



EARLY ECEAP PILOT PROJECT



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



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Equity Statement

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and Early ECEAP are committed to dismantling racism and building equitable state funded birth to 5 early learning comprehensive programming in Washington.

Increasing our understanding of and capacity to address the deep-rooted impacts of bias and racism at every level is the highest priority for our team. We embrace equity as a foundation of and driving force behind our work by listening to and learning from families, contractor staff, and communities. Driven by this commitment, we develop and revise systems, policies, and practices, with the goal of eliminating disparities and transforming lives.

Tribal ECEAP Statement

DCYF ECEAP acknowledges and respects our government-to-government relationship with Tribal Sovereign Nation contractors and sub-contractors. We also acknowledge the historical trauma that tribal people have experienced since colonization particularly in institutional settings.

Tribal Nations have an inherent sovereign right over how to educate their children in a culturally relevant manner. DCYF feels great honor in supporting tribes in caring for and providing high-quality learning for their youngest learners.

We are committed to building strong relationships with Tribal Sovereign Nations and strive to support them in implementing high-quality early learning approaches that are reflective of each Nation's culture and values.

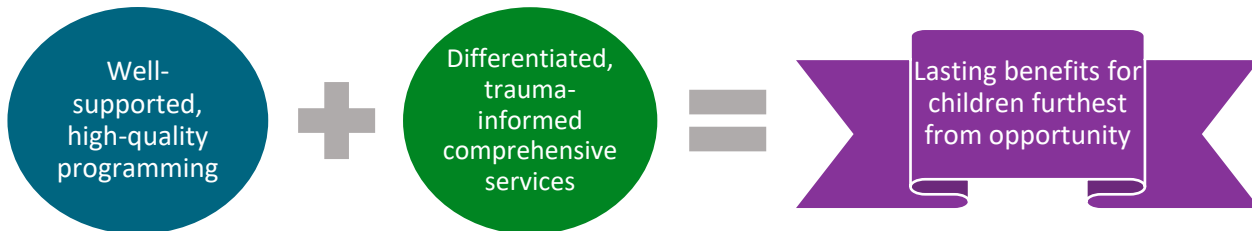
Executive Summary

In April 2019, **Substitute Senate Bill 5437** directed the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to begin the “phased implementation of a birth to three early childhood education and assistance program pilot project for eligible children under thirty-six months old.”

This model is called Early ECEAP and is based on the highly successful child and family outcomes of both Early Head Start (EHS) and Washington’s state-funded preschool, **the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)**. ECEAP, overseen by **DCYF**, is designed to prepare 3- and 4-year-old children furthest from opportunity for success in school and in life.

ECEAP focuses on the well-being of the whole child by providing comprehensive education, health, and family support services to the most vulnerable of Washington’s young children – those in intense poverty or experiencing complex trauma, or both. Individualized and culturally-relevant comprehensive services are the key to ECEAP’s success since its origin in 1985. Modeled after the federal Head Start Program, ECEAP’s “comprehensive services” approach ensures each child and family has the resources and services they need to foster learning readiness and improve their lives.

Currently, ECEAP serves 14,177 children in Washington. An **evaluation by** the Washington State Institute for Public Policy shows that children who participated in ECEAP had significantly higher math and reading test scores in the third, fourth, and fifth grades than similar children who did not participate.



Building on the successes of ECEAP, Early ECEAP provides full-day, full-year center based comprehensive services. The model ensures that working families have a trusted child care partner who will cherish their child, keep them safe, and implement developmentally appropriate and high-quality programming. This approach also partners with families in ways that support them in achieving their goals as a family. A total of 144 children and families will be served with federal Preschool Development Birth Through Five Grant (PDG B-5) funds from 2020-2022. As a condition of the PDG B-5 grant, this project will also be evaluated by the DCYF Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability (OIAA).

*On Sept. 15, 2020, the national Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs released a policy road map for each state. **Washington State** ranks in the top 10, with 4/5 policies adopted and fully implemented, yet only 1/6 effective strategies making substantial progress toward implementing. The one strategy Washington State has implemented is evidenced-based home visiting, serving children ages 0-3. Of the five remaining, implementing EHS is listed as having little to no progress. The Early ECEAP pilot, based on the standards of EHS, fits into this strategy to bring the benefits of an EHS model more fully into our state early learning system.*

Background

In 2018, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) was awarded a federal **Preschool Development Birth Through Five Grant** (PDG B-5) from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. This initial grant provided DCYF an opportunity to conduct systems planning aimed at improving and increasing availability of high-quality early learning services and building sustainable system infrastructure. In 2019, DCYF was awarded a PDG B-5 renewal grant to carry out approved activities over the next three years based on planning conducted in year one. Early ECEAP is one of these approved activities.

In the summer of 2019, DCYF created an Early ECEAP Design Team that included representation from external and internal partners, including tribes, current ECEAP contractors, Early Head Start (EHS) grantees, EHS and ECEAP parents, statewide advocacy organizations, Region X Office of Head Start, and elected officials from the Washington State Legislature. The Early ECEAP Design Team work resulted in a framework and funding plan for future implementation. The design team provided guidance around the development of a phased implementation plan of Early ECEAP.

