



2020 Evaluation

Child Care Aware of Washington

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation team would like to acknowledge the partnership and assistance of the entire Early Connections Play and Learn team in helping us complete this evaluation. We were honored to work with you during these unprecedented times as you restructured your program to meet the needs of your community.

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INTRODUCTION

This evaluation was intended to assess the Early Connections Play and Learn (ECPL) program, which provides play-based, early learning supports to children, families and caregivers accessing services at participating DSHS Community Service Offices (CSOs) in Central and Eastern Washington. The objective was to provide important information on the effectiveness of different aspects of program operations, initial expansion activities, achieving outcomes, and to inform discussion for additional program expansion.

In March 2020, shortly after this evaluation began, the CSOs were forced to close in response to the COVID19 pandemic and ECPL management decided to pivot the program to an entirely new virtual operations model in order to ensure continuity of services for the vulnerable populations it serves. To reflect this change, the evaluation team worked with ECPL development team to shift focus to the new virtual program and modified our planned methods.



In order to be responsive to the dynamic environment in which the ECPL team was now working, the evaluation team decided to include several *developmental* evaluation techniques. These included providing ongoing weekly feedback on the creation of new program practices, monitoring integration of evaluation metrics into the new data collection systems, participating in and providing feedback on testing of new systems and processes, and engaging in weekly discussions and reflective sessions with management and staff as new program processes were developed and rolled out. Evaluation approaches such as these are designed to support programs that are brand new or need to adapt to highly uncertain, dynamic environments such as the one the ECPL program found itself in: converting an in-person program to a virtual one in the middle of a pandemic, with almost daily changes in conditions and circumstances.¹

While the virtual program moved from design to implementation, the evaluation team monitored and provided analytical support to ECPL leaders and facilitators as they planned new virtual processes, developed and finalized bilingual program materials for customized activity kits and demonstration

¹ https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/developmental_evaluation

video, and continued to develop the new virtual messaging system using Quiq. The evaluation team gathered feedback and participated in ongoing conversations around how the newly designed program would continue to meet its goals, especially around the first three components of ECPL: establishing *Contact* with families and caregivers, *Building Trusted Relationships* with them, and providing them with a high quality *Play and Learn experience*. The goal was to provide them with services and experiences similar to what they would have received had they attended on-site: A free book and snack, an introductory experience to high quality learning, and establish a sense of trust to help connect families to relevant resources and hopefully them back for a return visit.

The evaluation team was able to accomplish modified versions of the original tasks, including developing a program logic model, identifying evaluation metrics, and developing an evaluation plan, supporting development of new virtual program delivery practices, and engaging and gathering feedback from the program team. For the evaluation goal of assessing partnerships with CSOs, the evaluation team relied on existing data previously collected by program staff. To gather feedback about the experience of participating families, the evaluation team reviewed data previously reported by program staff and administered a survey of families who participated in the new virtual system during its first month and a half of operations. When onsite playgroups are able to resume, evaluation efforts can be taken to assess topics not possible to address because of the pandemic.

Early Connections Play and Learn Program Description

Program Beginning and Model

The ECPL program was established in Yakima and Sunnyside in February 2017 by the Early Learning Special Services & Family Engagement program at Catholic Charities Serving Central Washington (CCSCW), with funding from local and national private sources including the Yakima Valley Community Foundation, Thrive WA, United Way of Central Washington and operational support from CCWSCW. In late 2019 the program began expansion to four additional sites including Toppenish, Moses Lake, Wenatchee, and Spokane. The goal of ECPL is to bring high quality early learning experiences to families and children who access services from their local

KEY NUMBERS

4306 Children reached by Early Connections play and learn

3189 Parents or caregivers receiving information on high quality early learning practices

13 different languages spoken by participating families

36 Play and Learn kits mailed

Department of Social & Health Services Community Service Office.² This population is considered vulnerable and farthest from services, and data suggests children of these families are most likely not accessing or knowledgeable of high quality, licensed or formal child care settings. The program was designed to provide these services through a designated play and learn space set up one day a week in a local CSO office, which families and children can access when they come in for appointments with their DSHS caseworker. Trained ECPL early learning professionals staff the space and engage families with:

- age appropriate learning materials and activities designed to foster parent-child relationships, growth, and learning;
- tools to support child development and behavior;
- referral information for other early learning and community resources; and
- a free book and snack.

ECPL early learning staff also help facilitate “warm hand-offs” to the CSO staff when families are called for their appointment, with an overall goal of reducing family stress and making the visit to a DSHS office more pleasant. The CSO provides the space, and staff encourage clients to visit the play area. This cross-agency partnership includes regular meetings and communication to ensure consistent and effective program delivery.

ECPL Site Expansion

The program has grown and participation increased since 2017. In late 2018, the program received funding through the Federal Preschool Development Grant³ administered by the Department of Children Youth and Families and Child Care Aware of WA to support three additional CSO Play and Learn sites in Central and Eastern Washington. In late 2019 and early 2020 the program expanded to Toppenish, Spokane, and Moses Lake. The Wenatchee CSO program was added with funding from Catholic Charities.

² **ECPL Guiding Principles** 1. Advance the goals to integrate early learning and child welfare to further strengthen families; Focus on optimal child development & improving social emotional wellbeing 2. Support families and children accessing TANF services with a better understanding of early childhood development 3. Tailored approach to reach underserved children and families by enhancing access to services to meet a variety of child and family needs and 4. Create a partnership program within an environment to increase open communication, mitigate toxic stress and model ways to deescalate challenging behaviors with children and adults during their visits to a CSO

³ Preschool Development Birth Through Five Grant (PDG B-5) from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and the Department of Education

Prior to the pandemic (February 2017 through March 2020), ECPL had served children and families in the following ways:

- Child total attendance: 4,306
- Parent/Caregiver total attendance: 3,189
- Family, Friend, and Neighbor total attendance: 433
- 4,213 free books given to children
- 2,638 children screened/offered an ASQ-3
- Over 1,184 families referred to ECEAP/Head Start Preschool Programs

The program is developed and managed by Maria Vasquez, Associate Director of Early Learning Special Services & Family Engagement, and Victor Cardenas, Early Learning & Family Engagement Manager, both at CCSCW. CCSCW Region has hired or reallocated FTE to the Early Connections Play & Learn program development team, including a compilation of 8 part time Early Learning Specialists and Family Engagement personnel equaling 3.5 FTE. This includes Facilitators covering six CSO locations at multiple sites, and two management/program development staff. One quality assurance staff position is still to be hired. Community Minded Enterprise (CME) in Spokane has sub-contracted with Catholic Charities to collaborate and provide the program at the Spokane Maple CSO, and has hired two facilitators. There is now a team of 10 facilitators across the 6 different locations.

ECPL Pivots and Responds to COVID-19

The CSO offices and the ECPL on-site playgroups were closed on March 15, 2020 due to the emerging Coronavirus pandemic. These closures continued throughout the summer and are likely to remain in place through the rest of 2020. This major change occurred shortly after the evaluation team completed development of the onsite program design logic model. To help ensure continuity of programming, and in response to the increased stress and challenges faced by families with young children, ECPL pivoted to a virtual operations model. The ECPL team quickly and creatively redesigned their service delivery model to reach the same families with children who would have accessed the services at the physical CSO location. Management and the program team committed themselves to providing easy, friendly access with compelling outreach and engagement, and developing virtual services and products to help achieve ECPL program goals. Below are key highlights of this process:

- Program leaders and facilitators identified a selection of books and developed Activity Kits that provide developmentally appropriate, evidence-based play and learn activities as well as early learning concepts similar to those families and children would have experienced at onsite

playgroups. The kits were carefully designed to meet a range of early learning development domains, including fine and gross motor skills, social-emotional development, brain development, communication, language development and literacy, cognitive development, and parent-child interactions and relationships.

