The mission of Human Services is to help all persons meet their basic needs and develop their potential by providing timely, effective human services and building community.
Early Learning Annual Report 2020

Snohomish County Human Services
Developmental Disabilities & Early Learning Division
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Questions about eligibility for services? Call...

North Snohomish County Early Head Start
425-388-6439

Early Intervention Program Referral Line
425-388-7402

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program
425-388-7010

Edit/Design: Laurie Bain
In Recognition

Our Funders

Our Partners in Service

Arlington School District
ChildStrive
Darrington School District
Edmonds School District
Everett Community College
Everett Public Schools
Granite Falls School District
Hearing, Speech and Deaf Center
Josephine Caring Community
Julie Shevlin RND, CD
Kindering
Lake Stevens School District
Lakewood School District
Listen and Talk
Marysville School District
Mukilteo School District
North Sound Nourishment and Recovery, LLC
Northwest School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing:
Puget Sound Counseling and Autism Services
Providence Children’s Center
Providence Everett Medical Center
Sauk-Suiattle Tribe
Sherwood Community Services
Smokey Point Early Learning Center
Snohomish School District
Tulalip Tribes
Volunteers of America Western WA
Wonderland Children and Family Services
North Snohomish County Early Head Start

NSC EHS offers income-eligible families with children birth to three and pregnant women comprehensive, home-based (in-home) services. NSC EHS staff provides weekly 90-minute home visits for each family. A home visit includes developmental, early learning and school-readiness activities; parent support, training, resource and referral; and health care screenings and support.

Children Served

Number of eligible children and families served: 111
Percentage medical exams completed: 88%
Percentage of eligible children in area served: 10%
Percentage dental exams completed: 76%
Average monthly enrollment: 96%

Preparing Children for Their Next Steps

NSC EHS uses the Creative Curriculum online assessment tool, Teaching Strategies GOLD. Home visiting staff collaborate with families to complete developmental observations and assessments that are used to complete three point-in-time snapshots of how EHS children are developing in six developmental domains based on Teaching Strategies GOLD Widely Held Expectations. Program staff provide information, activities and coaching to families to promote child development in all domains that meets or exceeds the widely held expectations for their age.

Birth to One Year

Social-Emotional: 100% 100% 100%
Physical: 100% 100% 88%
Language: 100% 100% 100%
Cognitive: 100% 100% 100%
Literacy: 100% 100% 100%
Math: 100% 100% 100%

One to Two Years

Social-Emotional: 100% 100% 100%
Physical: 69% 75% 81%
Language: 69% 69% 88%
Cognitive: 94% 94% 94%
Literacy: 100% 100% 100%
Math: 88% 81% 75%

Two to Three Years

Social-Emotional: 100% 100% 100%
Physical: 100% 100% 100%
Language: 100% 100% 100%
Cognitive: 100% 100% 100%
Literacy: 100% 100% 100%
Math: 100% 67% 67%

2019-2020 data indicates:
Social-Emotional: Nearly all children at all age levels are meeting or exceeding developmental expectations.
Literacy: All children at all age levels are meeting or exceeding developmental expectations.
Math: A majority of children at all age levels are meeting or exceeding developmental expectations. They are building a solid foundation in math skills and are likely to be ahead of their peers as they transition to pre-K and Kindergarten programs.

Engaging and Empowering Families

NSC EHS uses the CCR Analytics Strengths, Needs and Interests Parent Survey to measure parent needs and interests. The 40 survey questions are aligned with the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework, which identifies seven Family Engagement Outcomes. Results of the Survey measure needs and interests in each of the Outcome Areas:

1. Family Well-being (split into 3 sections): Economic, Physical Health, Abuse
2. Positive Parent-Child Relationships
3. Families as Lifelong Educators
4. Families as Learners
5. Family Engagement in Transitions
6. Family Connections to Peers and Community
7. Families as Advocates and Leaders

See Challenge 2020: Innovations in Service on page 5 to read how NSC EHS supported families to grow and thrive in adversity.
North Snohomish County Early Head Start

Budget

Office of Head Start $1,226,027
County General Fund Support $26,794
Non-Federal Share $326,248
Total Resources 2020 $1,579,069

Accountability

The most recent Federal Internal Control audit found:

- No deficiencies in the design or operation of internal control over financial reporting;
- No deficiencies considered to be material weaknesses; or
- No instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements of the County.