State legislation provided a foundational framework for Early ECEAP policy, including that pilot sites must be delivered through child care center and family home providers who meet minimum licensing standards and are enrolled in Early Achievers (the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System, or QRIS). It also stated the requirement to prioritize locations for the pilot sites with programs currently providing EHS, Head Start, or ECEAP, and to include a mix of urban, suburban, and rural locations. Funds to implement the pilot program may include a combination of federal, state, or private sources. The Early ECEAP Design Team recommended an array of child eligibility categories (in alignment with EHS and/or ECEAP), including, but not limited to, children experiencing homelessness, children involved in child welfare, children with disabilities, having a parent with a mental illness, dual language learners, and children with parents under the age of 21.

The Early ECEAP Design Team also supported the development of criteria and the selection of the 10 pilot programs. With this guidance and direction from the design team, DCYF launched the Early ECEAP Request for Application process in October 2019. In January 2020, successful applicants were awarded Early ECEAP slots in 10 locations throughout the state. In addition, the Early ECEAP Design Team helped to create the Early ECEAP performance standards, using the EHS standards as the basis. DCYF shared draft standards with the field for input during the spring of 2020 and finalized them in May 2020. Up to this point, all work was led by the **DCYF Head Start Collaboration Office**. In May 2020, the Early ECEAP work began to transition to the DCYF ECEAP team who hired an Early ECEAP Manager that same month.

Even with delays from the COVID-19 pandemic, the DCYF contracting process began in May 2020 with multiple Early ECEAP programs beginning in-person services in July 2020. All sites, regardless of whether they provided in-person services or **non-traditional remote services**, followed the guidance of local health and tribal jurisdictions to ensure the safety of all participating children and families.

PILOT GOALS

- Establish a Design Team
- Select 10 Pilot Sites
- Implement Performance Standards and Training for Pilot Sites
- Provide Ongoing Training and Assistance
- Implement Services to 144 Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families
- Develop a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) System with Each Site and an Overall CQI System
- Build Infrastructure

Design Team Recommendations Finalized

Early ECEAP RFA Launched

Successful Early ECEAP Applicants Awarded

Early ECEAP Readiness Training

Early ECEAP Contracts Implemented

Introduction

In 2019, based on the support of federal PDG B-5 funds, Senate Bill 5437 required DCYF to “develop a plan for phased implementation of a birth to three Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program pilot project,” now named Early ECEAP.

Legislative Background and Requirements Overview

At the time of the bill’s passage, the Legislature found a significant lack of access to high-quality care for at-risk infants and toddlers – a mere 5% of the eligible population is currently served by EHS, which includes home visiting and center-based care. In Washington State, children in their early childhood years (0-5) face the highest rate of child maltreatment of any age group in the 0-17 age range. In 2018, Washington had the second highest national rate of infants in care, with children 0-1 years in age representing 25.6% of children in care. Children in Washington state have the highest risk of fatality in their infant years, representing 82.9% child fatalities in 2017.¹ This is especially true for Black and tribal children whose risk is at twice the state average.

The bill’s stated goals for this pilot project were to create a “high-quality, comprehensive, cost-effective program,” with an “integrated approach” intended to “create strong continuity and alignment across Early ECEAP, ECEAP, EHS, Head Start, child care licensing, and Early Achievers implementation in Washington State.”

The pilot utilizes the strengths and strong outcomes of both **EHS** and **ECEAP** with the developed ECEAP infrastructure, creating a Washington-specific version of EHS. It is a center based, full-day (10 hours), full-year model.

DCYF must provide an annual report that includes a status update that describes the planning work completed, the status of funds secured, and any implementation activities of the pilot project by Nov. 30, 2020. This is the first annual report.

Short History of Early Head Start

In January 1964, President Lyndon Johnson declared a “War on Poverty.” One of many anti-poverty programs created to respond to this crisis, Head Start provides preschool children of low-income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional, and psychological needs. In

¹Expanding the Safe Babies Court Team™ Approach in Washington State: <https://ccvj.org/our-work/designing-a-washington-state-safe-babies-plan/>. Washington State Injury and Violence Prevention Guide, January 2013: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/2900/DOH530090ChldAb.pdf>

addition, Head Start ensures that each local community is vested in its success, building each program to meet the needs of each community.

The reauthorization of the Head Start Act in 1994 made it possible to establish **EHS** as a program to serve infants and toddlers under the age of 3 and pregnant women. EHS provides early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers, pregnant women, and their families.

There are four cornerstones of the EHS model:



According to the Head Start Collaboration Office, in 2020 in Washington State, there are a total of 36 EHS providers, with a mix of home based, center based, and child care partnership programs. In total, there are 3,740 slots, including home-based services. There are 1,453 center-based and child care partnerships slots, meaning the majority of the EHS slots are home based. Last year, the 36 programs served a total of 5,456 children and families and 402 prenatal mothers. The federal EHS program receives bipartisan support and underwent a rigorous evaluation, the **EHS Research and Evaluation Project** (EHSRE) and the **Child Trends Research Project**. EHS demonstrates proven outcomes that result in significant returns on investment. While the EHSRE research project demonstrated statistically positive impacts on child and parent growth, the Child Trends Research Project was a large-scale study on the role of EHS in reducing child abuse and neglect. Overall, results from this study show that EHS can effectively reduce child abuse and neglect. EHS led to positive short-term outcomes among participating families that, in turn, led to reduced chances of child welfare involvement later in the child's life.

Preschool Development Renewal Grant

In December 2019, the federal **Department of Health and Human Services** awarded a three-year, Preschool Development Birth Through Five Grant (PDG B-5) for \$34 million for January 2020 to December 2022. Early ECEAP is funded as one of the initiatives in that grant. Funded for three years, the model includes layering

Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) for these working day slots. Early ECEAP will serve 144 children and families as a pilot project, with 10 contractors in communities throughout the state.