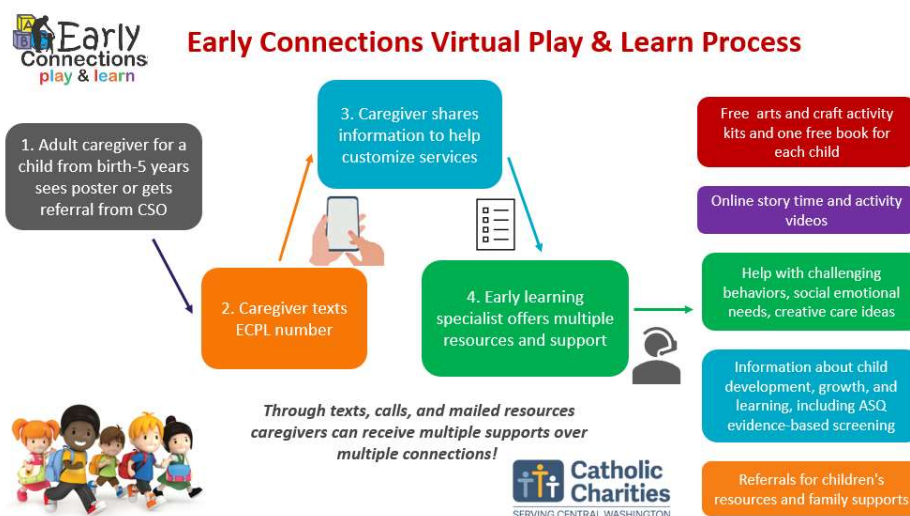
- Facilitators assembled an inventory of kits and books at their homes and learned to use filming technologies and video editing software to create content for a unique family and program-oriented YouTube channel (@CENTRALWAPL). They created demonstration videos designed to accompany the Activity Kits (20 videos) and story time book readings (22 English and 18 Spanish). The purpose of the videos is to illustrate how to perform the activities, and to model effective early learning and child development techniques, such as using facial and voice expression, serve and return interactions for brain building, use of fine and gross motor skills, and social emotional development oriented interactions.
- Staff developed contactless and postal mail delivery systems to distribute kits. They collaborated with ECPL leaders and facilitators in other locations to build tracking systems to ensure adequate supply. This provided a way for families to engage in developmentally appropriate learning and growth at home.
- ECPL facilitators and leaders ensured videos were available in both English and Spanish simultaneously, leveraging existing cultural competency and expertise among staff and supporting equitable programming.
- ECPL leaders and facilitators identified, secured in contract, and learned to use the Quik Messaging service platform. As described above, the platform allows families to text for free, connecting with a local early learning specialist to receive activity kits and books customized for the ages of children in their care, as well as additional information about child development and behaviors, and referrals to additional support resources in their area. This process required ECPL leadership to consider totally new ways of operating, to quickly engage and contract with a new vendor, and to adapt an existing tool built for the private sector to deliver an early learning program.

The new virtual program is designed for caregivers to reach out using a text line and their request is routed through a customized and conversation friendly automated hybrid system to gather pertinent information. After a few simple texts, each caregiver is offered relevant resources based on their responses and connected to a live ECPL facilitator, one of the individuals who operated an on-site CSO

Play and Learn program. Facilitators communicate by toggling between live interactions, or virtual automated service “bots” that handle the more highly repetitive “question and answer” functions of back and forth text exchanges. Quiq Messaging service includes data collection points that are fully integrated into text conversation workflows, unobtrusively gathering information in a conversational manner ensuring ECPL can track both processes for program management and future evaluation. The new ECPL virtual practices were also integrated with other play and learn programs at CCSCWS, increasing efficiency and ensuring broad access of clients to these valuable services.

System Testing and Rollout

Early Connections Play & Learn facilitators conducted a pilot test of remote services with eight families who each had an opportunity to connect with facilitators, test drive parts of the system, and select and receive activity kits and books for their children. On July 15, 2020, the virtual program was officially launched with the Yakima CSO. ECPL leaders employed a series of outreach conversations to augment the development of information and marketing materials, including email, letters, as well as posters, flyers, and a flowchart. The Yakima CSO took the initiative to begin including ECPL flyers along with its pandemic-related correspondence to families receiving benefit information and now all the remaining CSO partner agencies have agreed to inform families in their communities in the same manner. They all plan to include the ECPL flyer in benefit mailings to families when relevant. ECPL facilitators have designed and obtained t-shirts to wear during any video recordings or calls with families, which will help with program recognition and trust as remote services are expanded to other CSOs. The diagram below illustrates the new ECPL Virtual Play and Learn process.



Evaluation Methodology

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the efforts of the ECPL program to provide early learning supports to children, families and caregivers accessing services at participating DSHS Community Service Offices (CSOs) in Central and Eastern Washington. The original evaluation goals were to assess ECPL program practices throughout the different stages of the family engagement process, evaluate the partnership with the CSOs, review program fidelity, and assess the data collection systems.

1. Effectiveness of program practices and partnerships with the CSOs
2. Delivery of supports for participating families and children
3. Fidelity of operations across different locations.
4. Effectiveness of the current data collection systems and processes

To build a foundation for this work and future evaluations of ECPL, our evaluation plan also included a task to develop a program logic model and to identify key metrics and data needed to support this evaluation as well as future program monitoring work.

The COVID-19 pandemic, and closure of the CSO offices and ECPL playgroups in March 2020, occurred just as this evaluation was beginning, which prevented us from addressing these topics as originally planned. While we were able to answer some questions where data was already available, in most cases we needed to completely revise our methods. Instead of focusing on formative evaluation questions related to a fixed program structure and fidelity across sites, we incorporated developmental evaluation approaches that are designed to provide iterative feedback as a program changes. Evaluation approaches such as these support programs that are brand new or need to adapt to highly uncertain, dynamic environments such as the one the ECPL program found itself in: converting an in-person program to a virtual one in the middle of a pandemic, with almost daily changes in conditions and circumstances.⁴

We revised our approach as follows:

- Where possible, analyzed pre-pandemic quantitative and qualitative data related to onsite ECPL playgroups at the CSOs. Existing data included:

⁴ https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/developmental_evaluation.

- Program participation and activity numbers provided in the ECPL reports to CCA of WA and DCYF.
 - CSO survey data from the fiscal year.
 - Data on referrals and screenings from in-person operations.
- Collaborated with program management to identify and define program goals, stages of family engagement, target population, and desired outcomes, *independently from where the program might be physically located*.
 - Facilitated development of a logic model for *both* in-person and virtual service delivery.
 - Provided developmental review and feedback on program processes, communications, and data collection to help ensure that the new systems could effectively track monitoring and evaluation data for the different stages of family engagement, as well as results and outcomes.
 - We provided supportive thought partnership through regular web calls for the real-time development and rollout of the remote model, including new virtual processes for outreach for CSOs, family engagement, service provision, and referral.
 - We helped the program team ensure the new virtual systems could track and report on information necessary for program management and evaluation, including client demographic, program activities, program referrals, and participant feedback.
 - We reviewed and helped with updates to supporting data systems for tracking inventory of activity kits and books.
 - As the team continues to build out the Quiq Messaging service platform, there will be opportunities to collect data on developmental screenings provided for families (ASQs) as well as community referrals. The service data checklist in the appendix, co-created with ECPL leaders, may be helpful to ensure that the Quiq or other data system is collecting needed data as the rollout continues.
 - Developed new evaluation tools to collect qualitative data from participating families and staff on program operations and results.
 - We created a family/caregiver survey and helped integrate the process of asking for caregiver feedback into the virtual program practice, for continued refinement for improvement of services.
 - When the new virtual program was ready for testing and official roll-out, we engaged facilitators during multiple weekly staff meetings to learn about strengths and challenges

- of the project, their experiences with the new processes, and the ongoing improvements to program systems and data tracking.
- We created a staff survey to gather additional information about the program; this survey can also be integrated into ongoing practice.

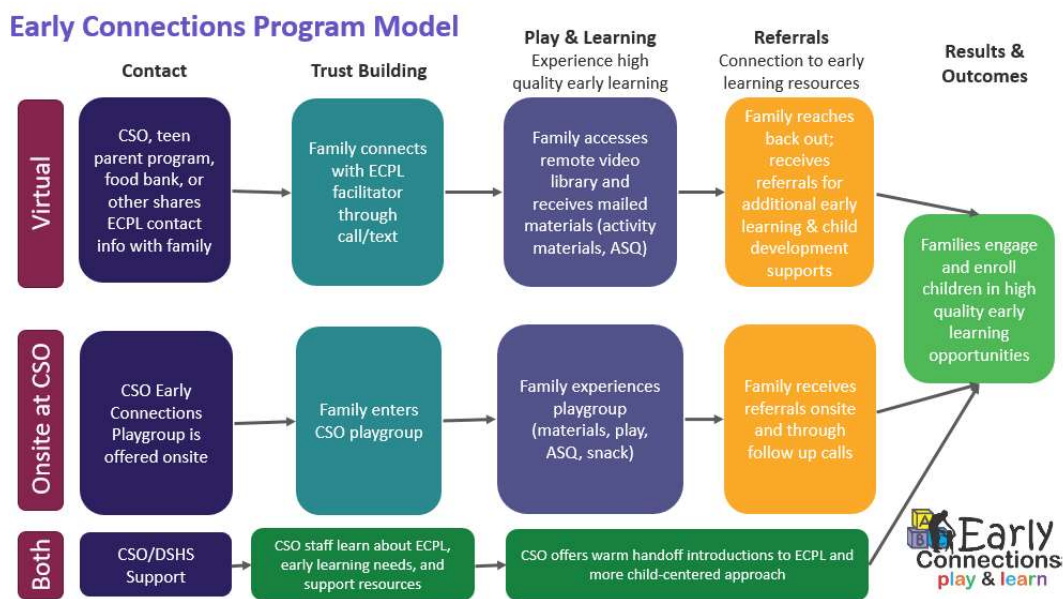
A detailed evaluation plan can be found in Appendix A, including notes indicating the questions that were addressed in this evaluation and those recommended for future evaluations.