Challenge 2020: Innovations in Service

To address the challenges of isolation and to ensure full services continued, NSC EHS:

- Provided tablets with wi-fi to families who needed them so they could communicate and meet with staff. The program worked with families to ascertain if the technology was useful for them, and how virtual meetings and home visits could be improved;
- Restructured meetings and home visits to focus heavily on direct services, to allow families to address their most urgent basic needs and priorities for their children;
- Identified housing and job instability, and relocation as foremost family concerns;
- Connected several families with housing and employment Navigators and worked with the Navigators to monitor family progress;
- Doubled the number of English and Spanish Circle of Security (family bonding and attachment curriculum) sessions to provide additional support and parent education; and
- Drafted a template for parent/caregiver self-care planning.
**EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

Snohomish County government is the County’s designated early intervention services Local Lead Agency for the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) Program under the Department of Children, Youth and Families. ESIT coordinates the statewide system of early intervention Part C services required by the 1986 federal mandate, the Individuals with Disabilities Act. As part of the Snohomish County Developmental Disabilities and Early Learning Division, the Early Intervention Program (EIP) operates under these federal standards to provide early intervention services for children birth to three and their families. EIP contracts with 11 direct-service provider agencies to provide specialized services such as speech therapy, occupational and physical therapy, nutrition, vision, deaf and hard-of-hearing, and special education. We support parents/caregivers to learn individualized intervention strategies to gain competence and enhance the development of children in everyday learning opportunities. Services are provided in natural environments such as home and community settings.

**CHILDREN SERVED**

Cumulative Number of Children Served 2019-20: 2,442

Note: Mid to late 2020 saw a decrease in number of children served due to COVID; however, numbers are currently rising again as we see an increase in referrals.

**PREPARING CHILDREN FOR THEIR NEXT STEPS**

Early Intervention providers begin to prepare families as early as 6 to 9 months from the child’s third birthday for options for services after early intervention services end. As children enter the public special education system or other community program options, it is a critical time for families to share their vision and concerns about their child’s development and to gain understanding of their educational rights. Statewide and locally, about 30% of children who have been in ESIT services do not require special education services by age 3. Our efforts at that time are to identify the next program options for children to help them continue to make progress in their overall development as same-age peers.

Below are state ESIT outcomes for Snohomish County EIP, using the three foundational Outcome Areas determined by the State. The chart shows the percentage of 850 enrolled children for whom data was collected that demonstrated significant increases in growth and function at time of exit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Area</th>
<th>Percentage of children who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.</th>
<th>Percentage of children who were functioning within age expectations by the time they exited the program.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Emotional</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring and using knowledge and skills</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of appropriate behaviors</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See *Challenges 2020: Innovations in Service* on page 7 to see how EIP helped sustain families and children with special needs during the pandemic.

**ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING FAMILIES**

Family Outcomes Survey Results in 2020 showed that Snohomish County families participating in Part C reported that early intervention services have helped their family:

- Know their rights 89%
- Effectively communicate their children’s needs 93%
- Help their children develop and learn 86%
EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

BUDGET

DCYF Special Education Funds $11,114,417  Developmental Disabilities Administration $557,551
DCYF Part C Federal Funds $631,977  DCYF Early Intervention State Funds $205,653
TOTAL RESOURCES $12,509,598

ACCOUNTABILITY

As the County Lead Agency for ESIT, we are subject to state reviews to ensure quality services and fiscal responsibility. The most recent Compliance Monitoring by ESIT indicated that Snohomish County Early Intervention Program has met its requirements.

CHALLENGE 2020: INNOVATIONS IN SERVICE

In March 2020, due to the impact of COVID 19, early intervention services statewide converted to all virtual platforms. Snohomish County Human Services and EIP providers worked together to ensure best practices continued and families received the highest quality services.

Evaluations to determine eligibility for ESIT services indicated about 15-18% decline in referrals from primary referral sources since the pandemic started, and 15-17% decline in overall enrollment compared to 2019. Some families requested to put services on hold or exited from services due to challenges and competing priorities at home. In April 2021 we saw a steady recovery in referrals. At the date of this report, we are back to the same level of referrals as pre-COVID.

We recognize the extreme challenges many families experienced over this past year and were grateful that they were able to utilize and benefit from virtual services. Early intervention service providers and agencies supported each family with care and compassion through these extraordinary months. In the words of families:

“Even with the COVID situation, we have been able to make progress.”
“You offered amazing resources when we had difficult times.”
“[With Zoom] it was a big advantage to be able to continue sessions for helping children with special needs.”
“We still get the information we need and our son still sees the therapists.”
“I am forever grateful for your services for both my daughters. We started when my first daughter was only 9 months old. You are like family. Thank you!”
Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is a statewide preschool program that provides services to low-income families with children age three to five. ECEAP focuses on the well-being of the whole child by providing comprehensive education, family support, nutrition, and health services. ECEAP subcontracts with school districts, non-profits, tribes and a college to operate 25 sites across the county.

**Children Served**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funded Slots</th>
<th>Medical Exams Complete</th>
<th>1,334</th>
<th>91%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Enrollment</td>
<td>Dental Exams Complete</td>
<td>1,359</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mental Health Referrals</td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Preparing Children for Next Steps**

ECEAP uses child outcomes measures from GOLD by Teaching Strategies (TS GOLD) and Early Achievers. TS GOLD is the online assessment tool for the Creative Curriculum, which measures child development in multiple domains through a series of checkpoints throughout the year. Assessments are based on the TS GOLD Widely Held Expectations—standard developmental and learning expectations for most children at various ages.