PDG also includes strategies for enhancing coordination and referral systems, strengthening transitions, strengthening workforce supports for serving children with disabilities and children impacted by trauma, ensuring culturally and linguistically responsive services, and increasing overall access to early learning services. This is an exciting set of projects for the state, placing intense focus on how to serve children and families furthest from opportunity and supporting communities in building capacity in a way that enables them to effectively respond to the unique and diverse needs of children and families across the state.

Describing the Need

Planning for Early ECEAP began with the **initial PDG B-5 in 2018**. In that grant, the need was described as:

“Across Washington State, early learning opportunities are the most limited for infants and toddlers. Although our state offers high-quality licensed child care, home visiting from prenatal through age 3, early intervention services through ESIT, and federally-funded EHS programs, there is a serious shortage of high-quality early learning service options for this age population. Families have preferences about child care for their infants and toddlers, but they encounter major challenges meeting those needs across the state. Combined, home visiting and Early HS reach just 7% of the state’s eligible infants and toddlers. Investing in high-quality infant and early learning service options will be a top priority in Early Learning Plan (ELP).”

The **Prenatal-to-3 State Policy Roadmap** for Washington State (released Sept. 15, 2020), highlights “five state-level policies and six strategies (which) positively impact at least one of these PN-3 goals.” These are “the strongest evidence of effectiveness, to date.”

The chart below shows Washington State making substantial progress toward meeting one of six strategies: evidence-based home visiting. The Early ECEAP pilot is based on EHS and will fit into the EHS strategy, ensuring Washington State builds our early learning system inclusive of infants and toddlers in centers, not only home based.

1 out of 6

of effective **STRATEGIES** that Washington has made substantial progress toward implementing

STRATEGIES	Has Washington Made Substantial Progress Toward Implementing the Strategy?
Comprehensive Screening and Referral Programs	SOME PROGRESS
Child Care Subsidies	LITTLE TO NO PROGRESS
Group Prenatal Care	SOME PROGRESS
Evidence-Based Home Visiting Programs	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS
Early Head Start	LITTLE TO NO PROGRESS
Early Intervention Services	SOME PROGRESS

Who Early ECEAP Serves

DCYF ECEAP is currently in the process of building Early ECEAP into the ECEAP data management system, known as the Early Learning Management System (ELMS). Early ECEAP contractors are required to gather data and report it to DCYF throughout the pilot, and these pilot sites will soon have access to a data collection tool that will be used until the ELMS build is complete.

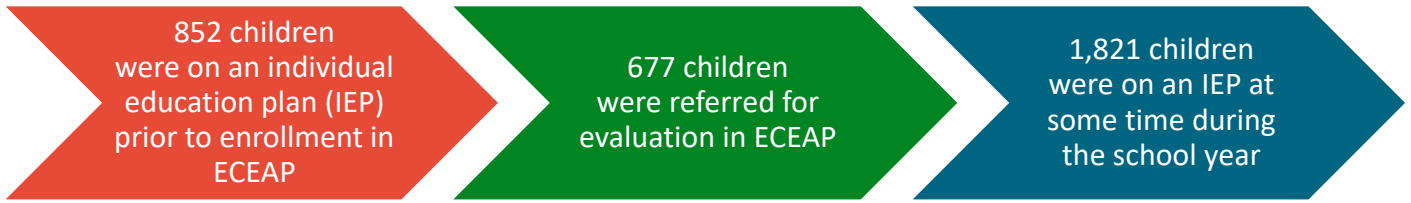
Although services are now live in communities, demographic data are not yet available for Early ECEAP children at the time of this report. However, we do know that many families with ECEAP children will also be able to access Early ECEAP and, therefore, we can draw some conclusions about who we will serve.

The **2018-2019 ECEAP Outcomes report** tells us that many of the ECEAP children and families receiving services experience delays or have exposure to multiple and severe traumatic events that can disrupt child development and formation of their sense of self. Examples include:

- 154 children who were expelled from other early learning settings due to behavior were welcomed into ECEAP
- 1,766 children with current or previous child protective service involvement
- 1,389 children who experienced homelessness
- 992 children in foster or kinship care
- 317 children who changed guardianship during the ECEAP year
- 796 children with an incarcerated parent
- 1,601 children with a household substance abuse issue