EVALUATION RESULTS

Program Design Tools

Through a series of sessions with ECPL leaders, we designed an ECPL program model to document and define the key program activities and desired outcomes. The process provided an opportunity to develop clarity and definition around the program’s target population, goals, desired program results and longer-term outcomes, and how program processes and activities are designed to effectively achieve them. This program design and logic-modeling work is critical for any program and/or program evaluation and became even more important as the program pivoted and redesigned its processes to an entirely new virtual operation. By partnering with program leaders, we were able to assist with identification of the activities and processes that would be needed for the new virtual program to achieve the previously defined outcomes for children and families, independent of the actual “space” in which the program operated. The diagram below illustrates the program design and logic model for both Virtual and Onsite CSO operations.



Additional program design tools include a checklist of data elements needed for program monitoring, reporting and evaluation for remote operations; an ECPL virtual services program visualization and model; and an evaluation plan for both remote and future operations. These materials are available in Appendices A-E.

Program Activity and Results

Onsite CSO Programming

Using existing information for on-site ECPL operations we developed the following profile of program participants and activities between February 2017 and March 15, 2020 (when the CSO's closed due to COVID19). As described earlier, the program operated solely out of the Yakima and Sunnyside CSOs between February 2017 and September 2019. During the first two fiscal years, the program served about 600 children ages birth to 5 in Yakima (725, counting repeat attendance) and about 400 children ages birth to 5 (about 500 with repeat attendance) in Sunnyside annually. Program expansion occurred in October 2019 in Toppenish and Moses Lake, Spokane in November 2019, and Wenatchee in February 2020. Due to changing data collection and storage methods and the coronavirus pandemic that prevented on-site programming for a complete year for the other sites, it is difficult to compare the number of children and families served in the most recent fiscal year, July 2019 through June 2020. However, for this most recent fiscal year, across all CSO sites, the program served 1,213 children and over 1,250 parents or caregivers.⁵

Cumulative services provided through onsite operations February 2017 – March 2020:

- Child total attendance: 4,306
- Parent/Caregiver total attendance: 3,189
- Family, Friend, and Neighbor total attendance: 433
- 4,213 free books given to children
- 2,638 children offered developmental screening
- Over 1,184 families referred to ECEAP/Head Start Preschool Programs

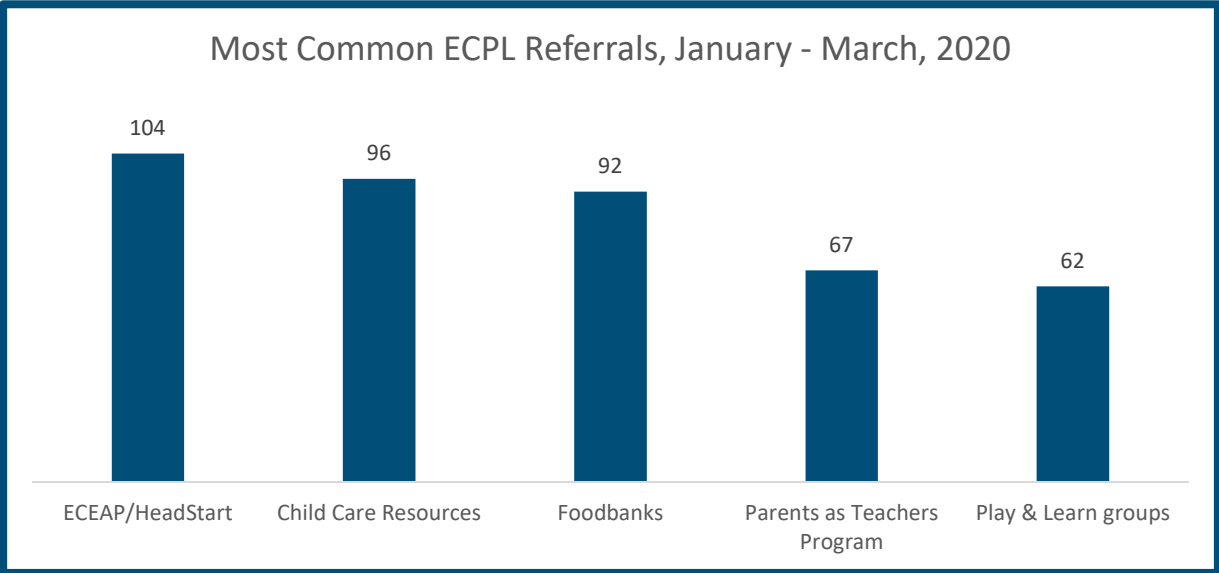


⁵ The number of parents/caregivers may be higher than the number of children because there can be more than one adult caring for the same child.

In addition to the number of children and parents/caregivers served, ECPL also tracks other information and results. Over the life of the program, over 4,000 free books were handed out to children during onsite visits to CSOs, and over 2,600 Ages and Stages-3 (ASQ) screening questionnaires were either administered or offered to parents and caregivers during their visits.

Referrals are provided for families based on conversations held with the facilitators and completion of the ASQs. To better understand the nature of these referrals, we used data from a tool called the Facilitator Reflection Form, which is completed by facilitators at the end of each onsite ECPL session, to analyze the types and numbers of referrals made by facilitators between January and mid-March 2020. Although this is a relatively short time period and represents a small sample, this data demonstrates that children, their families, and caregivers who access services through their local DSHS CSO office are being referred to community resources and professionals to support early learning and development needs. Because of the vulnerability of these families and limited access to services, they are unlikely to be receiving such services from any other source.

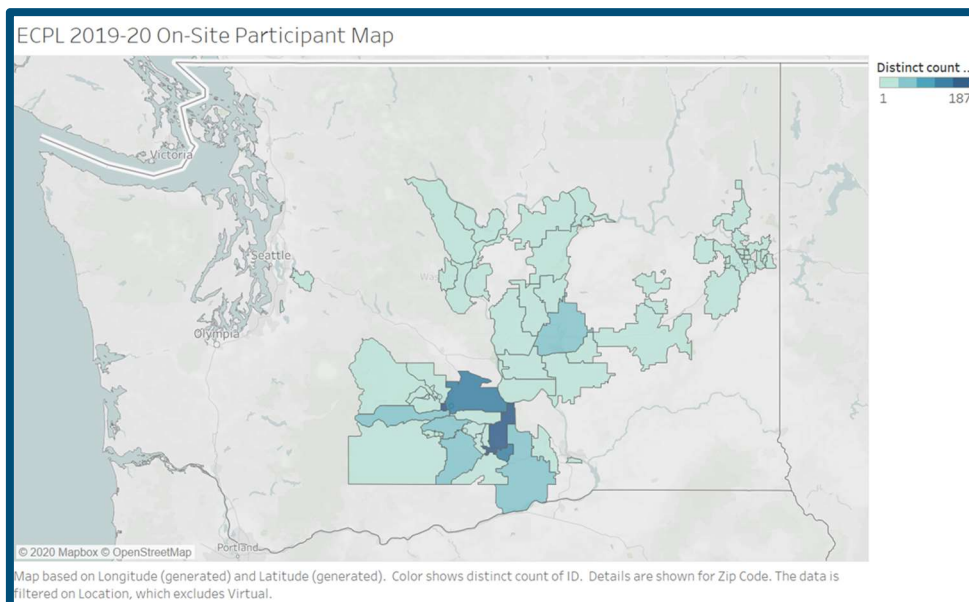
The chart below illustrates the most common referrals made to families and shows that most referrals are made for preschool and childcare support resources. These include early learning and childcare support services such as ECEAP and Head Start, Child Care Resources (which helps families find licensed child care), and other play and learn programs. The third largest category of referrals was to foodbanks, which indicates that these families are facing challenges with basic subsistence, challenges that are likely further exacerbated by the pandemic.



Source: Facilitator Reflection Forms, January 7 – March 12, 2020.

During on-site operations, the facilitators offered ASQ developmental screenings for caregivers to use with children. The purpose of using this collaborative screening tool is to educate caregivers about their child’s development and support caregivers to champion in this area, as well as advocate for the needs of their children. Facilitators use the screening tool to offer caregivers an opportunity to further understand their child’s current development while identifying strengths and areas of growth with connection to relevant follow up steps. The collaborative use of the parent/caregiver-completed tool supports caregiver awareness for early learning domains while creating opportunities for relationship building and celebration of child growth and success. Of the 181 ASQs offered to families between January and March 2020, 53 (30 percent) were scored and completed by the facilitator and family. Of these, 60 percent identified one or more areas that fell within the “monitoring zone,” and 36 percent scored below the “cut off level” and/or warranted a need for a referral in particular areas of development.

On-site ECPL services reached many Washington residents in the Central and Eastern parts of the state. This map shows the number of adults by reported zip code for all participants at ECPL sites during the 2019-2020 year. The darker color indicates more participants from the given zip code. These include repeat visits to ECPL play and learn group, so are duplicated counts of participants.



