

EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK UPDATE KEY MESSAGES and TALKING POINTS

BACKGROUND

The *Framework* was originally developed in 2008 as a resource and guide for comprehensive early childhood systems work in Colorado.

Numerous logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints served as building blocks for the information included in the original *Framework*.

Since its release in 2008, state and local early childhood stakeholders have used the *Framework* as a resource to help identify needs, guide planning and decision making, and build partnerships.

THE PURPOSE

This newly updated *Framework* promotes a shared vision for state agencies, local communities, and partner coalitions – across early learning and development, health and well-being, and family support and education.

The *Framework* is intended to foster collaboration to ensure all children in Colorado reach their developmental potential. Stakeholders are encouraged to continue to use the updated *Framework* as a resource to mobilize action and enable highly effective community planning, resource development, and coordinated service delivery.

The *Framework* is intended to be used by partners across Colorado to guide community conversations and strengthen collaborations to enhance early childhood services and supports. It provides a roadmap for local communities to identify strengths, barriers, and gaps within local systems.

The newly updated *Framework* promotes a shared vision for local communities to better integrate early childhood services and education into a comprehensive system that ensures all children are valued, healthy, and thriving.

The *Framework* provides a roadmap for those who work with and on behalf of families across all settings to ensure all young children reach their developmental potential and succeed in school and in life.

THE NEED FOR UPDATING

Colorado received national recognition for the creation of the 2008 Framework and continues to be a leader in the early childhood field. Seven years later, new research, state investments, and initiatives inspired the Early Childhood Leadership Commission to refresh this valuable tool to reflect the current Colorado context and progress.

HOW THE FRAMEWORK WAS UPDATED

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) led the update the *Framework* and appointed a Framework Steering Committee with cross-sector experience and expertise to guide the content and graphic revisions.

The process to update the *Framework* engaged hundreds of stakeholders from across the state with cross-domain experience and expertise to ensure the second iteration of the *Framework* remains a valuable resource and guide for communities and partners in Colorado.

The *Framework* project was made possible by the generous support received from Buell Foundation, Chambers Family Fund, Marsico Family Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, and Colorado's Office of Early Childhood. The *Framework* release was generously supported by The Ben and Lucy Ana Walton Fund at the Walton Family Foundation and The Colorado Health Foundation.

WHAT'S NEW

The *Framework* connects the essential components of a robust, prenatal through age eight, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results, including state and local economic and social benefits.

The *Framework* incorporates the latest research in early childhood, including the importance of development from prenatal to age three, transitions within and across programs, and the developmental continuum through age eight.

The *Framework* now has three domains instead of four to reflect the integration of social-emotional, mental and physical health. Emerging best practices emphasize the relationship between physical health and mental health.

The *Framework* highlights the value of having knowledgeable and responsive adults in licensed, non-traditional, and informal care settings.

The outcomes section is organized by access, quality, and equity to highlight the importance of a comprehensive and integrated early childhood system. Access recognizes that the availability of services is important. Quality recognizes that it is not enough for services to simply exist, but they must meet a quality standard. And equity recognizes that special populations need special attention.

This refreshed organization prompts partners from family support and education, health and well-being, and learning and development to consider the contributions made by all people working with and on behalf of children and families across the three domains.

The *Framework* includes a graphic that illustrates the developmental trajectory of children from prenatal through third grade. The focus is on the uniquely powerful relationship between the child and their parent/family. This relationship occurs within a context of other adults such as caregivers, teachers, and other professionals and the environment in which they live, work, and play. The graphic also highlights that these environments are impacted by local and state systems, including programmatic and public policies.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The *Framework* acknowledges that the family plays a critical role in a child's education and development beginning at birth.

Woven throughout the *Framework* is the vital role of adults who interact with and on behalf of children and families within local communities.

As a shared vision, the *Framework* lays a roadmap for how individuals, organizations, and agencies can achieve broader community collaborations that lead to better child outcomes.