EARLY ECEAP PILOT PROJECT

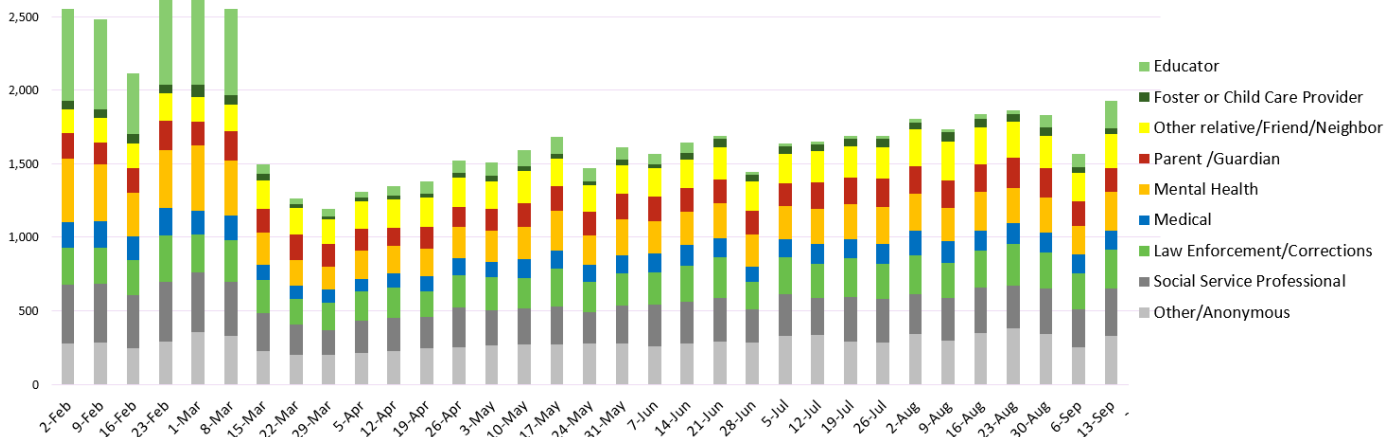
- 2,050 children in a household that experienced domestic violence



Prevention Services Needed Even More

In March 2020, many schools closed for in-person instruction due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, and on March 23, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee issued a statewide “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order. There was an almost immediate and substantial reduction in referrals to DCYF for child maltreatment – intakes decreased by 52% from the last week in February to the last week in March. Intakes from educators dropped the most (94%), but referrals from other referent types dropped as well, as families and children experienced increased isolation. The chart below illustrates this initial dip and slow rise since then. It is clear this pattern is following social distancing patterns in the state.

Change in Child Welfare Intake Pattern, by Referent Type and Week, Week of Feb. 2 – Week of Sept. 13, 2020



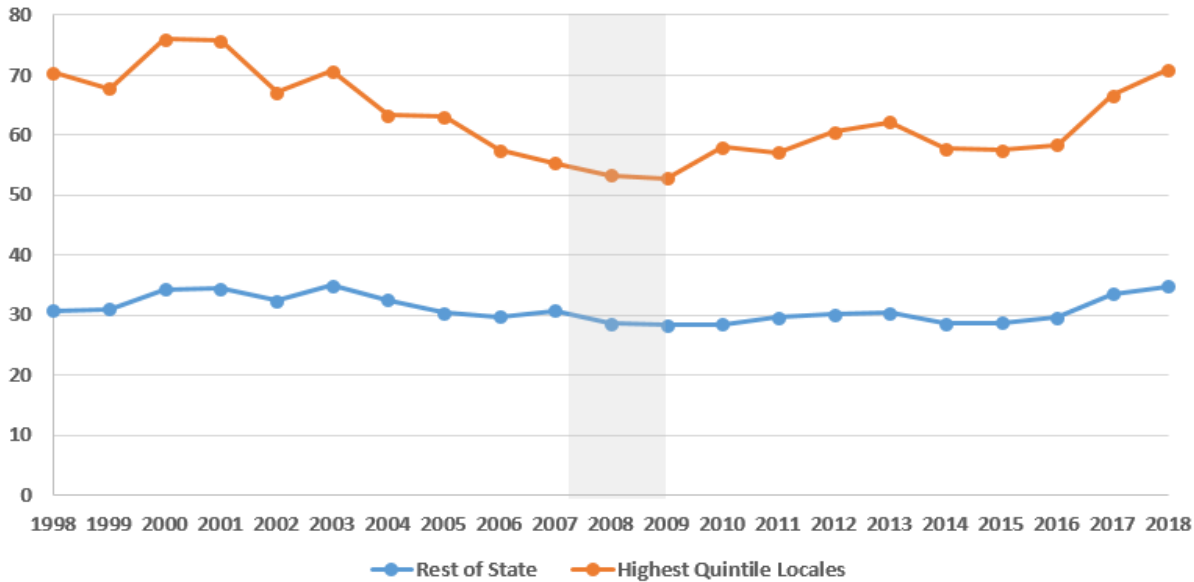
In addition to describing the trend, DCYF’s Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability (OIAA) reviewed additional research and trend data to try to understand what might be happening with the underlying trends in child maltreatment. While in normal times we would expect that increases in underlying rates of maltreatment to result in increases in intakes, social distancing has clearly disrupted the normal linkage between the two. At the same time, we know that families are under additional stress due to the public health emergency and the economic recession.

In reviewing research and data describing the impact of the Great Recession, as well as other disasters, on child maltreatment, it became clear to OIAA researchers that we should expect the underlying occurrence of child maltreatment is likely increasing for some groups of children, and may well stay elevated for some time. Based on this previous research, the two groups at greatest risk for experiencing increased maltreatment rates are those living in communities with the highest baseline rates of maltreatment and very young children across the state.

The trend chart below shows the historical rate of child maltreatment for two groups of local communities in Washington for the two decades from 1998 through 2008. Using data from the Department of Social and

Health Services Research and Data Analysis division’s (RDA) Community Risk and Protection Profiles,² OIAA researchers show here that while we see little change in the rate of child maltreatment for most of the state (the blue line), we see a rise in the rate of maltreatment in the 23 communities in the state with the baseline highest rates of maltreatment.³ This rise is observable starting in 2010, following the state’s devastating 2009 budget, and has continued since then.