Virtual ECPL Programming

The virtual ECPL model was tested with several families through a soft launch at in the middle of July and went “live” shortly after. Since the soft launch, 45 of these families have contacted the ECPL messaging line, and 36 families have completed the process and selected or been mailed a book, activity kit, or other resources. Early data demonstrates the flyers sent via CSO mailing with regular communication to clients, are the most common way families are referred to the virtual program. This indicates the chosen communication pathways for the virtual program are indeed reaching the target population: CSO clients. Staff connections have also been a referral source during this initial rollout, indicating that staff developed strong relationships with participants during on-site programming and can leverage that trust and connection with a new program model.

KEY NUMBERS

92 Children reached by virtual Early Connections play and learn

36 Play and Learn books and kits distributed

57 children birth-5 and 35 children 6+

ECPL Facilitator Perspectives

One of the key goals of this evaluation was to engage the facilitators and gather their perspectives and insights on the ECPL program. Although we were not able to meet in person and hold facilitator discussion groups as planned, evaluators were able to host one virtual group meeting at the outset of the project, participate in six of the team’s regular ECPL check-ins, and conduct a staff survey at the close of the project. The survey was designed to gather their feedback on different aspects of ECPL as well as their perspective on their job positions. Evaluators provided the survey in Spanish and English, providing opportunity for facilitators to complete the survey in the language they felt most comfortable in to express themselves and their experiences. The full text of the survey can be found in Appendix F.

The results of the survey were very positive and informative. When asked to reflect on the importance of different aspects of the ECPL program for meeting the needs of families, every respondent indicated they were all either “Extremely Important” or “Important”. The three program components most highly rated by staff were:

- Opportunities for parents/caregivers to play and learn together with their children,
- Helping parents/caregivers understand child behavior and development, and

- Establishing a trusted relationship between families and facilitators

When asked to share their feedback on what has gone well with the transition to a virtual program and what has been challenging, the facilitators shared many common perspectives. Most staff felt that the transition to virtual programming had gone very well, and that one of most positive aspects of the change was that they were able to keep serving vulnerable families.

Facilitators also shared families have responded very positively to the change, and that an important benefit of the virtual program is that families get free activity kits to play and

“The teamwork to develop the system has been amazing. It’s been so good for our cohesiveness as a whole. It’s given us a sense of purpose during the pandemic. We’ve been able to continue serving families at highest risk.”

-ECPL Facilitator

learn with at home, which they could otherwise not afford or have access to. Another perhaps unexpected outcome of this intense effort to pivot from onsite to virtual programming was a sense of team cohesion that has developed. Several ECPL team members commented on how much they appreciate the regular check-ins and teamwork experienced during this crisis, not only because they are all working from home, but also because most are located in different cities. The opportunity to connect and work more closely with each other is highly valued.

Challenges staff have faced include a somewhat challenging learning curve for onboarding Quiq and concerns that families they are working with may not have the experience with technology needed to effectively use it. Staff also shared that in-person observations help them better see challenges presented by children, or in children’s interactions with their parents/caregivers, which might be missed when only talking over the phone or communicating via texting.

When asked whether there are any program activities that could continue to be handled virtually even after onsite playgroups are once again possible, the facilitators provided several suggestions. They

“I really cherish the time we have with families and try to make it as impactful as we can...this long pause of not being able to see people face to face has made me really want to make sure and connect with every single family that comes through the door.”

-ECPL facilitator

cited the benefits of continuing to use Quiq to serve families who are unable to attend ECPL playgroups on the one day a week in the CSO when they are offered, and the likelihood of reaching many more families through virtual communications and services. One facilitator suggested that Quiq could be used to establish a relationship with an

interested family and encourage them to also come in to experience the in-person CSO play and learn group. Other activities that could continue virtually include providing resource and referral information and sending links to YouTube and story time videos so families can get ideas for activities to do at home. Staff feedback on activities that work best onsite was consistently focused on the advantages of being in-person to build relationships, model interactions for parents, and to observe children's behavior first-hand.

Facilitators also made suggestions for additional services that could build on the successes of the ECPL program, some of which included:

- Developing protocols for communicating with families over the phone in addition to Quiq messaging.
- Strengthening efforts to track child outcomes by building on existing partnerships with community entities that serve the same population and establishing new partnerships where they do not yet exist. Examples include DSHS Child Protective Services, Speech and Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists at local school districts, local contacts for ECEAP/Head Start, Child Care Aware resources, and foster care organizations.

Family and caregiver perspectives

The evaluation team developed a set of questions to assess the experiences of the initial group of families/caregivers who completed the new virtual process. The survey was designed to answer questions around their experience using the virtual Quiq messaging system and communicating with the facilitator, their perceptions of the activity kits and books, recommendations for improvement, and interest in other ECPL program offerings. To encourage survey participation, staff created an inclusive protocol that included contacting each family to let them know they would be receiving a link to the survey and ECPL management ensured that an incentive in the form of a grocery gift card was available for each respondent. Further, staff offered to survey families themselves and record information, which may result in more in-depth data to use in continuously improving the program as well as deepen relationships between staff and participants. Finally, the survey was provided in both English and Spanish to improve its accessibility and provide opportunities for more families to engage and share feedback.

A total of 11 families responded to the survey, most of whom had just received their activity kits or books. Eight of the families completed the English version of the survey and three completed it in Spanish. While this is a small number, their feedback provides valuable early insights into the

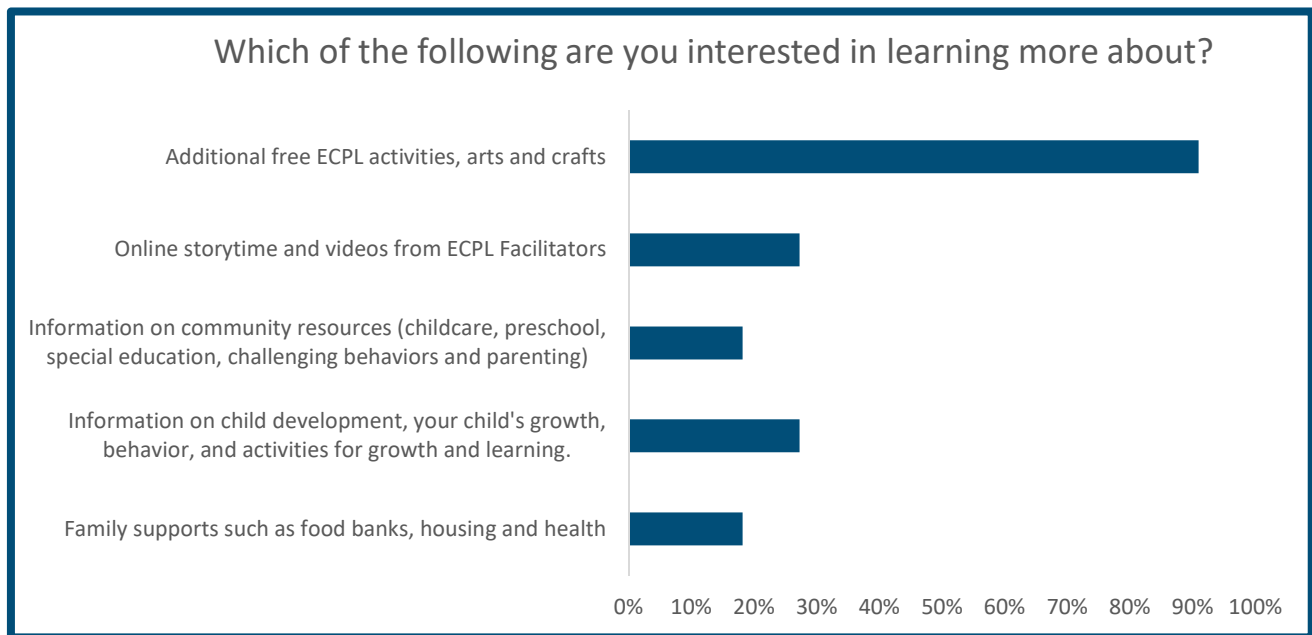
experiences of this first group of users. ECPL leaders will be continuing this customer satisfaction survey for some time to continue monitoring families' experiences.

The results of the survey are very positive with all but one participant experiencing no problems. Over 70 percent of respondents found Quiq very easy to use overall, and 90 percent had no trouble answering the questions asked of them. Over 80 percent of respondents indicated they received a timely response once they began their text conversation, and one participant shared "I appreciate that the texting feature is available and that you are texting with a real person."

Of the eight participants who had received their books or activity kits, 100 percent felt that the selection met the needs of the children in their care. When provided a list of other ECPL services and asked what they would be most interested in, over 90 percent expressed interest in receiving additional free activities, arts, and crafts. As shown in the chart below interest in other ECPL offerings varied.

"Please keep sending activities to work on at home with our children."

-Caregiver from Toppenish



When asked about the value of this method of communication nearly all respondents said it was very valuable, and over 90 percent they are very likely to continue using it to communicate with ECPL facilitators.

The full text of the family survey can be found in Appendix G.

"I thought that this was a wonderful and very accessible program. I appreciate that the texting feature is available and that you are texting with a real person."