Early Achievers is Washington State’s quality rating system for early learning programs that measures physical environment, emotional climate, interactions between teachers and children, program structure and activities to support learning. Snohomish County ECEAP sites continue to receive high Early Achievers ratings. All existing ECEAP sites meet Early Achievers requirements and all but one are rated either a 4 “Thriving in High Quality” or 5 “ Excelling in High Quality”; new sites in the queue to be rated were paused in March due to the pandemic. *Please note: DCYF directed ECEAP to not conduct TS GOLD assessments in Spring 2020 school year due to the impacts of the pandemic and the transition to remote learning.*

**Engaging and Empowering Families**

Using a family-centered coaching approach in all aspects of their work, ECEAP staff support parents/caregivers to use their own problem-solving skills to help build healthy, stable families. In addition, family support practices are tailored to fit individual family configurations, culture, language and child-rearing practices. Staff assist families with accessing resources, setting goals, and participating in parent education opportunities on a wide variety of topics.

Mobility Mentoring is a state-wide ECEAP family support model that provides a framework for staff and families to collaborate and achieve goals for increased economic stability and family well-being. This model is based on the values that family stability is critical to healthy child development, and that families know best what they need to thrive. Mobility Mentoring incorporates family-centered coaching strategies to support families to acquire resources, skills and supports as they set and achieve goals for increased stability.

**Family Partnership Stats 2020:** Data is based on cumulative enrollment of 1,609 families. As indicated by the difference in numbers between 2019 and 2020, the crisis of the pandemic impacted families’ capacity to engage in in-person activities. With a swift transition to virtual parent education activities and frequent communication, an increase in referrals and parent participants increased. See Challenge 2020: Innovations in Service on page 9 to read how ECEAP stepped up to meet the challenges for families in crisis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Family Events</th>
<th>Parents at Family Events</th>
<th>Parent Ed. Activities</th>
<th>Parents in Parent Ed.</th>
<th>Parents at Meetings</th>
<th>Professional Referrals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3,135</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>2,273</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>11,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>4,693</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>2,157</td>
<td>1,317</td>
<td>8,151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

BUDGET

DCYF Program Year Award 2020-2021 $13,064,516
Additional Summer Services 2020-2021 $640,911

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcontractor</th>
<th>PY 2020-21</th>
<th>Summer 2021</th>
<th>County Administrative Costs</th>
<th>County Programming Costs</th>
<th>In Kind and Other Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School districts</td>
<td>$7,735,777</td>
<td>$210,517</td>
<td>$711,215</td>
<td>$1,730,558</td>
<td>$2,185,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other organizations</td>
<td>$3,122,012</td>
<td>$216,128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACCOUNTABILITY

DCYF Program Monitoring Review: Snohomish County was found to be in full compliance with 163 out of 164 Contract and Performance Standards requirements in seven program areas.

The one non-compliant item was filling all funded slots within 30 calendar days. Snohomish County worked with subcontractors to relocate 40 slots to a new site established in an underserved area, implement year-round recruitment plans at each site, and strengthened relationships with larger community provider organizations that serve ECEAP-eligible families.

DCYF Fiscal Review: For the period July 2018 through June 2020, DCYF found no exceptions to requirements.

CHALLENGE 2020: INNOVATIONS IN SERVICE

In their state assessment of services rendered during the COVID-19 pandemic, DCYF reported on the success of Snohomish County ECEAP to adapt and overcome family isolation or the difficulties of relocation or job loss. DCYF noted that Snohomish County responded immediately to set up individualized services to:

♦ Meet basic needs such as nutrition, health services, and rental assistance;
♦ Provide fun and engaging learning-at-home activities that empowered parents as their child’s first and most important teachers; and
♦ Reinforce connections among ECEAP community members so families could share resources, find support and strengthen ties to the larger community.

Family Support staff regularly made deliveries of food boxes, supplies and “care packages” to family homes, and organized “drive-through” meal and supply pick up on site. Teachers embraced virtual venues to reach out to families with tools such as online meetings, emails, phone calls and texts. Programs provided educational packets and materials carefully designed to connect with families and engage children to learn in a home setting.

Site staff commitment and creativity went far beyond contracted requirements. In the words of families:

“I can see that you truly love my son—you didn't push him away like so many others have done. I see a change in him and his behavior. Thank you so much for caring about my needs and encouraging me.”

My daughter wanted to send you a video saying she misses you, and she has been sorting and writing! She loves the videos you send and likes to pretend she is you talking with your students!”

“I cried when I opened the bags of food. Thank you!”