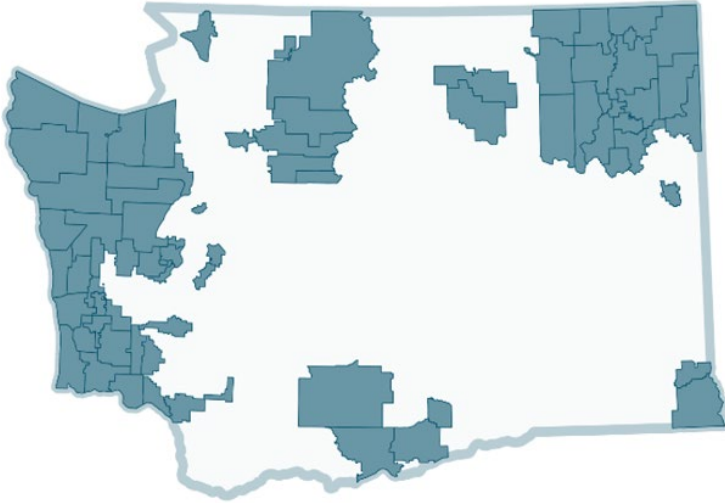
Rates of Child Maltreatment in Washington Locales, 1998-2018



The map below illustrates the location of the 23 locales with the highest baseline rates of child maltreatment in 2018. DCYF has identified these as communities in need of increased prevention services. While these 23 locales are home to just 17% of children in the state, they account for fully one-third of child maltreatment cases each year.

²OIAA researchers use RDA’s locale-level child maltreatment data. In more urban areas, a locale is a school district boundary. In more rural areas, RDA aggregates school districts to reach at least 20,000 residents. This aggregation helps to stabilize rates and provides the ability to examine trends over time. See more at: [RDA Community Risk and Protection Profiles](#).

³There are 115 locales in the state, these are the 23 locales in the highest quintile (or highest 20%) of rates. Note that membership in this highest quintile may change over time, so that the orange line in the chart does not represent the same locales over the 20-year series.

23 Locales with Highest Baseline Rates of Maltreatment, 2018

In addition to concerns about children in these 23 locales with the highest baseline rates of maltreatment, OIAA researchers found that following the last recession there was a disturbing and significant increase in severe abuse injuries among young children requiring hospitalization, even in Washington State. The research in six western Washington counties showed a 120% increase in the rate of abusive head trauma among children under age 5 during the months of the Great Recession.⁴ Although the numbers are small (4.8 per 100,000 children to 10.6 per 100,000 children), the type and severity of the injury can have devastating impacts on the future lives of the affected children. DCYF has monitoring systems in place to detect such increases if they occur, and the rates in these types of injuries do not appear to be increasing as of yet. However, reflecting on the patterns identified from the Great Recession in 2007-2009, there is a concern that childhood injuries could increase. These types of injuries speak to the need for support for families with young children who are especially vulnerable during severe economic downturns.

Early ECEAP is poised to be a steadying and supportive presence for our families who are experiencing isolation, the impacts of complex trauma, and the impacts of decreased services and supports. This programming is a key strategy in supporting families furthest from opportunity with children birth to 3 during the economic recovery that we now face. Program staff build relationships centered on a shared knowledge and deep care for children. Using a strengths-based approach, staff become a trusted resource and coach, who meet families where they are and build valued partnerships that result in new coping skills and strategies for life. Parents become part of programs through partnership building and this community-based approach. This results in new tools and skills for families who share that they use well beyond their child's early learning programming. As the Child Trends research study shows, participation in this programming determined that children's risk for abuse and neglect decreased later in life through participation in EHS services.

This programming also:

- Reduces levels of family conflict and parenting-related stress
- Supports emotionally warm, engaged, and responsive parenting practices
- Promotes child cognitive development and self-regulation skills

⁴Wood, J.N., French, B., Fromkin, J., Fakeye, O., Scribano, P.V., Letson, M.M., Makoroff, K.L., Feldman, K.W., Fabio, A. and Berger, R., 2016. Association of pediatric abusive head trauma rates with macroeconomic indicators. *Academic pediatrics*, 16(3), pp.224-232

Early ECEAP Coordination with Other Key Birth to Three Services

An array of programs and services exist to support the developmental needs and well-being of infants and toddlers and their families in Washington. While Early ECEAP is a comprehensive model that supports high-quality and responsive care environments, family support services, and health coordination for eligible families, the program relies on and coordinates with multiple community partners to ensure children and families are getting a range of needs met. Of significance are the partnerships that Early ECEAP has with early intervention programs including, Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT), the state's ECLIPSE program, child care and home providers, and EHS described below.

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT)

<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-development-supports/esit>

Early intervention services are designed to enable children birth to 3 with developmental delays or disabilities to be active and successful during the early childhood years and in the future in a variety of settings – in their homes, in child care, in preschool or school programs, and in their communities. Early ECEAP and EHS contractors have strong ties to local ESIT providers, enabling them to refer families based on developmental assessments and other observations. If a child is diagnosed with a disability, services can occur both in the home or the Early ECEAP centers. This is another space for family partnership and learning between staff and families. The goal is to individualize for each child.

Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Services (ECLIPSE)

<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-dev-support-providers/eclipse>

The ECLIPSE program aims to address the wide range needs of children and families impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) by offering comprehensive and coordinated care through monthly home visits with families and daily therapeutic care with an emphasis on social-emotional learning for children ages birth through 5 in developmentally age appropriate infant, toddler, and preschool environments. There are two current providers of these services in Washington State, they will both be Early ECEAP contractors using this important service to benefit children ages birth to 3.

