



ALLIANCE FOR KIDS MONTHLY COUNCIL REPORT

Foundations is the early childhood program of Joint Initiatives for Youth + Families, and includes Alliance for Kids, El Paso County's Early Childhood Council.

MAY 2023

Universal Pre-K updates and **Council Subcommittee** news are on both on **Page 3**.

Below are the three key projects which implement strategies to meet **Alliance for Kids' Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives in addition to the Scope of Work (SOW)** indicators for Colorado Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) work.

- 1 Health + Well-Being Project
- 2 Quality Initiatives Project integrated with Professional Development (PD)
- 3 FamilySPEAK Project

HEALTH + WELL-BEING PROJECT

Health + Well-Being aims to support and enhance healthy practices and social/emotional and behavioral support for community organizations and families.

UPDATES | EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

- JI entered into a partnership with University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) to create internship opportunities in Early Childhood Mental Health. This project aims to increase awareness of ECMH consultation as a career and begin to develop a pipeline into the field.
- Recruitment is ongoing for two Mental Health Practitioners to join the Foundations team.

FAMILY, FRIEND + NEIGHBOR (FFN) PROGRAMING: THE COLORADO HEALTH FOUNDATION

- **JI Playgroups extended through the first week of September.** These play-based groups introduce music, movement, literacy and school readiness activities to young children and their caregivers. Playgroups have continued to gain momentum with an average of 46 adults and 66 children attending in April. This project is a partnership between Joint Initiatives and the Community Cultural Collective.
- JI partnered with Peak Vista to **promote child abuse prevention** through a craft at a the JI Playgroup.
- **Workshops:** Two workshops were developed this month with the goal of attracting FFNs. A total of 32 early childhood providers attended these workshops, however, only 3 were FFNs.
- **Home Visits:** JI's FFN Specialist engaged in three home visits during April and continues to support 48 FFNs providing support, offering professional development, and sharing resources.


46

Children participating in JI Playgroup along with 66 adults (average April attendance)


3

Home visits provided by FFN Specialist


48

FFN Caregivers Supported



QUALITY INITIATIVES PROJECT INTEGRATED WITH PD

Quality Initiatives (QI) focus on coaching, outreach, supports, resources/assets, and professional development to enhance quality in early care and education (ECE) programs. Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) work focuses on outreach to update and support licensed ECE programs, increase capacity for licensed ECE programs, and provide resources and referrals for parents/families for ECE programs. Professional Development (PD) is integrated throughout QI and CCR&R.

QI UPDATES

CCR+R and Program Outreach

- JI's Foundations Outreach Specialist continued outreach to providers introducing herself and providing information regarding the status of their QIRS application (expiring soon).
- The Outreach Specialist has engaged 15 programs to increase from Level 1 to Level 2.
- The Foundations Outreach Specialist events:
 - 2023 Provider Appreciation Event
 - JI Playgroups
 - Communities That Care Child Care Strategy Team/Fountain Valley CARES meetings, Fountain Valley Communities That Care Community Board Meeting
 - Conrad Early Learning Center (D8) Family Game Night
 - Southern Colorado Early Childhood Business Conference
 - Summer Expo/Kids Fest in Woodland Park
 - Ellicott Early Childhood Resource Fair
 - Equity and Inclusion Training facilitated by Senior Judge Regina Walter and Dr. Regina Lewis.

Colorado Shines Quality Improvement (CSQI) Grant

- Two programs working toward a Level 4 (alternate pathway).
- Two providers achieved a Level 5 in April.
- CSQI grant spending concluded; no new MOUs until July 1, 2023.
- A second QI Coach joined JI's Foundations team in April.

Emerging + Expanding Child Care Grant Applications

- Two applications have passed and are awaiting State approval.
- Three program applications did not meet eligibility requirements.
- Four programs are preparing for the next round of E + E funding.

Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)

- Two CCCAP providers achieved a Level 5 (previously Level 4).
- A total of 134 programs have active CCCAP contracts.
- Four CCCAP programs moved to a Level 2, with two of those submitting for a Level 3-5 rating.



Two CCCAP programs have earned a Level 5 rating!



52.5

Quality improvement coaching hours (April)



Programs in queue for Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) Level 3-5 rating in El Paso County



Programs receiving CSQI grant support

134

Active CCCAP Contracts



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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

• **Workforce Development Training:**

- Expanding Quality for Infants and Toddlers (EQIT); Early Childhood Trauma Part 2; Sensory in the Classroom; Pre-Licensing Training; Safety Spotlight Professional Learning Community (PLC)
- In addition to Early Childhood Trauma Part 2 (open to all early childhood professionals), JI's Trauma Coach + Trainer provided trauma training for three early childhood programs and provided private coaching for six teaching staff.

• **ECE Career Navigator Supports**

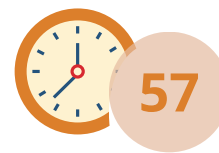
- JI's Career Navigator supports individuals in the areas of career pathways; Early Childhood Teacher qualification; Director qualification; Professional Development Information System (PDIS) ECE Credential and general technical support; Child Development Associate (CDA) assistance; scholarships; and UCCS Inclusive Early Childhood Education Apprenticeship Program career goals.
- JI's Career Navigator supported four people new to the ECE field — two high school students that reached out to the Career Navigator and two that would like to open a Family Child Care Home.



Participants in 4 trainings offered, including EQIT



Individuals receiving career navigation support



Career navigation support hours

FAMILYSPEAK PROJECT

FamilySPEAK (FS) partners with community agencies and organizations to develop and implement a systems approach to parent/family education and supports.

FAMILYSPEAK UPDATES

Chantelle Johnson joined JI as the new Voices Program Director. More to come on this project.



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UNIVERSAL PRE-K (UPK) UPDATES



SCAN or CLICK HERE
for LCO-UPK INFO HUB



- **144** early childhood programs signed up for UPK in EPC
- **13** school districts participating in UPK
- **4,926** registered UPK seats available in El Paso County
- In our community, **2,468** families were matched with a provider of their choice. Out of that number, **2,129** applications have been accepted by families.

UPK updates are available at Jointinitiatives.org/UPK, which includes links to each edition of JI's UPK newsletter.

ALLIANCE FOR KIDS COMMITTEE UPDATES

FAMILY SUPPORT + EDUCATION

The April meeting included a presentation from D'Wanna Powell from the Pikes Peak United Way Family Success Center. The group continues to gain strength by sharing family resources with one another and exploring gaps in service.

LEARNING + DEVELOPMENT

The committee is re-engaging its efforts with new JI staff support – more updates in upcoming Council reports.

HEALTH + WELL-BEING

The April meeting focused on how to increase screenings, early intervention referrals, and Early Childhood Mental Health in our community. A total of 17 stakeholders participated.

The Pyramid Community Leadership Team, a subcommittee of the Health + Well-Being Committee, met this month to draft a vision statement for the group, provide updates about coaching/ training grants and encourage the group to look at Pyramid Benchmarks of Quality for our communities.