



ALLIANCE FOR KIDS ANNUAL REPORT

FY2025–26

Welcome



We invite you to view the FY24-25 Annual Report of the Alliance for Kids (AFK), El Paso County's Early Childhood Council. Joint Initiatives houses the Council under its Foundations program.

Colorado legislation defines "Early Childhood Council" as a council established locally in communities throughout the state . . . that represents public and private stakeholders for the purpose of developing and ultimately implementing a comprehensive system of early childhood services for children in the community to ensure school readiness. "Early Childhood Council membership" are the members of a voting body of an Early Childhood Council with governing authority over all of the council's duties enumerated (7.717.1). Below you will find the Vision, Mission, and Scope of Alliance for Kids, followed AFK's report of the progress based on the Strategic Plan aligned to its accountability metrics (7.717.5).

The 2025–2026 Fiscal Year marked the first year of implementing our 2025–2030 Strategic Plan. Throughout the year, Alliance for Kids and Joint Initiatives continued working alongside families, early childhood professionals, community partners, and local leaders to strengthen the systems that support young children in El Paso County.

As the needs of our community continue to evolve, so does our work. **This year, we focused on expanding access to high-quality early childhood education, strengthening supports for families, investing in the early childhood workforce, and building stronger partnerships that create lasting change.** While each program has its own goals and outcomes, together they contribute to a shared vision of ensuring every child has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive.

The accomplishments highlighted in this report reflect the collective efforts of our staff, partners, providers, and community members. They also represent the first steps toward the long-term goals outlined in our new strategic plan. We are grateful for the **collaboration, innovation, and shared commitment** that continue to move this work forward and look forward to building on this momentum in the years ahead.



VISION, MISSION, AND SCOPE OF ALLIANCE FOR KIDS

Bylaws Section 2.1: Vision

The Alliance for Kids is dedicated to making El Paso County the best place to raise a child.

Bylaws Section 2.2: Mission

The Alliance for Kids serves as a vehicle, bringing together agencies and individuals to work collaboratively on a high quality early childhood system for young children and their families in El Paso County.

In partnership with families, this early childhood system encompasses children prenatal to eight years and includes the domains as outlined in the Early Childhood Colorado Framework.

Bylaws Section 2.3: Scope

The scope and role of the Alliance is to serve as the Early Childhood Council in El Paso County and includes, at a minimum community-wide strategic planning and financing of the early childhood system; implementation of new and review of ongoing programs/projects; and soliciting and overseeing funding.





**Strengthen families
by providing parents
with essential
support.**

Strong families are the foundation of healthy child development and school readiness. Throughout the 2025–2026 fiscal year, Joint Initiatives (JI) remained committed to helping families access the information, resources, and guidance they needed to make informed decisions and navigate the early childhood system with confidence. Through community outreach, personalized resource navigation, and direct engagement opportunities, families were connected to services, relationships, and learning experiences that strengthened their ability to support their children's growth and development.



CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES

Connecting with families where they live, work, and gather remained an important strategy for strengthening families throughout El Paso County. During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, JI participated in **24 family-focused community outreach events**, **engaging 2,431 families** and reaching **2,716 attendees**. These events created opportunities to build relationships with families, answer questions, and increase awareness of the programs and services available to support young children and their caregivers.

Throughout the year, families received information on a wide range of topics, including the **importance of the early years, healthy child development, trauma-informed care, equity, developmental screenings, early intervention, Child Find, home visiting, parenting classes, and other community resources.** Staff distributed **1,535** educational materials focused on healthy families and child development, **2,392** developmental screening and early intervention resources, **168** home visiting and parenting resources, and **418** communications promoting the importance of healthy families. Providing these resources in trusted community settings helped families better understand available services, recognize opportunities for early intervention, and connect with supports that promote healthy child development and long-term success.

Accessing early childhood programs and community resources can be complex for families, particularly as they navigate multiple services and eligibility requirements. Throughout the year, Joint Initiatives continued to provide **personalized resource navigation**, helping families connect with the information, services, and guidance they needed to make informed decisions and access resources that reflected their unique circumstances.



