

# Whatcom County Early Learning Model Draft 10/19/05

VISION: All children have high quality early care and learning experiences that support optimal growth and development leading to success in school and life. **All schools are ready for children and all children enter school *ready for school-- emotionally resilient and socially competent* with the language and literacy skills needed to become readers, writers, clear communicators, and **critical thinkers**.**

MISSION: Assist local communities in Whatcom County to increase quality of and access to learning experiences that support optimal growth and development in all children, in all domains.

GOAL: Develop a systems approach across county programs and agencies for identifying strategies, creating partnerships, and maximizing the resources available to support families, caregivers, and teachers with children ages birth to five in assuring the quality of each and every child's early learning experience.

**GUIDING BELIEFS:** We believe in the joy of raising and caring for children

.....Adults enjoyment of life with children

....our lives with children and their lives with us

**A. All parents and caregivers have the ability to promote language and literacy development as well as positive social and emotional development of young children.**

Outcomes	General Strategies	County Strategies	Sample of County Actions	Local Resources:	Regional Pilot Strategies
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<p><b>Parent and Caregiver Changes:</b> Increased nurturing behaviors to promote children's optimal language and social-emotional development.</p> <p><b>System Changes:</b> Increased availability of quality, appropriate and coordinated opportunities for families that promote and maintain healthy development in the areas of language and social/emotional competence.</p> <p><b>Child Changes:</b> Increased number and percentage of children entering kindergarten with developmentally appropriate language and literacy and social-emotional skills.</p>	<p>Ensure that communications with all who work with young children emphasize the importance of language and literacy and social, emotional, and mental health</p> <p>Promote existing programs' awareness and implementation of models of services and supports for young families that are effective, culturally competent and community-based.</p> <p>Promote existing programs' awareness and implementation of practices that provide opportunities for education and social connectedness for families.</p> <p>Promote providers knowledge of social, emotional, language development, and mental health of young children through collaborative professional development.</p>	<p><b>Increase access to educational opportunities which develop initial bonding and attachment skills as in Promoting First Relationships.</b></p> <p><b>Provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to be nurtured and supported, ie "Learning About Children Together".</b></p> <p><b>Develop and use a common literacy message to be used among parents, care providers, teachers, and the general public.</b></p> <p><b>Support social and emotional skill development in all early learning settings (natural environments).</b></p>	<p>Healthy Family Newsletter</p> <p>St. Joseph Hospital new parent packets</p> <p>Baby Connections /Toddler Connections</p> <p>BTC Parent/Infant &amp; Parent Toddler classes</p> <p>Home visits for new parents</p> <p>LACT Head Start/Early Head Start/Child Care Partnerships-home visitors &amp; groups</p> <p>Literacy materials for new parents/family literacy support</p> <p>Behavioral /Mental Health Consultation (on site) for families, caregivers, and teachers, B-12 yrs.</p> <p>Parent/Child Early Intervention Therapeutic playgroups</p>	<p>Brigid Collins</p> <p>St. Joseph Hospital</p> <p>Bellingham Technical College &amp; NW Early Learning</p> <p>Bellingham Technical College</p> <p>Whatcom County Health Dept; Mother Baby;</p> <p>Child Care &amp; Family Resources/ Opportunity Council</p> <p>Early Childhood Opportunities. Northwest/Opportunity Council</p> <p>Nooksack Valley Schools (NVCCF/EVENSTART) Bellingham Public Schools</p> <p>Infant Toddler Early Intervention-Opportunity Council, WCEL, Lummi Early Childhood, Nooksack Center for Children and Families</p>	<p><b>Welcome Baby</b> Recognizing that the most significant brain development occurs in the first three years of life, public health departments, or their designees, in Island, San Juan, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties are increasing support to parents with infants and toddlers. Parent/infant groups, modeled after the <i>Welcome Baby</i> program in Skagit County, support the initial bonding and attachment that is necessary for healthy social and emotional development. Early literacy is promoted through language enrichment, book reading and singing.</p> <p><b>Curriculum Support</b> Implementation of the <i>Steps To Achieving Resilience</i> (STAR) curriculum to structure social/emotional and emergent literacy learning activities in preschool environments will occur in over 60 classes. 40 classes will use the DECA.</p>
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**B. All children have access to developmentally and culturally appropriate services in safe, responsive, stimulating, high quality environments.**