Child Care and Family Home Providers

Early ECEAP is targeted to meet the needs of low-income working families who need access to high-quality child care as well as the comprehensive services Early ECEAP provides. Early ECEAP services are braided with child care to meet the needs of these families by providing a 10-hour per day model. In the pilot projects, Early ECEAP providers either provide care for up to 10 hours per day through their own licensed child care centers, or they partner with child care centers who provide the educational component of the program. In the future, Early ECEAP would like to also build partnerships with Family Home Providers. Through these partnerships, continuity for the children is assured as they are able to remain in one center or family home for the full day rather than having to transition to a different setting for part of the day. This also reduces transportation costs and stress for the families.

Early Head Start (EHS)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/programs/article/early-head-start-programs>

EHS programs are tailored for the unique needs of infants and toddlers under the age of 3 and pregnant women. EHS programs promote the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of infants and toddlers through safe and developmentally enriching caregiving. EHS programs are designed to promote the development of the children and to enable their parents to fulfill their roles as parents and to move toward

self-sufficiency. Programs assist families in meeting their own personal goals and achieving self-sufficiency across a wide variety of domains, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security. EHS programs also mobilize the local community to provide the resources and environment necessary to ensure a comprehensive, integrated array of services and support for children and families.

Year One: Activities

In March and April 2019, DCYF staff recruited members for the Early ECEAP Design Team. The team included a diverse membership of key community partners, parents, legislators, representative of the Governor's Office, and Region X Office of Head Start and Region X Office of Child Care. In total, there were 32 members, including Senator Claire Wilson, sponsor of SB 5437 which established Early ECEAP pilot program in statute, and Representative Tana Senn, 41st Legislative District.

The roles and responsibilities of the team were to advise and shape the pilot model, including development of performance standards, refining income and eligibility guidelines, and assisting with selection of pilot sites.

Planning Activities

- **March-April 30, 2019:** Recruited members for Early ECEAP Design Team
- **April 15-30, 2019:** Developed orientation for members of Early ECEAP Design Team
- **May 9, 2019:** Orientation for members of Early ECEAP Design Team
- **May 30, 2019:** Make-up orientation for members of Early ECEAP Design Team
- **May 14, June 11, July 11 & 30, Aug. 20, Sept. 25, Oct. 25, 2019:** Meetings with Early ECEAP Design Team
- **Oct. 18 – Nov. 11, 2019:** Early ECEAP RFA
- **Oct. 22-23, 2019:** Webinars/Application Conferences
- **Oct. 25 & 30, Nov. 7, 2019:** Questions and Answers (Q&A) published
- **Nov. 14-20, 2019:** RFA Review Period by Subgroup
- **Dec. 12, 2019:** Early ECEAP Review – Site Selection
- **Jan. 6, 2020:** Award Letters, 10 Pilot sites
- **Feb. 12-13, 2020:** Early ECEAP readiness training for pilot sites

Early ECEAP Performance Standards for 2020-2021

While the Design Team was active in 2019, a majority of the meetings focused on reviewing and deciding what the final draft of the Early ECEAP performance standards would include.

The guidance received from the legislation was as follows: “department shall consider early head start rules and regulations when developing the provider and family eligibility requirements and program requirements.”

While the standards are based directly from EHS, there are some accommodations designed to configure these with the ECEAP structure and state law requirements as part of the aligned early care system. These accommodations include aligning standards with Child Care Licensing, Early Achievers, and ECEAP. The overall direction from the Early ECEAP Design Team was to value the local flexibility of EHS, which make up the bulk of the standards, with the option to use the simplified language of ECEAP.

One of the main Early ECEAP model pilot implementation strategies will be a structured review and possible revision of these standards. Early ECEAP staff will work with contractors throughout the year, learning how these standards meet the needs of the children and families, DCYF, and programs, with a formal process in

early 2021 to revise standards as needed. This is a feature of the ECEAP infrastructure, made particularly important in this first two years of implementing this pilot project.

Some highlights of the Early ECEAP standards are:

- **Policy Council, Community Assessment, and Self-Assessment** – each of these management systems exists in both standards, the Early ECEAP Design Team chose the simpler language of ECEAP, which makes for less complicated implementation.
- **Family Partnership Approach and Partnership Process** are directly from EHS. Early ECEAP added Mobility Mentoring® as a key piece of the Family Partnership Agreement Process, adding a more specific parent engagement tool to the standards. Because this tool is also used in ECEAP, it allows for the potential to collect data with families for up to five years.
- **Curriculum and Assessment** both mirror EHS standards, allowing programs to choose research-based tools that meet their local needs.
- **Staff Qualifications** and competencies requirements mirror the EHS standards and include the ECEAP standard that allows for professional development plans if programs have a difficult time finding qualified staff.
- **Eligibility Requirements** match the EHS standards and include even higher income levels for children with risk factors, allowing for Washington State Child Care Subsidy.
- **The Adult to Child Ratio** (1:4) is taken directly from EHS standards.
- **Transition Planning** into preschool is taken directly from EHS with an emphasis on family partnerships. ECEAP standards now allow the transitioning of a child from Early ECEAP into ECEAP as a child turns 3. This mirrors transitions from EHS to Head Start.