- Caregiver from Yakima

CSO feedback

As noted earlier, our original evaluation design planned to evaluate the partnership between ECPL and the CSOs and included interviews and discussions with CSO administrators and staff. The COVID19 pandemic prevented this. However, we were able to review items for the fiscal year 2020 survey, administered just before the pandemic. ECPL leaders provided evaluators with survey results. There were 89 responses, with nearly a third from the Yakima CSO, followed by a quarter from the Spokane-Maple CSO. Over half of those who completed the survey serve as Public Benefits Specialists, Work First, or Social Service Specialists. Overall, the ratings were highly positive, as summarized in the points below.

- 1. Highly positive ratings overall:** 89% of respondents see the ECPL group as a program that supports their work with clients at the CSO. 92% feel the ECPL group has made an impact on services for both CSO staff and families. 99% recommend that the program continues to be available in the CSO.
- 2. Improved waiting room atmosphere:** 60% of respondents said they had seen changes in the waiting room atmosphere on days families have access to Early Connections Play & Learn groups and nearly all respondents who included comments reported positive improvements. Many respondents noted the decreased stress levels of children, caregivers, and CSO staff because of the program. Several also noticed increased happiness on the part of children and parents. In some sites, the waiting rooms were more boisterous with activity than they had been in the past and in others, staff reported a calmer atmosphere. The impact on activity level and noise may depend on how close the Play and Learn area is to the general waiting room or lobby.

3. **Improved client meetings:** Nearly half of respondents said that their client interactions are different during regularly scheduled appointments and reported positive improvements like those regarding the waiting room improvements, including increased happiness for children and decreased stress for parents. Many staff reported that the free book from ECPL helped occupy children during the client visit and that caregivers were less frustrated and more willing to engage in services as a result.

“I believe it assists in decreasing stress for the parents, the children and the staff during the customers’ visits to the CSO. Also, the information and education the parents are getting from this group (is a change related to ECPL).”

-CSO

4. **Recommendations for increased access and expansion:** Over half (58%) of respondents thought that the groups should be offered more days each week and over one-third (39%) recommended that the program be promoted for clients from more CSO departments. In fact, 16% of respondents recommended that ECPL find other ways for families who visit the CSO to participate in this group.



“I love it when you guys are here!”

“You need to be here all week!”

“Parents and children really enjoy the family time/learning skills. They look forward to attending the learning program.”

-
CSO Staff

INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of our evaluation results for each of our evaluation areas are as follows.

Effectiveness of program practices and partnerships with the CSOs

The process of moving from an in-person to a remote service delivery model provided an opportunity to closely examine the goals of the program apart from the physical location, and help ensure that virtual programming was aligned with and served the original ECPL program goals. The shared clarity of purpose held by ECPL leaders and staff was evident our conversations with them, and is reflected in the program design tools, logic model and evaluation plan collaboratively developed by the evaluators and ECPL team during this evaluation.

Our assessment of CSO feedback from the 2020 survey demonstrates CSO staff clearly see ECPL as a valuable program for their clients. Before the pandemic, over half of CSO staff surveyed said they wished the ECPL program was available more frequently and expressed interest in learning more about early learning resources for their clients. The ECPL development team was able to leverage existing goodwill and strong partnerships with CSOs to gain support for the new virtual program model. The Yakima CSO took the initiative to distribute ECPL program flyers with their urgent pandemic EBT communications. This demonstrated the ease of partnership and value of service to families, and as a result, all other ECPL partner CSO's responded in the same manner. The flyers appear to have resulted in connections for many of the initial participants in the virtual program. This relationship with the CSOs can provide a bridge for future collaboration efforts to serve this highly vulnerable population.

Delivery of supports for participating families and children

Data from the CSO survey, facilitator survey, and family survey show consistent results of strong program delivery for both caregivers and children. CSO staff see improvements to onsite waiting room atmosphere as a result of on-site programming. Caregivers and children report appreciation for the activity kits and books provided through virtual programming, as well as appreciation for the play space and connections to facilitators at CSOs. Referral data indicates an identified area of focus of referrals for early learning programming, supporting the key program outcome of increasing access to high quality care for children and families most likely to be disconnected from formal opportunities.

Bilingual and bicultural staff are a huge asset for the organization. Insights from Facilitators and data from families indicate that many participants appreciate Spanish communication and consider Spanish their home language. Staff respond to the complex realities faced by families and caregivers. For example, staff see the value in fulfilling requests for reading materials in both English and Spanish to

improve language skills of both adults and children. Staff are also able to communicate with caregivers and children in their preferred language.

Fidelity of operations across different locations.

This evaluation did not directly address this question due to the halt to operations as a result of the pandemic. However, the shift to a virtual operation required an intense level of teamwork, collaboration, and communication practices that built camaraderie and new norms for working together. These practices can provide a solid foundation for ongoing work to align and coordinate practices across sites. Future evaluations can address these questions; please see Appendix E, which includes our early thinking about potential approaches to evaluating fidelity of operations. Data from the Quiq messaging system includes data and transcripts from facilitator conversations with families, information on program referrals, as well as participant location, allowing for analysis of fidelity as well as insights into how family preferences and needs might vary across the region.

Effectiveness of the current data collection systems and processes

For onsite operations, ECPL staff evolved data systems and collection practices tremendously over the life of the program, moving from paper forms that made aggregation burdensome and limited accuracy to online forms that automatically calculated totals and created visualizations. Improvements in tracking referrals and follow up contacts were continuing into March 2020. After the pandemic halted onsite operations, ECPL staff adopted a new technology tool and have continuously improved both the data systems and data collection practices needed to obtain information about the new remote operations. Facilitators as well as program leads take responsibility for key parts of the data system, including creating an in-depth user guide and monitoring inventory of activity kits and books. Staff are becoming fluent across multiple data programs, including Google docs, Quiq, Survey Monkey, Adobe Suites, YouTube, and others. CCSCWS IT staff have been supportive of the new Quiq Messaging platform, with organizational leaders seeing a value in the program for other early learning and family programming.

While the data collection capabilities of the Quiq messaging system are powerful and the team has applied innovative thinking to the structure, data analysis for this report uncovered some challenges with quickly and easily reporting aggregated data. There are challenges with quickly pulling unduplicated households served and clearly tracking children's ages because of multiple categories used in the custom fields, for example. Quiq provides a high level of flexibility for integration with other systems, and some built-in reporting capability. Additional time and potentially resources are needed to design additional processes and reports needed to track and report detailed information about

participants, particularly details needed to monitoring and responding to a program that serves both adults and children in multiple languages, multiple configurations over time and includes inventory management needs. The addition of referrals and developmental screenings to the virtual process will add complexity, particularly as these kinds of interactions may require a hybrid of text and phone connection. The evaluation includes a checklist of data elements that can be used as a guide as technology continues to adapt.

Future Program Development and Expansion

The results of our evaluation show ECPL has demonstrated significant potential to scale geographically with both onsite and virtual programming. Last winter the program successfully expanded its onsite CSO playgroups to four additional sites, and then in the spring quickly pivoted to develop and roll-out a virtual version of its services to multiple sites. The structure and processes of the virtual program have been established and were relatively quickly and easily transferred and adopted when virtual services expanded from Yakima to Sunnyside and Toppenish. This is due in large part to significant investments of time by program leaders and staff in learning a new technology, adapting it for a unique social service program, and developing staff capacity to both build and use the software.

The ECPL facilitators shared that they are working as a tight-knit team, supporting each other through effective cross-training, skill-sharing, and regular communication. While we were not able to explore whether this level of collaboration existed prior to our engagement, this is clearly a strength of this team. Specific management and team-building practices worked exceptionally well throughout development of new processes, testing, and rollout, as evidenced by:

- Multiple, short team check-ins during the week to monitor progress, share experiences, and make real-time adjustments to their protocols and the Quiq messaging system, as well as in the inventory systems for the activity kits and books.
- Cross-training for facilitators to provide equitable service across a large geographic area regardless of where they or the families are physically located.
- Development of a shift-scheduling system that ensures coverage of the messaging lines.
- Quality control procedures to ensure timely responses to family inquiries and help as needed
- Development of a “quick start” training guide for Quiq by one of the ECPL facilitators, now being used to train the two new ECPL staff hired in August.
- Close, responsive communication with CSOs, including anticipating needs for flyer copies.

Many of the effective practices listed above existed prior to the pandemic and the others will be equally as relevant when the program returns to onsite services and resumes efforts to further develop and standardize processes at each of its sites.

As the pandemic continues to affect service delivery and the timing of a return to onsite services remains unknown, this virtual program has the potential to *expand* the reach of the ECPL program because it is now accessible to families five days a week, anywhere and anytime, instead of one day a week during a fixed time at their local CSO. Additionally, the new program offering of sending activity kits to families, along with videos to

illustrate the activities and provide model parent/caregiver behaviors, are something families did not have access to before.

This is consistent with several of the recommendations from the CSO's to give families improved access to the program.