**24 FAMILY-FOCUSED
COMMUNITY
OUTREACH EVENTS**



**ENGAGING
2,431 FAMILIES
AT EVENTS
(2,716
ATTENDEES)**



- **HEALTHY FAMILIES + CHILD DEVELOPMENT**
- **DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING + EARLY INTERVENTION**
- **HOME VISITING + PARENTING RESOURCES**
- **HEALTHY FAMILIES**



FAMILY RESOURCE NAVIGATION

The Family Resource Navigation team responded to **2,313 calls and inquiries** from families, providing individualized assistance across a broad range of needs. While **Universal Preschool** continued to generate the highest volume of requests, families also sought assistance with:

- **childcare navigation**
- **Child Care Aware**
- **Child Find**
- **military family resources**
- **language supports**
- **parenting resources**
- **referrals to both Joint Initiatives staff and community partners**

By helping families better understand available options and navigate community resources, the team reduced barriers to accessing services and connected families with supports that promote children's learning, development, and well-being.

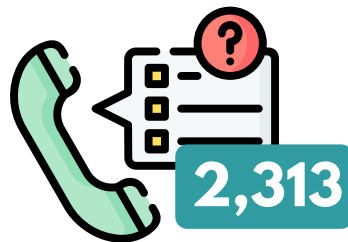


FAMILY, FRIEND + NEIGHBOR CARE

In addition to helping families access resources, **Joint Initiatives provided direct opportunities for families and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers to strengthen early learning through shared experiences and individualized support.** During the final six months of the Colorado Health Foundation grant, playgroups and home visits equipped caregivers with practical strategies to support children's development while fostering connections with other families and community resources.

During the grant period, JI hosted **10 playgroups, engaging 46 unduplicated children, 29 unduplicated adults, and 12 Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers.** Playgroups incorporated music, movement, early literacy, and outdoor exploration, and were held in community settings, including Nancy Lewis Park and the East Library, making participation accessible and creating opportunities for caregivers and children to learn, play, and build relationships together.

Strengthen families by providing parents with essential support.



2,313 CALLS + INQUIRIES FROM FAMILIES

787 787 CALLS + INQUIRIES FROM ECE PROVIDERS

Supporting families also means supporting the providers they rely on every day. **Throughout the year, the Family Resource Navigation team responded to 787 calls and inquiries from early childhood providers, offering guidance on:**

- **Universal Preschool**
- **CCCAP**
- **Child Care Aware**
- **language supports**
- **connections to additional Joint Initiatives resources.**

Ensuring providers had timely information and access to support strengthened their ability to assist families, navigate changing program requirements, and connect children with high-quality early childhood services.

THRIVING FAMILIES



GOAL 1

Strengthen families
by providing parents
with essential
support.



10 PLAYGROUPS

- 46 CHILDREN
- 29 ADULTS
- 12 FFNS

10



15 HOME VISITS
WITH 8
CAREGIVERS

15

To extend support beyond the playgroups, **staff engaged 72 Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers** and conducted **15 home visits with eight caregivers**. These individualized visits provided coaching, early learning resources, and encouragement tailored to each caregiver's needs, reinforcing positive interactions and everyday practices that support children's healthy development. Home visits concluded in December with the completion of the grant-funded program.

THRIVING FAMILIES



GOAL 2

Increase families'
access to resources
and information to
support them in
successfully
parenting their
children.

Throughout the year, **Joint Initiatives continued expanding access to Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) and preventive health initiatives**, helping families better understand their children's developmental and social-emotional needs while connecting them with the resources and guidance needed to support their children's success.



EMBEDDED ECMH CONSULTATION SERVICES

Through both community consultation and the embedded consultation model, **ECMH consultants provided 1,423.5 hours of consultation, impacting 312 children across El Paso County**. The **embedded consultation model provided ongoing support in three early childhood programs and 12 classrooms**, allowing consultants to build strong relationships with children, families, and educators over time. Community-based consultation expanded access to these services across additional early childhood programs, giving more families and providers the opportunity to receive individualized support. By working alongside families and educators, consultants helped identify concerns early, strengthen children's social-emotional development, and connect caregivers with practical strategies that could be used both at home and in the classroom.



1,423.5

HOURS OF CONSULTATION SERVICES
IMPACTING UP TO 312 CHILDREN



12

12 CLASSROOMS WITH
EMBEDDED ECMH

THRIVING FAMILIES



GOAL 2

Increase families' access to resources and information to support them in successfully parenting their children.



