

Early Childhood Council San Luis Valley (ECC SLV) Strategic Plan 2025-2030

<p>Overview</p> 	<p>The Early Childhood Council serves as a catalyst for positive change, playing a pivotal role in influencing policies, securing funding, and driving systemic improvements that enhance early childhood initiatives.</p> <p>‘Early Childhood Councils shall work toward consolidating and coordinating funding. Together, the Early Childhood Councils throughout the state shall serve to create a seamless system of early childhood services representing collaboration among various public and private stakeholders for the effective delivery of early childhood services in the areas of early care and education, family support, mental health, and health. These services shall support children five (5) years of age or younger and their parents in a manner that is responsive to local needs and conditions. These rules are promulgated pursuant to sections 26.5-1-105(1) and 26.5-2-201, et. seq., C.R.S.’</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>Working together to create a community where young children are valued, healthy, and thriving.</p>
<p>Vision</p>	<p>We envision a community where all members prioritize and invest in young children to build a thriving society.</p>
<p>Mission</p>	<p>Support the well-being and optimal development of young children by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ strengthening the system of early childhood ▪ enhancing early childhood professionals’ capacity ▪ connecting families to vital resources
<p>Guiding Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We value the critical importance of <u>relationships</u>, by welcoming individual perspectives. ▪ We strive to authentically engage and listen for understanding to create equitable <u>collaborations</u>. ▪ We <u>commit</u> to foster leadership and inspire one another and those we serve.
<p>Key Strategies</p>  <p>Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (In Berk & Roberts, 2009, p. 28)</p>	<p>The ECC SLV leans into Urie Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory to frame our work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boost the local economy by strengthening the early childhood system through investing for children and improving services. ▪ Advance the knowledge and skills of early childhood providers/educators to support the healthy development of young children and enhance their capacity to create high-quality learning environments. ▪ Connect families to vital resources and advance their knowledge and skills to support the healthy development of young children.





Our Work [Strategies, Activities & Tasks]





STRATEGY 1: Boost the local economy by strengthening the early childhood system through investing for children and improving services.		
Activity 1-A: Create ECC SLV Internal Capacity		
Task	Description	Progress Indicators
Maintain and Strengthen Organizational Infrastructure	Ensure adequate organizational funding and capacity to provide systems building, workforce development, quality learning environments and family supports	-Governance structure -Operating budget -Fundraising -Policies & procedures -Audit results
Maintain and Strengthen Human Resources (HR) Capacity	Ensure adequate human resources and staff capacity to meet funding/program requirements	-Qualified staff (org chart) -Professional development -HR policies -Staff health & well-being activities
Activity 1-B: Build Foundations of a Local System – Core Functions of ECC SLV		
Task	Description	Progress Indicators
Partnerships & Engagement	Convene community partners to share information and resources, identify issues, and problem-solve; while advancing robust public engagement to elevate early childhood issues.	-Community partnerships -Memorandums of understanding -Public engagement activities
Capacity Building & Sustainability	Provide continuous communitywide assessment, strategic planning, data collection, and monitoring to build and sustain local capacity for improvement of early childhood systems.	-Community assessment -Strategic plan -Data collection & analysis
Advocacy & Policy Development	Advocate and educate the community, policymakers, and families on policies that promote the healthy development of young children.	-Advocacy & educational activities
Professional Development & Leadership	Advancing the knowledge and skills of early childhood providers, educators, and families to support the healthy development of young children.	-See Strategies 2 & 3
Grant & Fiscal Management	Steward funds to improve local early childhood services and support, and disperse them to qualified providers and partners for effective service delivery implementation.	-Funding leveraged -See Strategies 2 & 3

STRATEGY 2: Early Childhood Workforce & Environments:


- Advancing the knowledge and skills of early childhood providers and educators to support the healthy development of young children.
- Enhance early childhood professionals' capacity to create high-quality learning environments.

Activity 2-A: Early Childhood Professional Pathways and Training




Task	Description	Progress Indicators
<p>Professional Development Pathways for EC Qualifications</p> 	<p>Support early childhood workforce with information/support on the Colorado Professional Development Information System (PDIS) and professional development pathways and connect them to scholarship opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -PDIS participants -PDIS credentialed professionals (level) -Scholarship recipient data -Other pathway data -Teacher/Director qualifications data
<p>Child Care Resource & Referral and Navigation</p> 	<p>Offer navigation support to all new child care programs including Family Child Care Home (FCCH) providers and Family, Friend & Neighbor (FFN) care providers. Annually update all licensed provider records in Colorado Shines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Providers served -Resources provided -Increase in licensed care -Provider updates completed
<p>Foundational Expanding Quality for Infants & Toddlers Training</p> 	<p>The Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care (EQIT) 48-hour course of training is designed for individuals like you who currently work with or plan to work with infants and toddlers and are interested in improving your knowledge and skills. Participants in the EQIT Course learn about the importance of brain development in the first 3 years of life, social/emotional, cognitive, and physical development, and working with families as well as effective strategies for curriculum and discipline through 16 3-hour modules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training schedule -Training content -Participation records -Pre & post surveys -ECE 111 credit
<p>Foundational Pyramid Model Training</p> 	<p>The Pyramid Model training provides strategies to foster social emotional health of the child. It builds upon a tiered public health approach to providing universal support to all children to promote wellness, targeted services to those who need more support, and intensive services to those who need them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training schedule -Training content -Participation records -Pre & post surveys