-
- *Promote access to Play and Learn groups from more CSO departments to take advantage of the positive parent child interactions.*
 - *Offer this group more days a week.*
 - *Find other ways for families to visit the CSO to participate in this group.*

-Quotes from CSO staff, 2020 staff survey

The virtual program has only been up and running for a few weeks and questions remain about how the team will address program goals related to building trusted relationships between facilitators and families. Facilitators shared that relationship building may be easier in some ways when the program is in-person. However, they also shared that only being available one day a week in a physical location, sometimes for a very short time, really limited the opportunity for interactions between facilitators and families. The ECPL team is in the process of developing the next level of protocols for proactively following up with families to ask if they have questions, are interested in trying additional activities, or need additional resources or referrals.

Recommendations

Focus on relationships and partnerships with families and CSOs

Because of the closure of the CSOs and onsite playgroups, and the limited amount of time the new virtual program was up and running, it was not possible to gather feedback from CSO staff and families related to establishing trusted relationships and effective partnerships. However, the evaluation questions and suggested methods related to building relationships with families and CSO partnerships remain relevant. **Continue to use the evaluation plan to support ongoing efforts to engage families and partners, identify outcomes, and inform future expansion.**

Management and Resource Recommendations

- **Continue effective management practices including frequent check-ins and distributed responsibility for new program development and monitoring activities. Continue to closely monitor the resources needed to deliver remote services,** particularly as expansion to other CSOs and word of mouth may lead to significant increases in participants. Specific areas to monitor include staffing needs for responding to participants through the Quiq Messaging web based portal (and the app that is currently under development) and over the phone, engineering resources for continual improvement and maintenance of the text messaging program, resources for activity kit and book distribution, and data collection and reporting resources. Monitoring remote service resource needs may also be influenced by opportunities and challenges presented when on-site operations resume.
- **Consider investing in a large database management system with Quiq integration to enable the program to more effectively track and report on client contacts and services.** Given the organizational cohesion and staff readiness and comfort with technology, moving to a more powerful and streamlined database could be useful for increasing the efficiency of programming and making data tracking easier on staff and could potentially allow staff to track work with clients across CCSCW programs. The evaluation team identified Salesforce, which can handle inventory as well as multiple types of clients and staff, as one viable option. Collaboration with CCSCW IT and organizational leaders, as well as CCA of WA (which has a Salesforce license), may yield additional options.

Program Design and Implementation Recommendations

- **Continue developing protocols and identify the most effective methods to follow up with families** after initial services are provided, and develop systems for tracking results and outcomes per the evaluation plan and evaluation data checklist (repeat visitors, ASQ distribution and administration, community resource referrals).
- **Assess the response to the Family/Caregiver survey and determine most effective way to obtain ongoing feedback.** Did families respond to the Survey Monkey survey as hoped? Was the gift card an effective incentive? Did personal outreach by facilitators help? What practices worked well that could be expanded on?
- **Continue to build capacity to gather information on program results and outcomes for families,** including establishing partnerships and outcome tracking methods with programs to whom families/caregivers are referred: ECEAP/Head Start, Child Care Resources, and Family Friend and Neighbor programs, and other community, social service, and health organizations.

- **Conduct follow-up interviews with CSO administrators** at program sites to learn what went well from the initial virtual rollout and what could be improved.
- **Continue to refine the data collection approaches in the Quiq system**, including using drop down menus and other fixed options, where appropriate, to improve the accuracy of data and ability to analyze it. For example, use pre-defined options for the referral field; this will increase the team's ability to understand how well outreach and marketing efforts work.

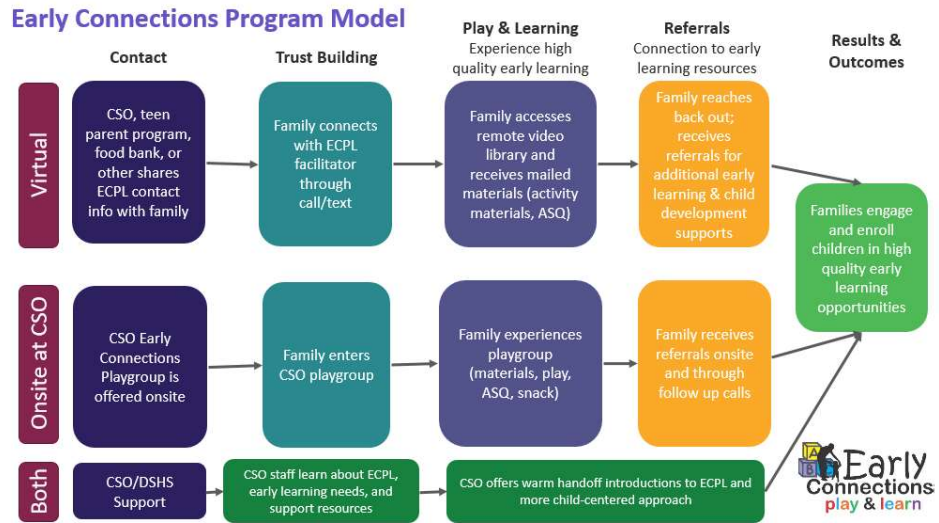
Conclusion

The pivot of ECPL services from on-site playgroups at CSOs to virtual provision of early learning supports in response to the current pandemic illustrates the tremendous creativity, energy, and commitment of ECPL leaders and team to provide continuity of services for the program's families and children. Within a short period of time they leveraged established CSO partnerships, strong staff relationships, and deep knowledge and experience of the early learning needs of the program's participants to develop and provide families with customized early learning materials and resources for at-home use. A continuous improvement commitment is evident in staff meetings and conversations with leadership and facilitators, and the team effectively collaborates to discuss successes and opportunities to build on lessons learned. ECPL has demonstrated it is effectively meeting its goals by providing early learning resources to vulnerable children and families served by CSOs during this difficult time.

The evaluation facilitated development of a program logic model and evaluation plan with identified metrics to provide a sound foundation and guide for ongoing and expanding ECPL program development, whether they are in-person or virtual. The evaluation approaches our team used were designed to help ECPL leaders create new practices for virtual program delivery, outreach and communications, and tracking of activities and outcomes; all are intentionally aligned with the program goals and outcomes identified in the ECPL logic model. The successful launch of virtual services, the highly positive initial feedback from staff and families, and active participation of partner CSO to support this new method of reaching families, are all indicators of a successful program and we encourage ECPL to continue engaging in dialog with its internal team and external partners. The ability of the program leaders and team to leverage multiple internal and external resources, effectively retrain staff, and collaboratively establish aligned processes across multiple sites, also suggests that the program can effectively expand virtual operations to new sites, assuming significant investments in open communication, coordination, and collaboration continue to be practiced. The logic model and evaluation plan also provide a roadmap for ECPL to continue strengthening the processes used to

monitor the results of its engagement with families, such as community referrals, and to establish the partnerships needed to track longer term early learning outcomes for children and families.

APPENDIX A: EARLY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM MODEL



APPENDIX B: EARLY CONNECTIONS VIRTUAL PLAY AND LEARN DESCRIPTION AND PROCESSES



Early Connections Virtual Play & Learn Program Description

Approach

Adult caregiver for a child from birth-5 years contacts the virtual play & learn program by texting anytime



Virtual Play & Learn Experiences

Connected with a **local early learning specialist**, caregivers receive multiple free supports over multiple touchpoints:

- Free children's book
- Free arts and craft activity kits
- Online story time and activity videos
- Referrals for children's resources and family support
- Information about child development, growth, and learning (including ASQ evidence-based screening)
- Help with challenging behaviors, social emotional needs, and creative parenting and care ideas

Initial Results

- Caregivers feel supported
- Caregivers learn about child development
- Caregivers use activities and materials with child(ren)
- Caregivers use referrals for early learning and other supports

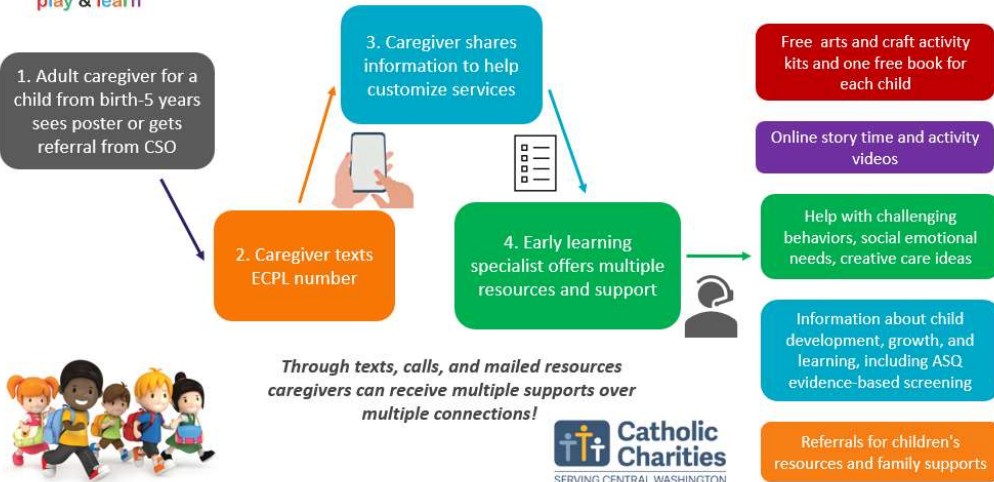


Program Outcomes

- Children receive high quality care at home or with friends and neighbors
- Families enroll children in high quality early learning opportunities