EARLY INTERVENTION SUPPORTS

Early intervention remained at the heart of this work. **Consultants partnered closely with families and educators to support 11 children identified as at risk of expulsion**, developing individualized plans that focused on each child's strengths while building the confidence of the adults supporting them. For one family, that partnership helped identify concerns and pursue further evaluation, resulting in a sensory processing disorder diagnosis and a successful transition to a family childcare home where the child has since thrived. The ECMH team also participated in two kindergarten readiness events and two community outreach events, providing families with information, resources, and strategies to help support a successful transition into school.



**SUPPORTED
11 CHILDREN
IDENTIFIED AS AT
RISK OF EXPULSION**



PREVENTATIVE ORAL HEALTH

Joint Initiatives also continued **expanding access to preventive oral health services** through the final six months of the Delta Dental Foundation grant. In partnership with Child Care Health Consultants and early childhood providers, **32 early childhood sites participated in the initiative, resulting in 448 children receiving oral health screenings and 40 classrooms implementing daily toothbrushing routines.** These efforts helped identify oral health concerns early, connected families with follow-up care when needed, and gave children healthy habits they can carry with them long after the grant concluded.



**448 ORAL
HEALTH
SCREENINGS**

THRIVING CHILDREN



GOAL 3

Increase access to a coordinated mixed-delivery model of affordable quality early childhood education. Increase families' access to resources and information to support them in successfully parenting their children.

Joint Initiatives worked alongside early childhood providers to strengthen program quality, respond to emerging challenges, and expand access to early learning opportunities. Through coaching, technical assistance, quality improvement supports, and systems-level advocacy, providers were better equipped to meet the needs of children and families while creating learning environments where children can thrive.



Increase access to a coordinated mixed-delivery model of affordable quality early childhood education. Increase families' access to resources and information to support them in successfully parenting their children.

Joint Initiatives worked alongside early childhood providers to **strengthen program quality, respond to emerging challenges, and expand access to early learning opportunities.** Through coaching, technical assistance, quality improvement supports, and systems-level advocacy, providers were better equipped to meet the needs of children and families while creating learning environments where children can thrive.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO EARLY LEARNING



Joint Initiatives provided **210 hours** of individualized technical assistance to **227 providers**, helping them **navigate licensing requirements, Colorado Shines, quality improvement, and program development.** Technical assistance was tailored to each provider's unique needs and included guidance on licensing, quality improvement planning, business development, and connecting providers with available resources. Staff also **supported the opening of 13 new licensed providers, including eight childcare centers and five family childcare homes, while working alongside 14 prospective providers** as they prepared to open new early childhood programs. These efforts expanded the availability of licensed childcare programs while building a strong pipeline of future providers.



**SUPPORTED OPENING OF 13
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**



**210 TOTAL TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE HOURS**



**227 PROVIDERS
RECEIVING SUPPORT**



RESPONSE TO CCCAP CHALLENGES

The year also brought significant challenges for providers as El Paso County implemented a CCCAP waitlist following the statewide enrollment freeze. Many providers became increasingly hesitant to rely on CCCAP as part of their business model due to uncertainty around enrollment and reimbursement. Joint Initiatives responded by providing individualized guidance, helping providers understand policy changes, explore strategies to strengthen and sustain their programs, and navigate an evolving early childhood landscape.



ORDINANCE UPDATED!

Recognizing that increasing child care capacity also requires removing barriers, **Joint Initiatives' President and CEO led the organization's work to advance the Colorado Springs Childcare Ordinance Update.**

Its passage created more opportunities for child care programs to open and operate throughout the city, laying the groundwork for expanded access to care over time.



Increase access to a coordinated mixed-delivery model of affordable quality early childhood education. Increase families' access to resources and information to support them in successfully parenting their children.



EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY INITIATIVES

Quality improvement remained a central focus of this work. Through Colorado Shines Quality Improvement (CSQI), Joint Initiatives **contracted with 43 early childhood programs, provided 448 coaching hours, and supported continuous quality improvement across 189 classrooms.** Through individualized coaching relationships, providers identified strengths, developed action plans, and implemented meaningful changes that strengthened children's daily care and learning experiences.



