

ALLIANCE FOR KIDS

QUARTERLY

REPORT



YEAR 2 | QUARTER 3
Jan. 1–Mar. 31, 2025



STRATEGIC PLAN
2023-26

Alliance for Kids, El Paso County's
Early Childhood Council is housed under the
Foundations program of Joint Initiatives for Youth + Families

THRIVING FAMILIES



FAMILY RESOURCE NAVIGATION

This quarter, JI's Family Resource Navigators have engaged with families over 2,000 times, providing essential support to help them navigate the Universal Preschool (UPK) system and access local community resources. We are also actively seeking a bilingual navigator to better support our Spanish-speaking families.



2,000

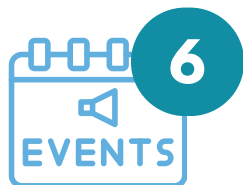
AVERAGE OF **2,000**
FAMILIES SUPPORTED
THIS QUARTER

GOAL 2

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



OUTREACH + FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



**6 FAMILY-FOCUSED
OUTREACH EVENTS**

Six family-focused outreach events were attended to share resources, provide UPK navigation support, and offer additional information. **During these events, 780 flyers were distributed**, covering topics like the importance of the early years, healthy families, equity, trauma-informed care, and healthy child development. These events provided valuable opportunities to engage directly with families, strengthen community connections, raise awareness about critical early childhood issues and connect them to valuable community services.

THRIVING FAMILIES

GOAL 2

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



ECMH CONSULTATION SERVICES

A total of **306 hours of Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Support:** ECMH consultation was **embedded in 4 early childhood centers**, with an additional case supported through a non-embedded model.

A total of **7 classrooms** received consultation, impacting **210 children**. Though seven child-focused cases were addressed, all involving children at risk of expulsion or suspension, demonstrating a strong focus on early intervention and inclusion, **no expulsions occurred this quarter**.



NO EXPULSIONS THIS QUARTER



306 HOURS OF ECMH SERVICES IMPACTING UP TO 210 CHILDREN



SUPPORTS FOR PARENTS + CAREGIVERS

Seven playgroups were held, including a special session with Opera Colorado, that introduced opera to both adults and children. Additionally, **16 Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers** attended one or more playgroups. The specialist is building strong relationships with FFN caregivers and the children they serve. This quarter, **3 new FFNs** began participating in the early literacy program.



7 PLAYGROUPS HELD



16 FFNS ENGAGED

Needs

The CCCAP freeze continues to present significant challenges for families who rely on financial assistance for child care, especially those not eligible for Universal Preschool. Families and providers are now beginning to deeply feel the effects of the freeze, which has limited access to affordable care. Additionally, the recent removal of TANF-qualified families from the list of exemptions will further reduce access for some of the most vulnerable families. These developments underscore the urgent need for expanded support and more inclusive assistance options.

THRIVING FAMILIES

GOAL 2

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

EMBED MODEL IMPLEMENTATION



Ji was awarded a **grant to expand the EMBED model** in the community, enhancing access to integrated support services within early childhood settings. Though this grant, Ji aims to expand its embedded Early Childhood Mental Health Practitioner (ECMHP) pilot program to promote health equity for children ages birth–5 by **placing trained practitioners in early childhood centers to support staff and families** with trauma-informed practices and reduce suspensions and expulsions.



HEALTHY UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL COLLABORATIVE

A total of **35 early childhood programs** will participate in Delta Dental screenings as part of the Healthy Universal Preschool Collaborative (HUPC) programming. This **effort will cover 57 classrooms** and is expected to **reach approximately 873 children**. Ji is partnering with four Child Care Health Consultants to support and carry out the screenings.



35 ECE PROGRAMS

57 CLASSROOMS



PROGRAM EXPECTS TO REACH 873 CHILDREN



Through the HUPC grant, the **Family Voice Survey** gathered information on families' access to screenings and medical services. Results showed that only **32% of children had seen a pediatrician and 28% had seen a dentist** in the past year. Awareness of screening services varied, with **20% to 24% of families aware of different screening types, such as vision, hearing, and dental screenings**. Common barriers to accessing services included time off work (47%) and financial challenges (20%), while 97% of respondents reported they could access services in their home language.

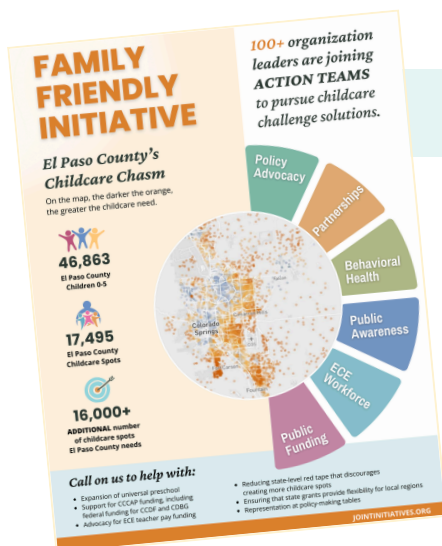
THRIVING CHILDREN

GOAL 3

Increase access to a coordinated mixed-delivery model of affordable quality early childhood education.

