Nickerson Gardens SAGE Center



Participant Profile

Tajanae Griffin Former SAGE Student

In partnership with several local agencies, Crystal Stairs developed the Nickerson Gardens SAGE Children's Center in 1994 to provide quality child care services for some of the most vulnerable children within South Los Angeles. The SAGE Center serves children and families in one of the most densely populated public housing developments, where generations of poverty have existed. Yet, it has been here where so many children have flourished and received a strong foundation.

Tajanae Griffin, now 22, is one of these children. Ms. Griffin remembers attending the SAGE Center as a preschool student, and continuing her affiliation until her middle school years as a participant in the after-school program. In fact, once she transitioned from the program, Ms. Griffin often volunteered during her high school years to help other young students with homework.

"Many of my friends never finished school and most have their own kids now," said Griffin. "My mom made sure I knew education was important, that's why she sent me to SAGE."



Tajanae Griffin

For Ms. Griffin, and many just like her, the SAGE Center became an extended family within the close-knit community. The community members who worked at the SAGE Center also saw her during the weekends and outside of school hours. Supporting her through tough times, Ms. Griffin remembers being surrounded by limitless opportunities to grow and seek knowledge at the SAGE Center.

Since graduating from high school, Ms. Griffin has obtained an associate's degree as well as completed an internship abroad. Programs, such as the Nickerson Gardens SAGE Children's Center, help prepare children for school and beyond. SAGE kept Griffin, like many others, busy. Imaginations are fueled and social skills blossom. In some instances, life-long friendships are nurtured.



*“Setting goals is the first step
in turning the invisible into the
visible.”*

-Tony Robbins



Early Care and Education Centers

Head Start

The Crystal Stairs Head Start Program is a critical part of our family services mission to improve the lives of families through child care services, research, and advocacy, providing comprehensive child development services for low-income children and their families. Head Start is a national program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of comprehensive services: education, health, mental health, disabilities, social and other services to enrolled children and families.

The Crystal Stairs Head Start Program provides:

- Active Learning Experiences
- Nutritional Snacks and Meals
- Social Services
- Parent Involvement Activities
- Services for Children with Disabilities



The Crystal Stairs Head Start Program served low-income families that reside in Compton and South Los Angeles at the following Head Start sites:

Century Community Center Site
Dollarhide Site
Kiddie Kastle Site
Mary B. Henry Site
Randle Site
Sullivan Site
Willowbrook Site
Wonderland Site
Washington Site

Additionally, the Crystal Stairs Head Start Program offered home-based services for children, ages 3-5 years old. The home-based option offers and supports comprehensive services to children and their families through weekly home visits and group socialization experiences.



Highlights (FY 2012-13)

819 children received services:

654 participated in the part-day programs

100 participated in the full-day program

65 participated in the home-based program

9 Head Start sites located in Compton and South Los Angeles

100 enrolled children receiving special education and related services



“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

- Lao Tzu



Community Voices

Since the agency's inception in 1980, Crystal Stairs has embedded advocacy as a central component to its organizational mission, recognizing the importance of delivering child care services as well as empowering low-income families in South Los Angeles towards self-sufficiency.

Community Voices was established in 2006 to formalize the important work of engaging parents and caregivers and developing them into advocates through community organizing, training and activities in Los Angeles County.

Community Voices has continued to provide access for parents and caregivers, to find their voice, develop their leadership skills and share their concerns with state and local policymakers on a variety of issues. The goal of Community Voices remains to create and sustain public policies that expand the availability of affordable, quality early care and education resources for low-income children and their families by creating an effective and sustainable cadre of grassroots constituencies, including parents and providers, who can inform and educate policymakers.

Highlights (FY 2012-13)

500 parents and providers throughout Los Angeles County participated in Community Voices trainings and events

81 letters written to legislators

131 parents and providers represented the Los Angeles County delegation at the 16th Annual Stand for Children event held in Sacramento

25 legislative visits with members of the California State Legislature



Employee Profile

Andrea Kennon Manager of Provider Services

Andrea Kennon joined Crystal Stairs in 1996, and oversees the Provider Services Department, which completes the reimbursement process for providers. As an agency leader, advocate for parents and providers and a role model for staff, Ms. Kennon has had a remarkable career with the organization. "When I joined Crystal Stairs, I knew this was an organization where I belonged," said Ms. Kennon. "We play a vital role in connecting families with the tools necessary to climb the ever-changing staircase of life and I wanted to be a part of that ascent."

In keeping with the Crystal Stairs mission, the Provider Services Department understands the important role of ensuring that the providers in partnership with parents remain an integral part of the process. Providers play a significant role in children's lives and such a department must be committed to providing exemplary customer service to help improve the quality of every program. Ms. Kennon and her staff know firsthand that customer service extends beyond payment. It is going the extra mile to support families and providers and reduce barriers. Under Ms. Kennon's leadership, the Provider Services Departments seeks to assist families have reliable, stable and quality care for their children.



Andrea Kennon

"We are here to support families and providers," Ms. Kennon added. "We want them to thrive so their children will thrive, which means we will ultimately have a strong community of families with children who have the potential to become successful productive adults."