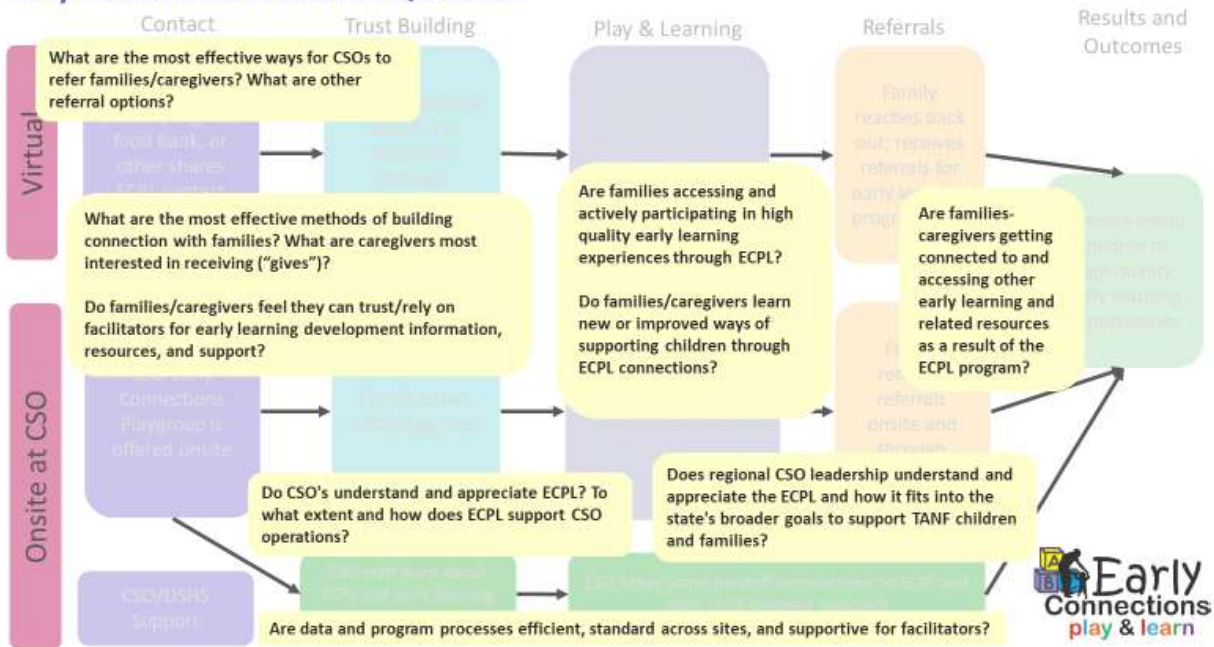


Early Connections Virtual Play & Learn Process

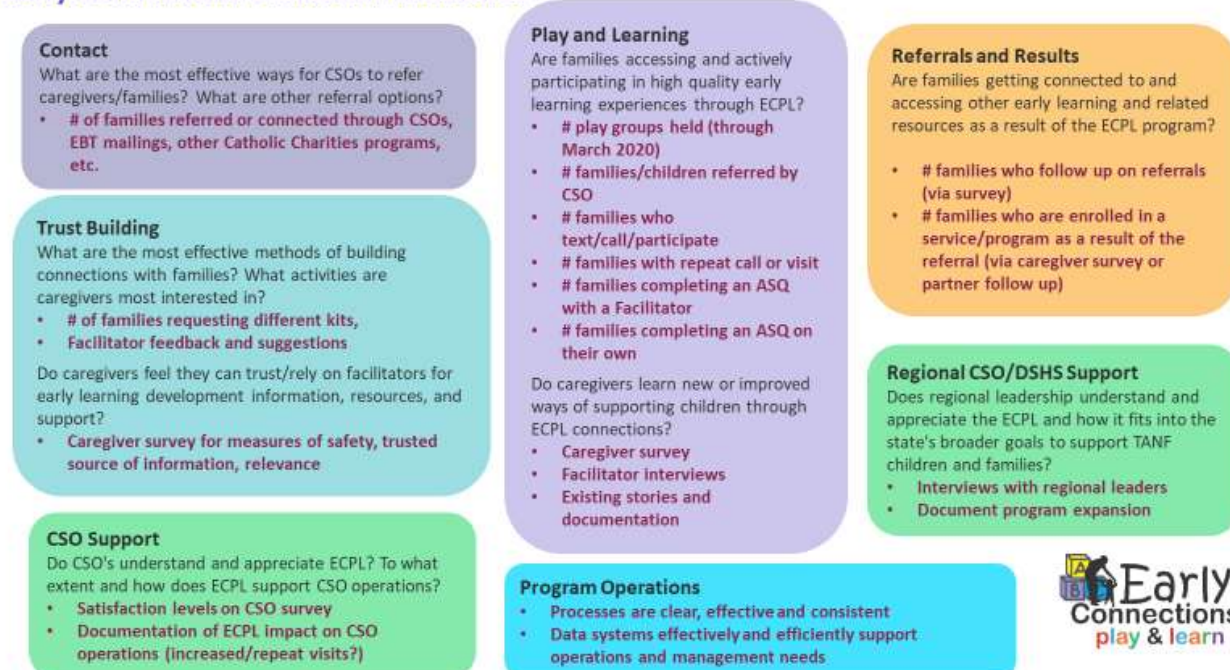


APPENDIX C: EARLY CONNECTIONS EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND MEASURES

Early Connections Evaluation Questions



Early Connections Evaluation Measures



APPENDIX D: VIRTUAL DATA COLLECTION CHECKLIST

Service Data Collection Checklist

This checklist is aligned with the data recommended to support ongoing program evaluation and can be used to review the data collected for both remote and on-site operations.

Client Information

- Quiq App captures client name, children's ages, address, phone number & income.
- Other data? Ex: Race/ethnicity, referral source (could phone number tell that?).

Facilitator Information

- Each facilitator is a separate "Agent" in the system, so it should be possible to track all the calls/texts a facilitator takes.

Contact requests and basics—text or call type and information about calls made

- For remote operations, Clients will make choices through "bots" before getting routed to an "Agent"; all this data is available.
- Number of texts, calls, and data on length of calls is also possible to track, although it may require downloading individual client data and then aggregating based on the type of analysis desired.
- Similarly, signing into an on-site Play and Learn group through Quiq may be possible and could replace the sign in sheets.

Services Provided to Client—Where will this be tracked? Will it be possible to use fields in Quiq? New Google form? It may be an extension of the Facilitator Reflection Form, which includes total data on the ASQs conducted and all referrals offered. It would be ideal to be able to connect this information to each client served.

- Activity Kits ordered
- Video Links shared (separately, not sure that this will happen as a regular part of the process)
- ASQs conducted
- Referrals provided from ASQs
- Other Early Childhood information
- Other services
- Any notes fields to track the narrative of the call?

Client Feedback

- Could there be a short survey sent by text after a call with a Facilitator? The Facilitator could mention it during the call. Questions might be based on those in the existing Caregiver Feedback and Referral Request Form.

APPENDIX E: EARLY CONNECTIONS EVALUATION PLAN

Early Connections 2020 Evaluation Plan: Contact and Trust Building

Evaluation Questions (What do we want to know?)	Measures (Indicators of progress/success)	Evaluation Methodology (How will we assess this?)	Data Source(s)	Evaluation Timeframe
What are most effective methods of connecting with target families?	# of families who call/text ECPL for information. # of families referred to ECPL by CSO. # of families who hear about program from EBT mailing. # of families who saw program flyer # who heard about it from other source	Review activity data and/or discuss with facilitators success of their efforts to connect. Feedback from Facilitators.	Discussion with facilitators; program activity data.	2020 Evaluation
How well is the process working of providing initial books, activity kits, etc. to families?	Facilitator feedback and suggestions.	Discuss with facilitators what's working/what's not. Conversations during huddles, and staff survey.	Facilitators; program leadership and staff	2020 Evaluation
What initial "gives" are families most interested in?	Description available items <i>Future evaluations could include most popular activity kits when more data is available</i>	Track what families are requesting the most.	Program data from Quiq	Partially addressed in 2020 Evaluation.
Do families/caregivers feel they can trust and rely on their facilitators for early learning/child development-related information, resources and support?	<i>Level of trust</i> <i>Do not recommend trying to measure for 2020 evaluation report</i>	Ask participating families to answer a few questions via a reflection form or short questionnaire. May be opportunity to use text/call application for automated feedback or surveys.	Survey data from Quiq app or other online source; caregiver feedback form.	Future evaluations
What are the most effective methods for CSOs or other programs to remotely refer families to ECPL? How well is this approach working?	# families successfully referred using new text/remote method (2020) <i>Satisfaction levels of CSOs (future evaluations)</i>	Ask Regional Administrators and key CSO staff how well the new system is working.	ECPL data tracking systems. CSO RA and relevant staff.	Partially addressed in 2020 Evaluation.