The *Framework* underscores the need for interconnectedness and alignment between learning and development, family support and education, and health and well-being to have a strong and comprehensive early childhood system for children prenatal to age eight.

Not one individual organization or agency can do it all, but together, with a collective vision to guide our work, we will achieve better outcomes for Colorado children.

The *Framework* is intended to help partners see how their work contributes to a comprehensive early childhood system and the role each of us plays in ensuring all children in Colorado are valued, healthy, and thriving.

EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK UPDATE OVERVIEW

We know Colorado prospers when all children are healthy, valued and thriving. Communities rich in comprehensive early childhood services and learning experiences show greater prosperity and social gains. Creating a shared vision and pathways for collaboration is key to building successful early childhood systems and ultimately a successful Colorado. The *Framework* provides a pathway for those who work with and on behalf of families in all settings to ensure young children reach their developmental potential and are ready to succeed in school and in **life**.

BACKGROUND

The *Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework)* was originally developed in 2008 as a resource guide for comprehensive early childhood systems work in Colorado. Numerous logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints served as building blocks for the overarching *Framework*. Since its release, state and local early childhood stakeholders have used the *Framework* as a resource to help identify needs, guide planning and decision making, and build partnerships.

PURPOSE

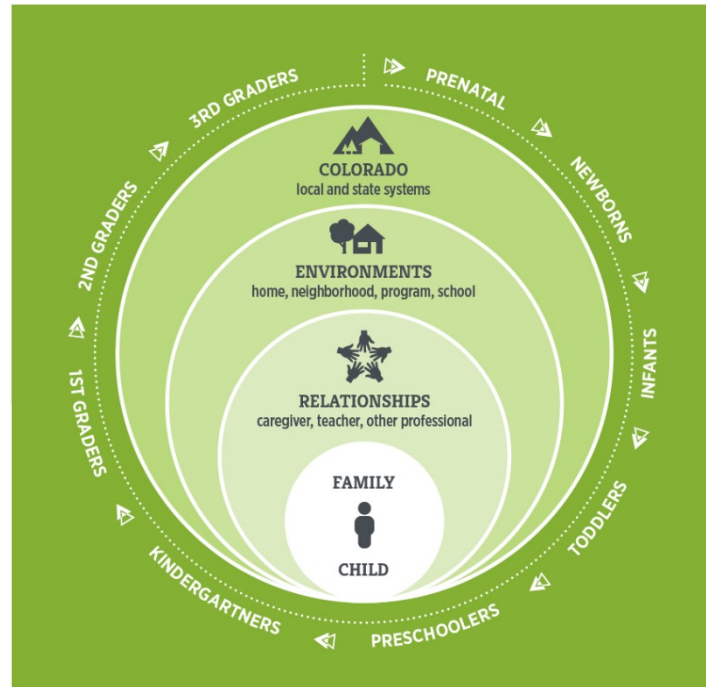
The newly updated *Framework* promotes a shared vision for state agencies, local communities, and partner coalitions – across early learning and development, health and well-being, family support and education. Stakeholders are encouraged to continue to use the updated *Framework* as a resource to mobilize action and enable highly effective community planning, resource development, and coordinated service delivery. As a roadmap for collaboration and community conversations, this model presents opportunities for local organizations to recommit their support and refine comprehensive services for children prenatal through age eight across Colorado.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Colorado's innovative and bold leadership in securing investments, increasing efficiencies, and launching new initiatives for early childhood inspired leaders to refresh this valuable tool. Not one individual, organization, or agency can do it all, but together our collective work at the state level, in local communities, and through public and private partnerships will help us achieve better outcomes for children. The *Framework* is intended to help us each see the value of our work in an early childhood system that ensures the economic and social success of all communities in Colorado.