Ms. Kennon also played a key leadership role in facilitating the internal agency efforts, working with staff and board leadership, to guide implementation of the 2010-2013 strategic plan. As the facilitator of the strategic plan, Ms. Kennon ensured that staff task teams remained focused on the four strategic goals, which have helped position Crystal Stairs as a stronger leader in the field.



Our Leadership

Organizational Leadership

Board of Directors

Dr. Karen Hill Scott, Chair
Eleanor E. Beasley, Vice Chair
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Linda Sullivan, Treasurer
Katessa Charles Davis
Tasia Felton
Nike Irvin
Melissa G. Meono
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Ly Tanya Loughridge
Chief Financial Officer

William Pino
Chief Technology Officer

Pamela L. Washington, Esq.
Chief Legal Officer

Nicole J. Jones
Director of External Affairs

Tina Curran
Director of Human Resources

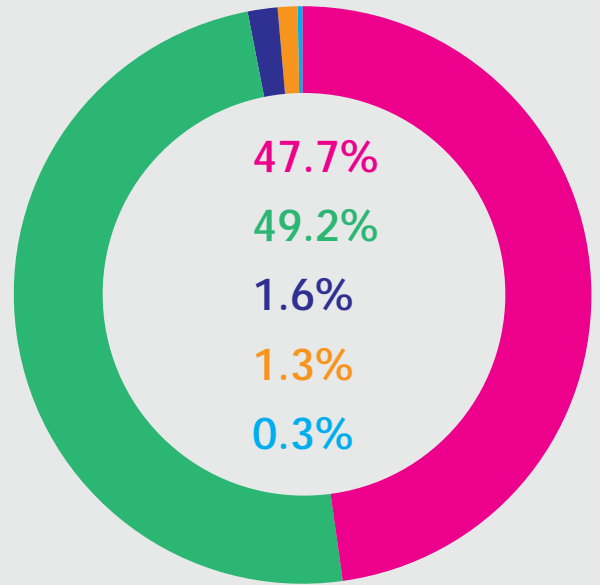


Organizational Budget (FY 2012-13)

Crystal Stairs Funding Resources

Federal Awards	\$48,125,366
State Apportionments	\$49,655,596
Fees for Service	\$1,570,156
Other Grants and Contracts	\$1,301,226
Contributions & Investment Income	\$281,831

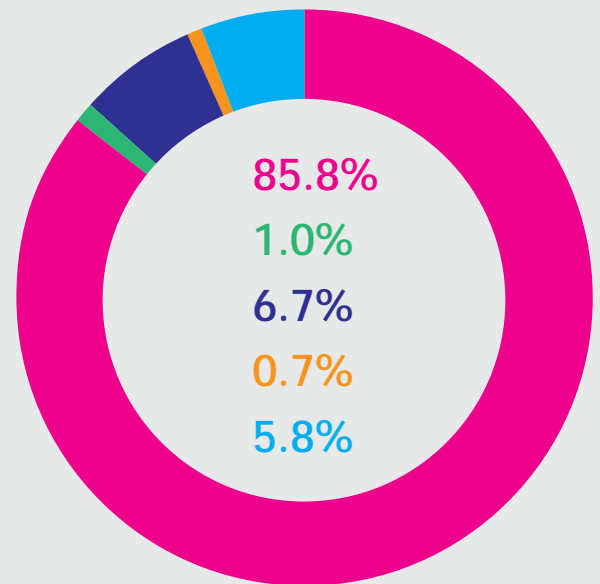
\$100,934,175



Crystal Stairs Expenditures

Child Care Assistance	\$86,099,275
Child Care Resource and Referral Services	\$1,028,558
Child Care Center	\$6,755,234
Childrens Health and Wellness	\$654,520
Administrative Costs	\$5,863,784

\$100,401,371





“I had to have help getting up these steps because I’ve been tackled by so many lions and tigers.”

- Tippi Hedren



Honor Roll

(FY 2012-13)

Thanking Our Supporters

\$25,000 and Above

The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
Union Bank Foundation

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Edison International/Southern California Edison
Kaiser Permanente

\$5,000 - \$9,999

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Honor Roll

(FY 2012-13)

Thanking Our Supporters

\$999 and Below (cont.)

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Jenny Leyva
Sonia Lopez
Ly Tanya Loughridge
Andrea Kennon
Jackie B. Majors
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Sharon Smith
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Urban Wealth Management, LLC
Pamela Washington
Yuovene Whistler
Gerardo E. Zelada

Major Contractors

California Department of Education/Child Development Programs
California Department of Education/Nutrition Services Division
Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles
County of Los Angeles/Department of Public Health
County of Los Angeles/Department of Public Social Services
First 5 Los Angeles
Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles
Administration of Children & Families

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K-1 Speed
The Karen Hill Scott Company
Laemmle Theatres
Los Angeles Dodgers

Baby Disney
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Petersen Automotive Museum
Pink's Famous Hot Dogs
Robert Half International – Office Team
Roclord Studio
The Comedy & Magic Club
The Laugh Factory
Warehouse Restaurant
Westside Tavern
Zoological Society of San Diego



Mother to Son

By Langston Hughes

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor -
Bare.
But all the time
I'se been a-climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So boy, don't you turn back.
Don't you set down on the steps
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
Don't you fall now -
For I'se still goin', honey,
I'se still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

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Thank You



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