FAMILY FRIENDLY INITIATIVE

The **Family Friendly Initiative** committees held individual meetings this quarter to further define their roles and goals. These focused discussions helped shape targeted objectives and actionable items within each group. This work builds on the momentum of the Family Friendly Summit's key takeaways. The committees are now **actively addressing priority areas, including ECE Workforce, Public Policy Behavioral Health, Childcare Funding, Partnerships and Public Awareness.**



EMERGING + EXPANDING GRANT

Through the Emerging + Expanding Grant, we **distributed \$223,266 to three programs**, resulting in the creation of **160 new infant and toddler spots** in our community. CDEC also **approved an additional program for a \$200,000** capital improvement grant, providing an approximate increase of 52 infant and toddlers slots and 90 preschool slots once the project is complete.



160 INFANT/TODDLER SLOTS CREATED

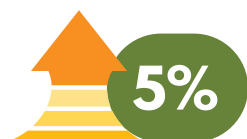


EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY INITIATIVES

Currently, **34 programs are queued for rating**, and we maintain **55 active Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)**. QI Coaches provided **149 hours of direct GAE coaching** to programs with active MOUs. We have seen a **5% increase in high-quality programs** this quarter, including **one center that achieved a Level 5** rating thanks to their dedication and the support of a JI Quality Improvement Coach.



34 PROVIDERS ARE IN QUEUE FOR RATING



5% INCREASE IN HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMS



149 GAE COACHING HOURS



55 ACTIVE MOUs

THRIVING CHILDREN

MORE HIGHLIGHTS

- 10 PRE-LICENSING ATTENDEES
- 8 NEWLY LICENSED PROGRAMS
- 2 NEW PROGRAMS WITH CCCAP FISCAL AGREEMENTS
- 82 LEVEL 3-5 PROGRAMS
- 1 PROGRAM INCREASED TO LEVEL 5

Needs

We are seeing a growing demand for quality improvement support among providers, but current funding levels are insufficient to meet this need.

THRIVING COMMUNITY



UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL (UPK)

- This quarter, **215 programs** are offering **6,483 seats**, reflecting a **1.17% increase in available seats**. Of these, **77 programs** are located within the 15 school districts in our catchment area. The breakdown includes **47 family childcare homes (FCCH)** and **91 center-based programs**.
- At the end of this quarter, **1,885 UPK seats remain available**, including **1,042 general education seats**. The increase in available seats reflects the successful onboarding of new providers, expanding access and program capacity.
- As of this quarter, **3,571 Year 3 applications have been submitted**, with a total of **3,094 seats already filled**— **2,838 general education seats** and **256 IEP seats**.
- Interest in the program remains strong, with **four new providers reaching out about joining UPK at the end of the quarter**.

GOAL 4

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



215 PROVIDERS



3,571 YEAR 3 APPLICANTS

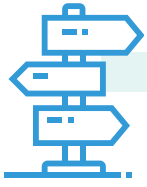


3,094 YEAR 3 SEATS FILLED

THRIVING WORKFORCE

GOAL 5

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



CAREER NAVIGATION + TRAINING

Career navigation services were provided to **210 professionals**, a **13% increase** from last quarter, totaling **325 hours of support**. **Navigation was provided to nine professionals new to the field**, highlighting our ongoing efforts to expand the workforce. The continued increase in demand for career navigation support highlights that there is an increase of professionals entering the field. Individualized guidance remains key to fostering career growth.



13% INCREASE IN PROFESSIONALS SERVED

7

Between January and March, a total of **90 professionals** participated in **seven professional development trainings**, totaling **90 hours** of instruction. These sessions covered a range of topics to support skill-building and career advancement. Notably, a **Pre-Licensing training held January 27-30 trained 10 participants**. Overall, these efforts reflect a strong commitment to workforce development in the early childhood education field.



90 PARTICIPANTS TRAINED (90 HOURS)



ADVANCING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS PROGRAM

The Advancing Early Childhood Educators Program has **14 students enrolled in Track 1** and have received **75 hours of career navigation support**. A total of **14 students are enrolled in Track 2** and have received **108 hours of career navigation**. Of these students, **20 have submitted their ECE Credential applications**. While we are seeing an increase in program participation, there is a lot of uncertainty from students regarding the ECE field and some have expressed fear and concern of what might happen with funding for ECE course and the professionalization of the ECE Career Pathway.



28

COMBINED NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN TRACK 1 + TRACK 2



20

20 STUDENTS APPLIED FOR ECE CREDENTIAL

Needs

There is a growing need for funding for additional Career Navigation support as the program's popularity continues to increase.

THRIVING WORKFORCE

GOAL 5

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



OUTREACH + ECE AWARENESS

Jl's Partner Recruiter engaged with local schools through **six high school career days** and **four middle and high school presentations** to promote early childhood education careers. Additionally, we received **22 applications for the High School ECE Award**, supporting the next generation of early childhood professionals.



**PARTNER RECRUITER VISITED
4 MIDDLE + HIGH SCHOOL
CLASSROOMS**



**6 CAREER
DAY EVENTS**



22

**22 APPLICATIONS
FOR HIGH SCHOOL
ECE AWARD**



Celebration

As part of our ongoing strategy to strengthen the early childhood education (ECE) workforce pipeline, the Partnership Recruiter successfully engaged a high school student enrolled in ECE classes. The **student applied for and received the \$500 Career Engagement Award, which marked the beginning of targeted support and mentorship.** Together, they refined her resume and **secured her a position at Mountain Willow Montessori, where she began working in January.** Since then, she has actively participated in professional development through PDIS trainings and **continues to thrive in her role as an assistant, demonstrating both growth and enthusiasm for a long-term career in ECE.**