Selecting 10 Pilot Program Contractors

In fall 2019, the Early ECEAP Design Team helped to create the request for applications (RFA) and structure to recruit and select ten pilot program contractors. The criteria included a minimum Early Achievers rating of 3 and prioritization for underserved communities, including tribal programs with outreach with the Indian Policy Early Learning (IPEL) committee.

Of the 17 received applications, DCYF selected 10 contractors and notified them in January 2020. One tribal program was selected and later declined to contract in June 2020 due to an internal assessment deeming a lack of space and capacity. In September 2020, the tenth contractor was selected and their contract was executed.

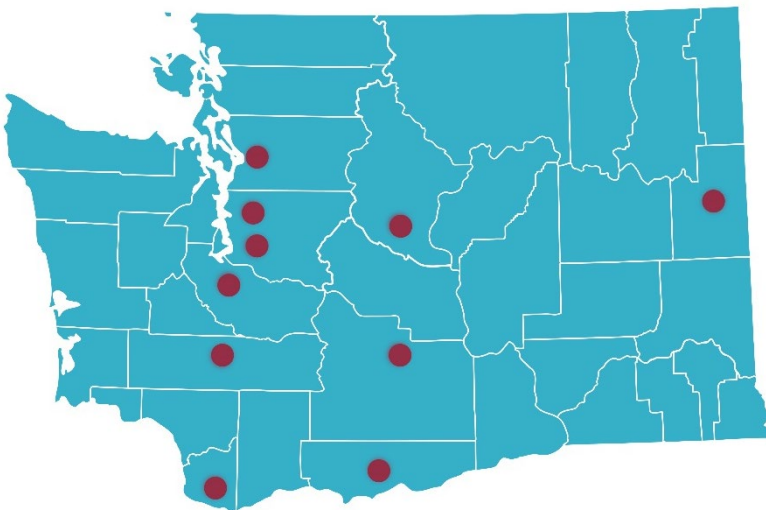
Early ECEAP Pilot Contractors

Program Name and Brief Description	# of Slots
<p><u>Catholic Charities Diocese of Yakima</u>, Yakima, WA 98908 “Catholic Charities serving Central Washington provides help and creates hope for thousands of people each year regardless of religious, social, or economic backgrounds. The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program provides a comprehensive pre-kindergarten program that integrates education, family support, and health services. Serving low-income children and families, the program fosters development of the whole child.”</p>	40
<p><u>Centralia College</u>, Early Learning Programs, Centralia, WA 98531 “At Centralia College, learning is lifelong pursuit and our educational offerings extend to even the youngest in our community. From the campus childcare center to preschool programs and parenting classes, children are a top priority.”</p>	9
<p><u>Chelan Douglas Child Services Association</u>, Wenatchee, WA 98807 “As children leave CDCSA they will have the social competence, skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life; demonstrated through developmentally appropriate progression on meeting goals in social and emotional development, language development, literacy knowledge and skills, approaches to learning, cognition and general knowledge, physical well-being and motor development. As parents leave CDCSA they will have the knowledge and understanding that they are their child’s first and most important teacher and advocate, and knowledge and skills to make a difference in the life and learning of their child.”</p>	10
<p><u>Childhaven</u>, 1345 22nd St NE, Auburn, WA 98002 “At Childhaven, we believe in healing through connection. Our skilled early learning staff provide high-quality care to young children in a classroom environment. Teams work collaboratively with families to promote developmental progress. We honor and support each family's needs and voice, learning how best to support your child and family to meet desired goals.”</p>	9
<p><u>Community Colleges of Spokane</u>, Spokane, WA 99210 “Our centers provide eligible children with services that start before they are born with support for pregnant women so that they remain healthy and are prepared for the joys and challenges of parenthood.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcontractor: Spokane Child Development Center, Spokane, WA 99216 We believe that the home environment is the primary source of growth, formation, and education of its members. The Center is an extension of, as well as a resource for this primary unit, the family. • Subcontractor: Salish School, Spokane, WA 99205 “The Salish School of Spokane is a grassroots, non-profit organization working to preserve and revitalize Southern interior Salish languages, the first languages of the Spokane region.” Early Learning programming includes Infant/Toddler services in the Language Nest and ECEAP Preschool services. 	12

EARLY ECEAP PILOT PROJECT

<p><u>Educational Service District (ESD) 112</u>, Vancouver, WA 98661 “ESD 112 Early Care and Education promotes school readiness efforts through individualized services that benefit children. We assist families, child care providers and community partners in providing quality early learning programs and professional development opportunities throughout the ESD 112 region.”</p>	<p>16</p>
<p><u>Everett Community College</u> – Early Learning Center, Everett, WA 98201 “The staff at the Early Learning Center believes that children learn best in a respectful, supportive and nurturing environment where they are encouraged by caring adults who observe and learn beside them. We believe that children should be given time and appropriate materials to engage in hands-on exploration, problem-solving, and experimenting. Knowing each child is unique, teachers create custom lesson plans and classroom environments to nurture the child’s creativity. With our small group sizes and low child-to-teacher ratios, children experience the joy of learning in an environment that fosters self-esteem and individuality.”</p>	<p>18</p>
<p><u>Mid-Columbia Children’s Council</u>, Goldendale, WA 98620 “Educating children and families with innovative, high-quality early childhood learning opportunities and family partnerships to build better communities, one person at a time.”</p>	<p>8</p>
<p><u>Multicultural Child and Family Hope Center</u>, Tacoma, WA 98405 “Our mission is to provide culturally relevant support services to children and families through daycare, ECEAP, and DSHS contracted services. A positive relationship between teacher and student is an important factor in the social, emotional and academic development of a child. Our center strives to ensure this balance.”</p>	<p>12</p>
<p><u>Wellspring Family Services</u>, Seattle, WA 98144 “Since 1988, Wellspring’s Early Learning Center has provided thousands of children with loving care, nutritious meals, a chance to learn, and help to prepare them for kindergarten and beyond. Our Early Learning Center (ELC) is a licensed child care program accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).”</p>	<p>10</p>