CONTRACTED TO SUPPORT 43 ECE PROGRAMS (189 CLASSROOMS)



448 TOTAL COACHING ASSISTANCE HOURS

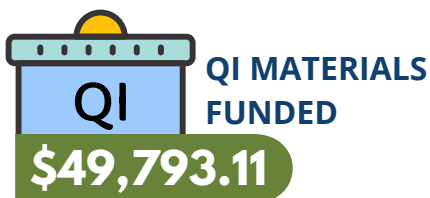
Across El Paso County, **79 programs advanced or actively worked toward higher Colorado Shines ratings during the year.** This included **29 programs that advanced from Level 1 to Level 2, 26 that achieved a Level 3–5 quality rating, and 24 that were actively preparing for their next rating.** The state subsequently paused Colorado Shines rating assessments because of funding limitations and to allow time for a broader review of the quality assessment process. Although this delayed rating opportunities for programs ready to advance, providers continued working with coaches on their quality-improvement goals. Their continued participation reflects a commitment to strengthening program quality and improving early learning experiences, even during a period of uncertainty and transition at the state level.



29 PROGRAMS MOVE FROM LEVEL 1 TO LEVEL 2



26 PROGRAMS ACHIEVE HIGH QUALITY LEVEL 3–5 RATING



In addition to coaching and technical assistance, **Joint Initiatives invested \$49,793.11 in quality improvement materials, conducted 29 classroom observations, and connected providers with professional development opportunities** that strengthened teaching practices and classroom environments. Together, these efforts helped providers strengthen their programs, build on their successes, and create enriching learning environments where children can thrive.



To help address one of the community's greatest needs—**increasing access to infant and toddler care**—Joint Initiatives also supported providers through the **Emerging + Expanding (E+E) initiative. Four early childhood programs received targeted coaching and \$94,508 in funding to expand infant and toddler capacity,** helping providers strengthen their programs while increasing access to care for the community's youngest children.

Facilitate the implementation of Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) and promote UPK and early childhood education to the business community.



UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL (UPK)

Joint Initiatives continued serving as El Paso County's Local Coordinating Organization for Colorado Universal Preschool, helping families access early learning opportunities while supporting providers through enrollment, program participation, and changes within the statewide system. **During the 2025-2026 program year, 5,244 El Paso County children enrolled in UPK,** giving more children access to learning experiences that support healthy development and prepare them for kindergarten.

A total of **232 early childhood programs** participated throughout the year, creating a mixed-delivery system that offered families choices across different settings and communities. Participating programs included **73 school district-based sites across all 15 El Paso County school districts, 103 childcare centers, and 56 family childcare homes.** This diverse network allowed families to select care that more closely aligned with their children's needs, location, schedule, and preferred learning environment while strengthening connections across the county's early childhood system.



232 PROGRAMS

73 SCHOOL DISTRICT SITES

103 CENTER-BASED SITES

56 FAMILY CHILD CARE SITES



**5,244 CHILDREN
ENROLLED IN UPK**



ENSURING ACCESS FOR FAMILIES

Through **individualized assistance, consistent provider communication, and coordination with state and local partners,** Joint Initiatives helped families move through the enrollment process with greater clarity and supported providers in maintaining their participation. Together, these efforts strengthened the local mixed-delivery system and helped **ensure that thousands of El Paso County children could access preschool in the settings that best met their families' needs.**



SUPPORTING FAMILIES + PROVIDERS

Joint Initiatives' UPK team also served as a central source of support for families and providers navigating a complex and evolving program. Throughout the year, the **team handled 4,427 unique issues related to applications, enrollment, placements, provider participation, and other program needs. With a 96.1% resolution rate,** the team helped reduce barriers that could otherwise delay a child's enrollment or prevent a provider from successfully participating in UPK.



**UNIQUE UPK ISSUES
SUPPORTED BY TEAM**

4,427



RESOLUTION RATE



Facilitate the implementation of Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) and promote UPK and early childhood education to the business community.



FAMILY FRIENDLY INITIATIVE

While UPK implementation remained a major focus, Joint Initiatives also worked through the Family Friendly Initiative to engage businesses and community partners in addressing broader childcare challenges. **Through collaboration, public awareness, and systems-building efforts, FFI partners advanced solutions focused on childcare access, workforce stability, and the long-term sustainability of the early childhood system.** Over the past year, the number of licensed childcare spots in El Paso County increased from approximately 17,500 to 18,800, **creating 1,300 additional opportunities for children to access care.**



1300 CHILDCARE SLOTS FOR FAMILIES CREATED



UCCS CHILDCARE BOOTCAMP LAUNCHES

Several efforts focused on strengthening the workforce and helping new providers enter the field. **UCCS launched a Child Care Center Boot Camp to guide prospective providers through the process of opening a program.** Joint Initiatives also became licensed as a community Substitute Placement Agency, creating a new resource to help programs address staffing gaps that can affect classroom operations and available childcare capacity.