<p>Seedlings Training for anyone who engages with children 0-8 children</p> 	<p>Seedlings is a hands-on learning, relationship building, and social connections curriculum. This science-based curriculum blends principles from neuroscience around brain growth and development. The 10-week in-person courses explain how stress impacts the brain, body, and behaviors over a lifetime and how it is shared from adults to children. It provides support for adults to break the intergenerational transmission of toxic stress, promotes mental wellness, and offers coping strategies in a safe, judgment-free space with support and resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training schedule -Training content -Participation records -Pre & post surveys
<p>Aim 4 Excellence National Director Credential Course</p> 	<p>Aim4Excellence offers an engaging and interactive online professional learning experience that focuses on the core leadership and management competencies early childhood leaders need. Aim4Excellence is eligible for college credit, supports National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) program accreditation, and aligns with state professional development credentials. Scholarships and support available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training schedule -Training content -Participation records -Pre & post surveys -College credit
<p>Branches Training for Directors/Admin Teams</p> 	<p>Branches is a virtual trauma-based data driven course specifically designed for directors and coaches in early childhood settings. It provides identification of trauma, strategies to deal with the effects of trauma, and relationship building skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training schedule -Training content -Participation records -Pre & post surveys
<p>Project Include</p> 	<p>Project Include provides training, support, and equipment to assist licensed Colorado family child care homes, child care centers, and preschools in developing learning environments and curriculums that are more inclusive for all children, including those with delays/disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Participating providers -Training completed -Equipment loaned
<p>Additional Training is provided or facilitated with partners</p>	<p>Early Head Start teacher connections Emergency Preparedness Cavity Free at 3 Universal Precautions CPR/First Aide Small Business Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training schedule -Training content -Participation records

Activity 2-B: Assessments for Programs, Classrooms and Professionals


Task	Description	Progress Indicators
<p>Assessments</p> 	<p>Assess quality services/needs of early childhood programs, classrooms and professionals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -CO Shines Quality Rating Level data -Environment Rating Scale (ERS) assessments -Pyramid (TPOT & TPITOS) screenings -CHILD -PERM -Assessment data analysis

Activity 2-C: Coaching and Consultation


<p>Early Head Start Coaching</p> 	<p>An Early Head Start coach is a professional who works directly with early childhood educators, specifically with infant and toddler early care teachers, supervisors, and directors to build capacity for continuous quality improvement. Utilizing Practice Based Coaching (PBC) - a cyclical process for supporting the use of effective practices that lead to positive outcomes for children and families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coaching logs & hours -Data analysis
<p>Quality Improvement Coaching</p> 	<p>Colorado Shines is the quality rating and improvement system for all of Colorado's licensed early care and learning programs serving children ages 0-5. Services include coaching to prepare for the Colorado Shines Quality Rating licensed child care centers, family child care homes and preschool programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coaching hours -QRIS quality rating data -Quality improvement materials purchased -Data analysis
<p>Universal Preschool Quality Improvement Implementation Coaching</p> 	<p>Quality Standards are required for participating programs in the CO Universal Preschool Program. The ECC SLV offers support and coaching for Universal Preschool Program service providers (licensed community-based, school-based, or home-based preschool providers).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coaching hours -QRIS quality rating data -Data analysis
<p>EQIT Relate Coaching</p> 	<p>Coaching for Expanding Quality for Infants and Toddlers (EQIT) training participants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coaching hours -Coaching logs

<p>Pyramid Model Coaching (Group & Individual)</p> 	<p>Group coaching: the Coachee Team participates, without children present, in 8 Group Coaching meetings on 4 specific topics. These group coaching meetings will focus on the promotional and prevention levels of the Pyramid Model regarding responsive relationships and high-quality supportive environments. Group Coaching Time Commitment-12 hours 4 months. Individual coaching: coaching Time Commitment-9 hours over 4 months.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coaching hours -Data analysis using pre & post pyramid assessment tools
<p>Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation</p> 	<p>Empowering Caregivers to Support the Healthy Social-Emotional Development of Infants & Children. Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Can Help Caregivers Support Social-Emotional Development & Address Challenging Behaviors.</p> <p>Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Consultants work with caregivers (early childhood staff, parents, teachers, etc.) to build knowledge, skills, confidence and reflective capacity with a focus on social emotional wellness for caregivers and children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Consultation hours -Service plans & goals -# of referrals -# of open cases (program, classroom, child) -# of closed cases - Community outreach activities



STRATEGY 3: Connect families to vital resources and advance their knowledge and skills to support the healthy development of young children.