Locations of Contractors Participating in Year One



Implementation Timeline

May 2020 – September 2020

- **May 2020:** Hired Early ECEAP Manager
- **May/June 2020:** Contractors approved for startup and readiness activities
- **May/June 2020:** Transition DCYF Administration of Early ECEAP from the Head Start Collaboration Office unit to the ECEAP unit
- **June 2020:** Hired new Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) ECEAP staff
- **June 2020:** Conducted introductions calls with 10 pilot contractors
- **July 2020:** Programs Start Date (with flexibility due to pandemic)
- **August 2020:** Hired Infant/Toddler ECEAP Specialist
- **August 2020:** Monthly CQI call with each Early ECEAP contractor begins
- **September 2020:** Monthly Early ECEAP directors calls begin to create a learning community with the Early ECEAP Manager and the ECEAP Administrator

Brief Update from Programs

At the writing of this report, all of the 10 Early ECEAP contractors, except for one, are open and providing Early ECEAP services to infants and toddlers and their families. The final Early ECEAP contractor was the last to receive a contract from DCYF in August and will begin services in October/November 2020.

Each contractor has a unique set of conditions to meet given the pandemic and the differing and changing guidelines from public health. Even though in-person services are happening now, contractors continue to plan for contingencies, including possibly closing centers if required. In the event of closing, programs have developed non-traditional services plans to continue to support families who may be experiencing more acute trauma during this pandemic.

Each of the contractors received start-up funding which they used to set up the infant and toddler classrooms, purchase classroom equipment and materials, and hire and train staff.

The contractors have been building relationships with families, learning with families about their child's development, providing screenings and initial assessments, ensuring the basic needs of the children and families are being addressed, connecting children with health services, providing nutritious meals, training staff, and building infrastructure.

EARLY ECEAP COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

Education – Infant/toddler classes with a comprehensive research-based curriculum, developmental screening, ongoing assessment of development, and individualized planning to support kindergarten readiness.

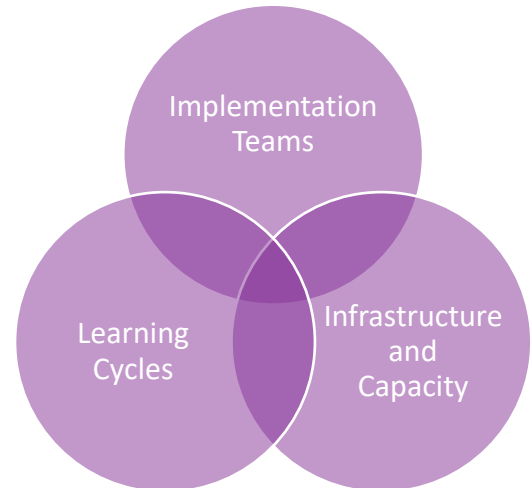
Family Support – Individualized approach to enhance family resilience, stability and financial security using the **Mobility Mentoring®** approach.

Health – Ensuring each child is up-to-date with preventative care and screening, receiving nutritious meals, and referred for mental health services if indicated.

What's Next?

Utilizing some thinking and tools from **Implementation Science**, we are guided to continue to build our teams and systems by learning as we go.

In ECEAP, we are building the teams that will continue to support contractors as they implement this model and to build the Early ECEAP infrastructure. This includes building out our IT systems to include Early ECEAP. Relationships and enhanced protocols will be established and fine-tuned with programs to ensure shared learning with and from each other, making adjustments as needed and making time to routinely pause and reflect.



Key Features of What's Next

- Complete hiring of essential IT staff for ELMS to build Early ECEAP into our larger ECEAP reporting system, which will allow data to be collected with families for up to five years.
- Finalize the development of an interim online reporting tool until ELMS components are built. This will allow Early ECEAP staff to collect and analyze data during the time prior to ELMS being ready for use.
- Begin quarterly desktop monitoring and reporting with interim online reporting tool.
- Continue monthly Early ECEAP director calls to provide a learning community and additional forum to collect data throughout the pilot.
- Ensure full enrollment and robust programming through solid infrastructure development.
- Collaborate with Teaching Strategies to improve the current infant/toddler assessment tool matching the needs of all infant/toddler providers in our state. This includes working with Teaching Strategies to ensure that the tool is used without bias and that staff have the tool and support needed to assess children from a place of cultural competency and in partnership with families.
- Continuing monthly Early ECEAP contractor calls to create feedback, monitoring, planning, and programming adjustment loops with a goal of improved services for children and families.
- Continuous incubation and testing of key programming features and then incorporation of identified best practices into Early ECEAP programming moving forward.
- Learning through the implementation of the Early ECEAP Mobility Mentoring® pilot.
- Ongoing review and adjustment of performance standards (February – May 2021).
- Identify training needs from the field and find resources for or provide needed training.
- Create online resources related to Early ECEAP that meet the needs of Early ECEAP contractors
- Evaluation of Early ECEAP programming by DCYF OIAA evaluators.