Recognizing that childcare access is also shaped by the spaces available to providers, **FFI convened architects, builders, and developers from the built-environment community to explore facility-based childcare solutions.** The next phase of this work will include gathering input from families and developing tools to help inform the design of childcare spaces that better reflect community needs.



FFI also began designing surveys to better understand how childcare affects local employers and working families. With funding from Gary Community Ventures, the Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC will carry this work forward by gathering employer perspectives and strengthening business involvement in developing local childcare solutions. This partnership creates an opportunity to better connect the needs of families, employers, and the early childhood system.



Joint Initiatives also expanded public awareness of early childhood education through a coordinated paid media and social media campaign. **The campaign included 107 30-second television spots on KRDO, generating more than 300,000 television impressions.** Digital banner advertising through the **Gazette** received 49,010 views, while social media content generated 203,077 views and 3,504 engagements.



Together, these efforts **increased the visibility of early childhood education** across El Paso County and helped bring greater attention to the **importance of childcare, the early childhood workforce, and the role early learning plays** in supporting children, families, and the broader community.



Support recruitment, qualification, and retention of professionals within the Early Childhood Education field.



SUPPORTING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

Joint Initiatives worked to strengthen the early childhood workforce by **introducing new professionals to the field, helping educators advance their education and careers, and providing training and individualized support** that encouraged professionals to remain in early childhood education. Together, these recruitment and retention **efforts reached 1,094 individuals.**



1,094 INDIVIDUALS REACHED W/ RETENTION + RECRUITMENT EFFORTS



27 CAREER DAYS + CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS

The workforce team participated in **12 middle and high school career days and classroom presentations**, introducing students to early childhood careers and connecting interested students with potential summer employment opportunities. The team also completed more than **15 classroom presentations at Pikes Peak State College**, resulting in more than **10 new recruits** and helping students connect with free training, career guidance, employment opportunities, and community resources. These efforts helped participants move from education into employment, secure practicum placements and early childhood positions, and advance from entry-level roles into lead teacher positions.



ADVANCING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS PROGRAM

During the fiscal year, **117 individuals participated in the Advancing Early Childhood Educators Program** and received **1,006 hours of individualized career navigation**. Although **Jl invested \$198,472 in career navigation and other supports** through the Advancing Early Educators Program, traditional scholarship funding was not available for educators seeking to earn a Child Development Associate credential or complete college coursework. In response, **Jl advocated with the grantor to revise how participant-support dollars could be used**, allowing the program to serve fewer participants while providing each person with more meaningful financial assistance. The **revised structure also added dedicated funding for Track 3 participants pursuing the CDA+ pathway**, allowing them to complete the CDA and CDA+ requirements without financial barriers.

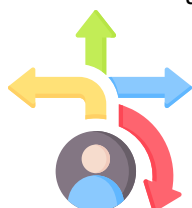


117 ADVANCING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



1,006

1006 CAREER NAVIGATION HOURS



These changes helped **reduce financial barriers and created a more realistic pathway** for educators to earn qualifications and advance within the early childhood field. Continued investment in scholarships, career navigation, accessible training, and employment pathways will remain essential to helping educators increase their wages and build sustainable careers.



Support recruitment, qualification, and retention of professionals within the Early Childhood Education field.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Joint Initiatives delivered 45 professional development training courses to 592 early childhood professionals, totaling 362 training hours. Training included leadership and workplace-culture development designed to strengthen program environments and support staff recruitment and retention. Participant feedback reflected the continued need for accessible, high-quality, no-cost professional development.



592

592 PROFESSIONALS TRAINED
45 TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



362

362 TRAINING HOURS

Through the **Family Friendly Initiative**, Joint Initiatives partnered with the **Pikes Peak Workforce Center** to host the **region's first early childhood-focused job fair**. The event connected 15 employers with 65 job seekers, creating a dedicated recruitment opportunity for the sector. The workforce team also participated in 168 partner meetings to improve coordination and identify collaborative strategies to address workforce gaps.