Early Connections Evaluation Plan: Relationships with CSOs

Evaluation Questions (What do we want to know?)	Measures (Indicators of progress/success)	Evaluation Methodology (How will we assess this?)	Data Source(s)	Evaluation Timeframe
Do CSO's understand and appreciate the goals of ECPL? To what extent and how does ECPL support CSO operations? What are CSO staff perspectives on the program and how its working? Are CSO staff developing knowledge of early learning needs and referring clients accordingly?	Satisfaction levels and feedback, particularly around whether ECPL has improved waiting area atmosphere and staff interactions with clients (2020). Document whether CSOs are building knowledge of early learning needs of TANF families and referring them to supportive resources (future evaluations).	Use results from the March 2020 survey of CSO staff.	March CSO survey results. In the future, surveys can be sent quarterly. Also recommend future interviews with CSO administrators and key staff to discuss program development and operations.	2020 Evaluation (pre-COVID CSO survey). Future evaluations should address virtual ECPL program and referrals.
Does regional leadership understand and appreciate the ECPL and how it fits into the state's broader goals to support TANF children and families?	Understanding of CSO Regional Administrators of ECPL program.	Interviews with Ras and/or key staff. Document whether regional administrators have taken steps beyond what's required to facilitate connections and referrals (i.e. has CSO atmosphere changed). <i>Not possible for 2020 evaluation.</i>	Interviews	Future evaluations

Early Connections 2020 Evaluation Plan: Play, Learning, Referrals and Results

Evaluation Questions (What do we want to know?)	Measures (Indicators of progress/success)	Evaluation Methodology (How will we assess this?)	Data Source(s)	Evaluation Timeframe
Are families accessing and actively participating in high quality early learning experiences through ECPL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # play groups held (through March 2020) # families/children referred by CSO # families who text/call/participate # families with repeat call or visit # families completing an ASQ with a Facilitator # families completed an ASQ on their own <p>Qualitative description of ECPL materials, staff protocols, and education and related professional development for facilitators.</p>	Track and monitor data on activities, families/children served, referrals made, and early outcomes.	ECPL data tracking system and Quiq.	2020 Evaluation
Do families/caregivers learn new or improved ways of supporting children through ECPL connections?	<p>Families/caregivers increase knowledge of child development and early learning and of available play and learn activities and resources.</p> <p>Families/caregivers increase understanding of how to implement these activities and access other early learning-related resources available to them (future evaluations).</p>	<p>Survey of families participating in first weeks of Virtual ECPL.</p> <p>Conversations with Facilitators.</p> <p>Family survey to ask about their experience, what they learned, how they used the resources, and outcomes for children.</p>	<p>August 2020 family/caregiver survey</p> <p>Facilitator daily reflection forms (pre-COVID) and August 2020 Facilitator survey.</p>	2020 Evaluation and future evaluations.
Are families getting connected to and accessing other early learning and related resources as a result of the ECPL program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # families who follow up on referrals. # families who are enrolled in a service/program as a result of the referral. 	<p>Caregiver/family survey.</p> <p>Caregiver/family focus groups.</p> <p>Follow up with partners about referrals (ECEAP, HS, FFN, etc.). <i>not feasible for 2020 evaluation.</i></p>	<p>Caregiver/family survey.</p> <p>Follow-up with program providing the service (ECEAP, HS, Working Connections, Licensed Care, Home Visiting, Parents as Teachers, IECHMH consultants, other.)</p>	Future evaluations.

Early Connections 2020 Evaluation Plan: Data and Systems

Evaluation Questions (What do we want to know?)	Measures (Indicators of progress/success)	Evaluation Methodology (How will we assess this?)	Data Source(s)	Evaluation Timeframe
How effective/streamlined are current data tracking systems? <i>Revised objective: Help ensure new Quiq system can track evaluation data</i>	Assess whether new program processes and Quiq are adequately tracking data needed for program Monitoring and Evaluation.	Analyze systems; discuss with Maria, Victor and staff. Participate in Quiq bot development and user testing.	Quiq Data reports. Maria, Victor and staff	2020 Evaluation
What is the best way to track families and "touchpoints"?	Review of systems and continuous quality improvement efforts through remote operations development	Analyze systems; discuss with Maria, Victor and staff. Participate in Quiq bot development and user testing.	Quiq Data reports. Maria, Victor and staff	
Are facilitators adequately supported to perform their job responsibilities?	<p>Topics to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clarity of roles and responsibilities -Training and PD for their position -Access to supervisor guidance -Peer communication and support -Support for program responsibilities (clear procedures, good tools and systems, logistics, etc.) 	August 2020 staff survey.	Survey results.	2020 Evaluation
Are program activities conducted consistently across sites? <i>Not feasible/applicable this year, given COVID19 and shift to virtual operations</i>		Identify key activities most important for program fidelity and program operations. Review program materials. Interview staff, observe operations.	Interviews Program materials	Future evaluations

APPENDIX F: ECPL FACILITATOR SURVEY PROTOCOL

Feedback on the ECPL Program

1. Thinking about the different parts of Early Connections Play and Learn listed below, how important do you think these are for meeting the early learning needs of families? (Scale of 1-5, Not important to Extremely important)
 - Connection with local early learning experts
 - Opportunities for parents/caregivers to play and learn together (books, activity kits, story time and learning videos)
 - Help understanding child behavior and development (information on growth and learning, Ages and Stages assessments, etc.).
 - Referrals for other community resources (childcare, preschool, challenging behaviors, parenting, etc.)
 - Establishing a trusted relationship between a family and facilitator
 - Building CSO/DSHS understanding of the early learning needs of families
2. What do you think has gone well with the transition from on-site CSO playgroups to the remote system?
3. What do you think has been challenging in the transition from on-site CSO playgroups to the remote system?
4. If a return to on-site playgroups becomes possible, is there anything you would you recommend continuing to do remotely?
5. If a return to on-site playgroups becomes possible, what would be most important to do in person?
6. Are there any additional services or resources you think would help improve the ECPL program for families and children?

Feedback on your job

7. Do you feel like you have a clear understanding of your ECPL roles and responsibilities? (I understand a little, some, most, or all of my roles and responsibilities)
8. Do you feel you have enough of the following knowledge, skills, and resources to succeed in your position? (I need a lot more, I need some, I have most, I have everything I need)

- Knowledge of the early learning needs of young children served by ECPL
- Experience working with young children
- Experience communicating with parents and caregivers about a child's early learning needs
- Knowledge of early learning supports and resources beyond ECPL that families and children could benefit from
- Technology skills or tools (such as creating YouTube videos, using the Quiq messaging platform, using other computer software programs)
- Other resources and tools to help me work remotely (like desk space, computer equipment, phone, internet connection, childcare support, etc.).

9. Are there areas where would you like to receive more training or information? Please explain.

10. How do you feel about the amount of supervision and guidance provided by your supervisor?

11. Is there anything else you would like to share or suggest about the ECPL program or your job?

APPENDIX G: ECPL FAMILY SURVEY PROTOCOL

1. Overall, how easy was it to use the Early Connections Play and Learn texting service? (Very difficult, Somewhat difficult, Okay, Somewhat easy, Very easy)
2. Did you receive a timely response once you began the conversation? (Yes/Somewhat/No)
3. Did you experience any difficulty completing the questions asked of you? If so, please explain where you experienced this. (Open ended)
4. If you experienced difficulty, were you able get your questions answered in a timely manner? (Yes, Somewhat, No)
5. Did the selection of books meet the needs of the child(ren) in your care? (Yes, No, Haven't receive book yet, N/A)
6. Did the selection of activity kits meet the needs of the child(ren) in your care? (Yes, No, Haven't receive kit yet, N/A)
7. Besides books or activity kits, did you receive any other information from your Early Connections Play and Learn facilitator? (Open ended comments)
8. How interested are you in accessing more resources offered by Early Connections Play and Learn facilitators:
 - a. Additional free activity and arts and crafts kits for your children.
 - b. Free online story time and learning videos provided by Early Connections Play and Learn facilitators.
 - c. Free information from Early Connections Play and Learn facilitators on community resources to help with childcare, preschool, special education, challenging behaviors, and parenting.
 - d. Information on understanding child development, learning about your child's growth, learning, and behavior, and activities for growth and learning.
 - e. Family supports such as food banks, housing, and health
 - f. Other (please explain)
9. Is this virtual method of communication with early learning experts valuable for you?
 - a. Not very valuable
 - b. Somewhat valuable
 - c. Very valuable
 - d. Comments (Please explain)
10. How likely are you to continue to use this text messaging system with Early Connections Play and Learn facilitators to access additional early learning services?
11. Do you have any recommendations for improvement to this virtual ECPL Service? (Open ended)