Activity 3-A: Provide home visitation services with families		
Task	Description	Progress Indicators
<p>Parents As Teachers (PAT) Home Visiting Program</p> 	<p>PAT is an evidence-based home visiting program designed to empower parents as their child's first teacher. PAT utilizes a home visitation model, working with families from pregnancy—kindergarten. The Parents as Teachers program promotes the optimal early development, learning and health of young children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -# Parent educators -# Participating families -# Home visits -Child development screenings -Family goals -Social Connections - Resources -Graduation rates

Activity 3-B: Provide quality early childhood services for infants and toddlers



Task	Description	Progress Indicators
<p>Early Head Start Program</p> 	<p>Quality Child Care and other services for expectant families & children birth to age 3 years. Services are provided in partnership with local early childhood programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Goal Early Head Start children experience high quality, inclusive care and education that ensures they are ready to succeed in preschool and beyond. • Family Goal - Families are leaders and advocates for their children, build connections in the community to improve their own skills, and engage as their children’s first teacher. • Early Childhood Professional’s Goal - The Program will implement high-quality, inclusive teaching practices and environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Community partners -Infants/Toddlers served -Family & community services -Health & safety/nutrition -Education, disabilities/child development screenings -Staff qualifications -Program goal progress -EC mental health consultation

Activity 3-C: Family navigation support and resources

Task	Description	Progress Indicators
<p>Child Care Resource & Referral</p> 	<p>Implement the Colorado regional resource and referral network to deliver services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help families to navigate the Colorado Shines system to access child care services • Access to child care information for families • Connect families to other needed information and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child care referrals -Family resources provided
<p>Colorado Universal Preschool Program Navigation</p> 	<p>Assist families identifying a participating program and enrolling in Colorado Universal Preschool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary program • Every Colorado child in the year before they are eligible for kindergarten • Receives up to 15 hours of funded preschool each week for the August - May school year • Attend a high-quality preschool of their choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of preschool age children served -Families supported in enrollment

<p>SLV Diaper Bank</p> 	<p>Need Diapers? ECC SLV has received grant funding to provide FREE diapers, wipes and creams to families across the San Luis Valley. Limit 1 box of diapers, wipes and cream per month per child within the household.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Diapers purchased -Diapers distributed by County -Participating partners
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Activity 3-D: Provide training and leadership development opportunities to families and family, friend, neighbor (FFN) care providers

Task	Description	Progress Indicators
<p>Positive Solutions for Families [and FFN's] Training</p> 	<p>Positive Solutions for Families is an evidence-based, family-friendly workshop of 7 sessions to help promote positive and effective parenting / caregiving behaviors. Includes information to Promote children's social and emotional skills; Understand their child's challenging behaviors; Use positive approaches to help children learn appropriate behavior.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training schedule -Training content -Participation records -Pre & post surveys
<p>Seedlings Training for Families & FFNs</p> 	<p>Seedlings is a hands-on learning, relationship building, and social connections curriculum. This science-based curriculum blends principles from neuroscience around brain growth and development. The 10-week courses explain how stress impacts the brain, body, and behaviors over a lifetime and how it is shared from adults to children. It provides support for adults to break the intergenerational transmission of toxic stress, promotes mental wellness, and offers coping strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training schedule -Training content -Participation records -Pre & post surveys

School Readiness Plan

The San Luis Valley has 4680 children (birth to 5 years) and only 1440 licensed child care spaces. 69% of children are without access to licensed care. Additionally, there are 2533 infants and toddlers - children (birth to age 3 years) and only 289 licensed child care spaces for this age group, leaving 89% of our babies without access to licensed care.

Strategy developed in partnership with community partners including county departments of human/social services, to target and recruit licensed early childhood education programs that are rated in the Colorado Shines system, actively working toward achieving Colorado Shines system level two (2) rating.

Task/Description	Progress Indicators
Increase the access and availability of high-quality child care for children participating in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -QRIS quality rating data -fiscal agreements w/ Counties -children served
Target quality improvement funding to improve the level of quality at participating early childhood education programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -quality improvement funds dispersed -quality rating data
Promote family involvement as aligned to the family engagement quality indicator within the Colorado Shines quality rating and improvement system framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -family engagement survey data -quality rating data