Outcomes	General Strategies	County Strategies	Sample of County Actions	Local Resources:	Regional Pilot Strategies
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<p><b>Parent and Caregiver Changes:</b> Increased understanding of what children need across diverse populations for optimal health and development (<i>physical well-being and motor, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, cognition and general knowledge, and language, com., and literacy.</i>) as identified and defined in research (e.g. in the Washington Early Learning and Development Benchmarks, NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice, etc.) Improved ability of families to access and participate in quality child care and preschool programs that meet families' needs. Increased ability to access community resources and support networks.</p> <p><b>System Changes:</b> Increased number and percent of early care and learning programs that increase quality and are rewarded by increased subsidy/payment. Increased wages for quality early care and learning professionals. Improved early childhood teacher preparation. Increased systems recognition of families role as the primary nurturers and teachers of their children. Increased public awareness and support of early childhood education, health, and school readiness as a major contributor to economic growth and health communities. Increased availability of community resources and support networks for families and caregivers.</p>	<p>Develop a common understanding of "What children should know and be able to do? Between birth and kindergarten entry, as indicated in the Washington Early Learning and Development Benchmarks. Enhance the availability and quality of child care and preschool programs. Promote children's health in early care and education programs. Support high quality professional development services for providers. Support career and wage ladders. Increase number of early childhood educators obtaining higher education degrees. Develop capacity within the early care and education systems to engage in family support.</p> <p><b>Child Changes:</b> Increased number and percentage of children entering kindergarten healthy and ready for school, including learning and development in physical well-being, health, and motor development, social and emotional development, approaches toward learning, cognition and general knowledge, and language communication, and literacy.</p>	<p>Teachers of young children are supported to get CDA, AA and BA degrees</p> <p>Maintain a consultation and education programs for early childhood programs, ie Collaboration for Children</p> <p>Establish Vertical Teaming within school district areas (birth to 3, preschool, K-3)</p> <p>Use common screening tools, throughout the learning community, ie Ages and Stages Questionnaire, DAYC, DECA</p> <p>Develop funding mechanism and capacity so that all children have universal access to preschool provided in a variety of settings such as preschool, child care, ECEAP/Head Start, etc.</p> <p>Support increased funding to early learning and care programs based on the Quality Rating and Information System and the Tiered reimbursement system.</p>	<p>Child Care Teacher Scholarships Early Childhood programs &amp; classes</p> <p>STARS courses &amp; wksp</p> <p>Child Care Resource &amp; Referral educational opportunities, STARS, and on site consultation (Whatcom County Collaboration for Children)</p> <p>Northwest Early Learning Literacy projects: Collaboration for Children Child Care and Family Resources</p> <p>Nooksack Center for Children &amp; Families Head Start Coop Preschools Private Preschools Child Care</p> <p>Homeless/Emergency Child Care Subsidy and support.</p>	<p>WA Scholarships for Child Care Professionals (formerly TEACH)</p> <p>WCC, BTC, NIC, Opportunity Council, private trainers</p> <p>Opportunity Council CCR&amp;R</p> <p>NW ESD 189, WCC</p> <p>School Districts</p> <p>Opportunity Council/ CCR&amp;R NCCF ECONW WCC Child Care</p>	<p><b>Collaboration for Children</b> Early childhood educators will attend two half-day seminars and received 8-12 hours of on-site consultation from an Early Learning Specialist to promote emergent literacy and social development and positive learning environments in preschool or child care settings. Teachers also receive assistance with screening and assessment tools and free curriculum tools to support early learning and development and one credit a quarter.</p> <p>Some funds will pay for tuition assistance for other classes those in <i>Collaboration for Children</i> may need toward an A.A. or B .A. in ECE.</p> <p>Implementation of the <i>Steps To Achieve Resilience</i> (STAR) curriculum will increase the quality of early childhood education environments.</p> <p><b>Increasing Slots for Preschool</b> Programs working with <i>Collaboration for Children</i> may apply for scholarship funds to support enrollment of up to a total of 60 children for preschool next year.</p>
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**C. All families have access to parenting education and support, including information about promoting healthy growth and development.**

