



ALLIANCE FOR KIDS FEBRUARY 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.

REPORTING TIMEFRAME: FEBRUARY 1-29, 2024

Universal Pre-K updates and **Council Subcommittee** news are on **Pages 4-5**.

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 Family Support + Education 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

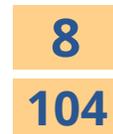
- Mental Health Practitioners continue to build strong relationships with directors, teachers and families.
- Staff turnover continues to present challenges to centers.
- Five families have been referred to JI's Pathways program for additional support.



6 Childhood centers supported with embedded ECMH Consultation



3 Three child-focused cases this month, seven children at risk of suspension or expulsion, and three expelled



8 Classrooms



104 Children impacted

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

- **Jl Playgroups extended through May 2024.** These play-based groups introduce music, movement, literacy and school readiness activities to young children and their caregivers. This project is a partnership between Joint Initiatives and Opus Creative Industries at Colorado Springs Community Cultural Collective.
- **Two playgroups were held in February** at the new, permanent location at 1 S. Nevada Ave.
- Outreach to FFNs continues through the marketing of the JI Playgroup.
 - **Between two to five FFNs attended each February playgroup.**
- The FFN Program is on pause while we hire staff for the new position.



64 Children attending JI Playgroup along with 54 adults



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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

Colorado Shines Quality Improvement (CSQI) Grant



Programs receiving CSQI grant support



TSQI MOU



ESQI MOU

CCR+R , Program Outreach, and QI Coaching



Quality Improvement coaching hours



Providers engaged with Navigator to increase from Level 1 to Level 2



Programs in queue for Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) Rating

Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)

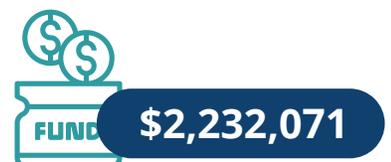
- **\$18,000 awarded for Quality Expansion** to four existing providers
- **One new Family Home Child Care start-up applicant** is in the final approval process.
- **One new CCCAP agreement** signed due to JI involvement.

Emerging + Expanding (E+E) Child Care Grant Applications

- A total of **29 applications** were submitted.
- Colorado Department of Early childhood has **approved five applications**, totaling \$2,232,071.
- Two programs have been paid out.
- Two programs are in the beginning steps of the payment process.



Programs approved to receive E+E grant support





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QUALITY INITIATIVES PROJECT INTEGRATED WITH PD

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE TRAINING & COACHING

- Trauma 1 (Creative Play) | 20 participants
- ® Challenging Behavior (Hope Montessori) | 42 participants
- ® Trauma 1 (Open to all) | 21 participants
- ® Trauma 2 (Creative Play) | 20 participants
- ® Trauma 1 (Kiowa County) | 13 Participants



Participants in 5 trainings offered



1 CLASS Observation

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Workforce Development Training:

- EQIT Session C Cohort
- Verbal De-Escalation and Active Shooter Survival Skills
- Leading Edge for Family Child Care Homes
- Social-Emotional Health + Development | Trauma 1 and Trauma 2
- The Growing Brain

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.



Participants in 5 trainings offered, including EQIT



Individuals receiving career navigation support



Career navigation support hours



Scholarships provided EQIT (5) and Career Navigation (6)

FAMILY SUPPORT + EDUCATION PROJECT

The Family Support + Education Project partners with community agencies and organizations to develop and implement a systems approach to parent/family education and supports.

FAMILY SUPPORT + EDUCATION UPDATES

No report at this time.



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UNIVERSAL PRE-K (UPK) UPDATES



SCAN or CLICK HERE
for LCO-UPK INFO HUB



179 PROVIDERS



4,344 MATCHED
4-YEAR-OLDS



1,149 MATCHED
3-YEAR-OLDS

Provider Types

- School District-Based: **69** (all 15 EPC districts participating)
- Family Child Care Homes: **30**
- Center-Based: **80**
- Programs accepting CCCAP: **66**



421 ON WAIT LIST
4-YEAR-OLDS

Matched with a Provider/Enrolled

- 4-year-olds matched: **4,344** (85%) (4,310 enrolled, 34 accepted)
- 4-year-olds unmatched: **753** (15%)
- 4-year-olds on waitlists: **421** (8.2%)
- 3-year-olds enrolled: **1,149**



6,210 SEATS
YEAR TWO

UPK Seats + Applications

- Registered UPK Seats: **5,219**
- UPK Seats available: **875** (includes available IEP seats)
- Family applications: **11,999**
- 1,307 have been withdrawn
 - 3,035 are “in progress” but have not been submitted. It appears many families that are “in progress” for the 2023-2024 school year thought that this was the 2024-2025 application.

UPK Team Assistance

- Family calls/emails for February: **325**
- Provider calls/emails for February: **672**

Areas of El Paso County with low availability to meet need are D2, D38, and D20.

TAKEAWAYS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- With **997 February calls/email**, the vast majority requested assistance with setup for Year Two.
- **Provider retention from Year One to Year Two-2 96%**, with 201 providers registered for year two, 28 of which are new providers. There are **6,210 seats so far for Year Two**, bringing overall access in El Paso County to 66% (+11%) for Year Two.
- As of March 4th, **1,345 applications have been submitted and 382 are in progress for Year Two**, a total of 1,727. This is roughly 1/5 of our four-year-old population of around 9,413 that have applied in just 4 ½ days.
- **Three provider Roundtables** on February 23 to assist providers with their set up questions for 2024-25. School district and center engagement was excellent. Family Child Care Home engagement was low due offering the Roundtable on Friday night.
- With support from JI’s Communications Manager, a **weekly UPK Newsletter** goes out and the **website is continually updated.**



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ALLIANCE FOR KIDS COMMITTEE UPDATES

FAMILY SUPPORT + EDUCATION

The **Family Support+ Education Committee** met in August, with eight community stakeholders in attendance. Discussions focused on supporting children, youth and adults with disabilities.

LEARNING + DEVELOPMENT

The **Learning + Development Committee** met on February 8, 2024, and eight people were in attendance. The group worked on OBJECTIVE 5: Promote innovative approaches as well as scale-proven approaches to workforce retention. A Google document with automated texting for positive outreach to leaders and administrators was created. It was shared that Childcare Aware has a similar toolkit. This activity is something we can offer El Paso County. JI's Communication Manager is going to put together some graphics using the messages. This is to see more messages that lift the people working in the Early Childhood field for retention purposes.
Next meeting will be April 11, 2024.

HEALTH + WELL-BEING

The **Health and Well-Being Committee** met in February, with twelve mental health stakeholders attending. The guest speaker was Paula Hergert of EPC Public Health, and discussions centered around Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the importance of caregivers, service providers and teachers being not only trauma-informed, but trauma-responsive. Denielle Gregory, a supervisor with The Resource Exchange, was nominated and accepted the position as Co-Chair of this committee.

Next meeting will be virtual on March 21, 2024.

The **Pyramid Community Leadership Team** convened this month with guest Robin Levy, Pyramid Coordinator for Healthy Child Care Colorado. Robin complemented our team as being the first and strongest leadership team in the state and addressed questions about sustaining the Pyramid model in our communities.

Next meeting will be virtual on March 24, 2024.