WHAT'S NEW

- The *Framework* connects the essential components of a robust, prenatal through age eight, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results, including state and local economic and social benefits.
- The *Framework* incorporates the latest research in early childhood, including the importance of development from prenatal to age three, transitions within and across programs, and the developmental continuum through age eight.
- The *Framework* now has three domains instead of four to reflect the integration of social-emotional, mental and physical health. Emerging best practices emphasize the relationship between physical health and mental health.
- The *Framework* highlights the value of having knowledgeable and responsive adults in licensed, non-traditional, and informal care settings.
- The outcomes section is organized by access, quality, and equity to highlight the importance of a comprehensive and integrated early childhood system. Access recognizes that the availability of services is important. Quality recognizes that it is not enough for services to simply exist, but they must meet a quality standard. And equity recognizes that special populations need special attention.
- This refreshed organization prompts partners from family support and education, health and well-being, and learning and development to consider the contributions made by all people working with and on behalf of children and families across the three domains.
- The *Framework* includes a graphic that illustrates the developmental trajectory of children from prenatal through third grade. The focus is on the uniquely powerful relationship between the child and their parent/family. This relationship occurs within a context of other adults such as caregivers, teachers, and other professionals and the environment in which they live, work, and play. The graphic also highlights that these environments are impacted by local and state systems, including programmatic and public policies.



For more information:

www.earlychildhoodframework.org –Download the Framework (in English and Spanish), communications tools, success stories and resources.

www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com – Expand your knowledge of Colorado's early childhood initiatives and successes, plus the latest updates from the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC).

EARLY CHILDHOOD COLORADO FRAMEWORK UPDATE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *What is the Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework)?*

This newly updated *Framework* promotes a shared vision for state agencies, local communities, and partner coalitions – across early learning and development, health and well-being, and family support and education. It is intended to foster collaboration to ensure all children in Colorado reach their developmental potential. Stakeholders are encouraged to continue to use the updated *Framework* as a resource to mobilize action and enable highly effective community planning, resource development, and coordinated service delivery.

Updating the *Framework* presents an opportunity for communities to recommit to a shared vision for early childhood in Colorado. It provides a roadmap for local communities to identify strengths, barriers and gaps within their local system

2. *How was the Framework developed?*

The *Framework* was originally developed in 2008 as a resource and guide for comprehensive early childhood systems work in Colorado. Numerous logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints served as building blocks for the information included in the original *Framework*. Since its release in 2008, state and local early childhood stakeholders have used the *Framework* as a resource to help identify needs, guide planning, and decision making and build partnerships.

3. *Why did the Framework need to be updated?*

Colorado received national recognition for the creation of the 2008 *Framework* and continues to be a leader in the early childhood field. Seven years later, new research, state investments, and initiatives inspired the Early Childhood Leadership Commission to refresh this valuable tool to reflect the current Colorado context and progress.

4. *What was the process for updating the Framework?*

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) led the project to update the *Framework* and appointed a *Framework* Steering Committee to oversee the process and ensure a high level of openness and transparency. The work of the *Framework* Steering Committee included:

- Researching the latest state and national models to inform the work.
- Revising the *Framework* to reflect Colorado's early childhood expertise and current initiatives.
- Collecting input from hundreds of stakeholders across the state, including local early childhood councils, lawmakers, early childhood coalitions and partnerships, and state agencies.

The *Framework* project was made possible by the generous support received from Buell Foundation, Chambers Family Fund, Marsico Family Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, and Colorado's Office of Early Childhood. The *Framework* release was generously supported by The Ben and Lucy Ana Walton Fund at the Walton Family

Foundation and The Colorado Health Foundation. The update process began in January 2015 and the final *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* was endorsed by the ECLC in July 2015.