15

EMPLOYERS

26

JOB SEEKERS



SUBSTITUTE PLACEMENT AGENCY

Jl completed the state licensing process to establish a community **Early Learning Substitute Placement Agency (ELSPA)**, which will help childcare programs address short-term staffing shortages. Current efforts are focused on enrolling participating programs before hiring three substitute early childhood teachers.

PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY



GOAL 6

Empower ECE providers and families to engage in public policy advocacy.

Jl worked to make public policy more accessible to early childhood providers, families, and community partners by sharing legislative updates in understandable language, creating opportunities for participation, and elevating lived experiences in policy conversations. **Through the Family Friendly Initiative, partners discussed childcare expansion, workforce challenges, infant and toddler care, public investment, and the long-term sustainability of the early childhood system.** More than 130 stories were collected from families, providers, and community members to help ensure advocacy and public-awareness efforts reflected the real impact of childcare on employment, family stability, and well-being.



Empower ECE providers and families to engage in public policy advocacy.



ADVOCACY EVENT AT THE CAPITOL



Jl staff and local childcare leaders attended Speak Up for Kids Day at the Colorado State Capitol, where they strengthened their advocacy skills and connected with statewide partners. Because legislators were in session, participants met with several legislative aides to share local experiences and discuss the needs of children, families, and early childhood providers. Jl's Vice President of Foundations also served as an advocacy coach, helping participants prepare to communicate effectively with elected officials and their staff. This experience gave local early childhood leaders a direct opportunity to build confidence, better understand the legislative process, and see how their voices can inform policy decisions.



CHILDCARE ZONING ORDINANCE PASSES

These advocacy efforts contributed to a **significant local policy win with the passage of the Colorado Springs Childcare Ordinance Update**. Joint Initiatives worked alongside community partners, businesses, religious institutions, residents, and City staff to address zoning requirements that added costs, extended timelines, and created barriers to opening childcare facilities. The ordinance created a less restrictive regulatory environment for several types of child and adult day care, including small and large centers, home-based programs, and programs operating as accessory uses. It also expanded opportunities to include childcare alongside certain residential, commercial, industrial, religious, and office uses while reducing overly restrictive standards. **By removing these barriers, the ordinance created more opportunities to develop childcare in locations that are accessible and responsive to community needs.**

Through FFI, Joint Initiatives also joined statewide partners in supporting legislation related to reviewing childcare regulations, establishing a regulatory task force, and strengthening the childcare tax credit.

Together, these efforts helped bring local provider and family experiences into policy discussions while building stronger connections between early childhood leaders, community partners, and decision-makers.

ABOUT THE ORDINANCE

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CONCLUSION



The first year of the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan demonstrated the value of a coordinated early childhood system. Across each goal, Joint Initiatives and Alliance for Kids helped families find and navigate services, supported providers in strengthening and sustaining their programs, invested in the early childhood workforce, and brought community partners together to address barriers that no single organization could solve alone.

The year's impact can be seen not only in the number of people reached, but also in the changes made possible through this work. Families gained clearer pathways to early learning, mental health, developmental, and preventive health supports. Providers received coaching, technical assistance, workforce support, and financial resources to improve their programs and expand care. Emerging educators moved from classrooms into employment and from entry-level positions into leadership roles. Local advocacy also contributed to policy changes that reduced barriers to opening child care programs and created new opportunities for long-term community investment.

This progress occurred during a year of significant change. CCCAP enrollment restrictions, workforce shortages, limited scholarship funding, the pause in Colorado Shines rating assessments, and broader state funding uncertainty created challenges for families and providers. Even within that uncertainty, the **early childhood community continued to adapt, collaborate, and move forward. The work completed this year strengthened the relationships, systems, and local infrastructure needed to respond to future changes.**

The coming year will bring another important transition as dedicated Local Coordinating Organization funding for Universal Preschool ends and the Alliance for Kids Council absorbs local UPK coordination into its broader Early Childhood Council responsibilities. As a result, UPK will no longer remain a separate strategic-plan goal. The work itself is not going away. **Family navigation, provider support, mixed-delivery coordination, and access to preschool will instead be integrated across the Council's broader goals, reflecting UPK's place within a coordinated birth-to-five system.**

As Alliance for Kids enters the second year of the strategic plan, **the Council will build on this foundation while continuing to center the voices of families and providers, strengthen the workforce, improve access and quality, and advocate for sustainable solutions.** The progress made this year reflects what is possible through shared commitment and provides a strong foundation for the work ahead.