Outcomes	General Strategies	County Strategies	Some Sample County Actions	Local Resources:	Regional Pilot Strategies
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<p><b>Parent and Caregiver Changes:</b> Improved child/parent/caregiver relationships by reducing parent and caregiver stress and nurturing family networks.</p> <p>Increased demonstrated parenting skills to support children's development and health.</p> <p>Increased frequency of parents/caregivers accessing resources and support networks.</p> <p><b>System Changes:</b> Increased resources for parenting education and supportive services. Increased family inclusion in the development of policies and implementation of strategies influencing the development and health of young children in our community.</p> <p><b>Child Changes:</b> Increased number and percentage of children who are nurtured in safe, stable, and supportive families. Increased number and percentage of children entering kindergarten healthy and ready to continue learning..</p>	<p><b>Provide information to parents and facilitate connection to needed services and supports.</b> <b>Provide professional development programs, services, and supports for professionals providing information and support to parents.</b> <b>Provide programs and supports for educators and trainers.</b></p>	<p><b>Integrate the "Child Profile" Messages as a resource for families, care providers and teachers in early learning settings.</b></p> <p><b>Develop programs &amp; Resource Centers that serve parents where they are (i.e WIC, child care settings, schools, medical offices, etc.)</b></p> <p><b>Provide access to a variety of parenting skill development opportunities ensuring that all families can access.</b></p>	<p>Child Profile packets sent to each home</p> <p>Drop in/ resource room for parents</p> <p>Baby Connections/Toddler Connections—free courses</p> <p>Parent &amp; Infant courses Parent &amp; Toddler courses Parenting Discussion courses</p> <p>EVEN START</p> <p>Parent coop preschools</p> <p>Head Start parent groups</p> <p>School District Parent contacts for Birth to Five issues</p> <p>Strengthening Families courses</p> <p>Learning About Children Together (parent ed model) CC R &amp; R</p> <p>Developmental Assessment Clinic</p> <p>Family Resources Coordination - Infant Toddler Early Intervention, B-3) and Children 3-12.</p>	<p>Health Dept Child Care BTC, WCC, NWIC, OppCoun</p> <p>Mother Baby Center BTC, WCC, Readiness to Learn Schools</p> <p>Bellingham Tech College/NW Early Learning grant</p> <p>Bellingham Technical College</p> <p>NVSD</p> <p>Whatcom Community College</p> <p>Early Childhood Opp NW</p> <p>Blaine, Ferndale, Meridian, Mt. Baker, Nooksack Schools/NW Early Learning grant</p> <p>Whatcom Co—WSU Cooperative Extension</p> <p>Child Care and Family Resources/Opportunity Council, BTC, WCC, child care homes and centers</p> <p>Whatcom County Health Dept/Opportunity Council</p> <p>(b-3) Opportunity Council (lead agency), Whatcom Center for Early Learning, Lummi Early Childhood, Nooksack School Dist (NVCCF)., Ferndale School Dist. (3-12 Opportunity Council and WCHD.</p>	<p><b>Community and Technical College Parenting Collaboration Edmonds, Skagit, and Bellingham Technical Colleges will each offer three parenting classes in your communities next year. Parents will learn the importance of relationships, rich language environments, and the support of emergent literacy skills to future school success.</b></p> <p><b>College/School District Collaboration</b> Northwest Early Learning is recruiting thirty elementary schools to partner with local community/ technical college to offer two parenting classes and provide resources to the parents and early childhood educators in their area.</p>
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**D. All children have access to health insurance, a medical home, and comprehensive, consistent, culturally appropriate health services.**

Outcomes	General Strategies	County Strategies	Some Sample County Actions	Local Resources:	Regional Pilot Strategies
<p><b>Parent and Caregiver Changes:</b> Increased understanding and improved consumer skills of comprehensive health care <i>(including medical, dental, mental health, vision and involvement in the health system as a skilled consumer)</i>.</p> <p>Increased ability to recognize an emerging issue with their child's health or development and connect with appropriate services.</p> <p><b>System Changes:</b> Increased number and percentage of children who have medical insurance and increased number and percent of children receiving early intervention before entering kindergarten..</p> <p><b>Child Changes:</b> Healthy children indicated by improved child health and wellness status.</p> <p>Increased number and percentage of children who receive recommended preventive care <i>(e.g., well-child, immunizations)</i></p> <p>Increased number and percentage of children who have access to ongoing comprehensive health care in their medical home <i>(including medical, dental, mental health and vision)</i>.</p>	<p>Increase awareness among all who care for young children about the importance of comprehensive health care, early identification for risk of developmental delay</p> <p>Enroll more eligible children in public health insurance programs (Medicaid, SCHIP, Basic Health, SSI).</p> <p>Facilitate access to a Medical Home for all children (including medical, dental, mental health and vision services).</p> <p>Make developmental assessment and referral to Early Intervention (EI) accessible.</p>	<p>Increase awareness about the importance of comprehensive health care, ie mental, dental, physical health care</p> <p>Assist families in securing a medical home for their child(ren).</p> <p><b>Integrate the "Child Profile" Messages as a resource for families, care providers and teachers in early learning settings.</b></p> <p>Provide all early childhood teachers and caregivers <i>(medical care providers, families, school districts, child care professionals)</i> with tools to access and utilize health and prevention services —ie Bright Futures materials, Oral Health Info, etc</p> <p>Increase awareness among all early childhood teachers and caregivers <i>(medical care providers, families, school districts, child care professionals)</i> of the important of early identification and early intervention.</p>	<p>First Steps pregnancy (DSHS)</p> <p>Prenatal-age 5 health support</p> <p>Coordinated Child Find/early intervention/special education services/common assessments- protocols</p> <p>ABCD/CHOMP- (Children's Healthy Mouth Project)</p> <p>Pending-Medical Homes Health Consultant (Building Medical Homes, Ensuring Bright Futures)</p> <p>Medicaid Outreach</p>	<p>Whatcom County Health Dept; Mother Baby Center; Sea Mar</p> <p>Opportunity Council, Whatcom Center for Early Learning, Lummi Early Childhood, Nooksack School Dist, and Ferndale School Dist.</p> <p>Early Childhood Opp NW Bright Futures materials</p> <p>Whatcom County Health Department and Opportunity Council</p> <p>Whatcom Alliance for Health Care Access</p> <p>Interfaith Health Clinic</p> <p>ITEIP/Assessment Clinic/School Districts/Child Find</p>	