5. **What sectors comprised the Framework Steering Committee?**

The following areas of expertise were represented in the membership of the Framework Steering Committee:

- Early learning
- Family support and parent education
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Health
- Home visitation
- Prenatal to age 3
- K-12 education
- Professional development
- Special education
- Philanthropy
- State agencies
- Coalitions and partnerships
- Research and advocacy

6. **What's new in the Framework?**

Notable updates in the revised *Framework* include:

- The *Framework* connects the essential components of a robust, prenatal through age eight, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results, including state and local economic and social benefits.
- The *Framework* incorporates the latest research in early childhood, including the importance of development from prenatal to age three, transitions within and across programs, and the developmental continuum through age eight.
- The *Framework* now has three domains instead of four to reflect the integration of social-emotional, mental and physical health. Emerging best practices emphasize the relationship between physical health and mental health.
- The *Framework* highlights the value of having knowledgeable and responsive adults in licensed, non-traditional, and informal care settings.
- The outcomes section is organized by access, quality, and equity to highlight the importance of a comprehensive and integrated early childhood system.
- This refreshed organization prompts partners from family support and education, health and well-being, and learning and development to consider the contributions made by all people working with and on behalf of children and families across the three domains.

7. **How can the Framework be used in my community?**

The *Framework* serves many purposes and can be utilized by state and local partners to:

- **Communicate**- to increase the understanding of stakeholders, leaders, and the public around the importance of early childhood systems and services.
- **Plan**- to identify strengths, barriers and gaps in early childhood systems and services. The Framework can be used to facilitate decision making around priorities, and to identify new and/or different funding, program, or policy efforts. Additionally, the *Framework* can be used as a model to support new partnerships.
- **Evaluate**- to measure change for children, families, and communities.

8. **Where can I get more information about the Framework?**

www.earlychildhoodframework.org – Download the Framework (in English and Spanish), communications tools, success stories and resources.

www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com – Expand your knowledge of Colorado's early childhood initiatives and successes, plus the latest updates from the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC).



The “Elevator Pitch”

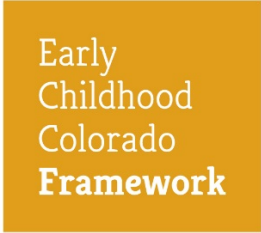
We all want the best outcomes for Colorado children. Finding effective ways to work together in early childhood settings is a challenge facing most local communities. Whether we’re talking with families, early learning centers, healthcare providers, state agencies, or nonprofit organizations – designing and implementing a comprehensive early childhood system takes a tremendous amount of community buy-in, planning and organization.

The *Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework)* promotes a shared vision for local communities to better integrate early childhood services and supports into a system that ensures all children are valued, healthy and thriving.

Developed by a broad coalition of stakeholders from across the state and multiple interest areas, the updated Framework connects essential components of a robust, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results which will lead to state and local economic and social benefits.

As a powerful pathway for community conversations and collaboration, the Framework prioritizes services and supports for children and families, and illustrates the connections between home, neighborhoods and schools. The *Framework* makes it clear - communities can better align early childhood learning and development, family support and education, and health and well-being to achieve better outcomes for children and all of Colorado.

Not one individual, organization, or agency can do it all, but together our collective work at the state level, in local communities, and through public-private partnerships will help us ensure all young children in Colorado are ready to succeed in school and in life.



<<INSERT LOCAL AGENCY LOGO HERE

Sample

MEDIA RELEASE

Contact: LEAD AGENCY CONTACT
TITLE
EMAIL/PHONE/OTHER
WEBSITE

<EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL/NAME> supports newly updated *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*

*Creates a shared vision for early childhood in Colorado
Connects early childhood success to economic and social benefits
Identifies pathways for partner collaboration*

(CITY/TOWN - DATE) – On <DATE>, Governor Hickenlooper and the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) released the newly updated *Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework)*. The *Framework* promotes a shared vision for local communities to better integrate early childhood services and education into a comprehensive system that ensures all children are valued, healthy and thriving. “We know Colorado prospers when all children are valued, healthy and thriving,” said Lieutenant Governor Garcia, a co-chair of the ECLC. “The release of this *Framework* is an opportunity for communities across the state to recommit to a shared vision for young children.”

<LOCAL ANGLE PARAGRAPH HERE: 1) Intended use of the *Framework*; 2) Announce meeting/event/celebration for the *Framework*; 3) Highlight local effort to share/disseminate the *Framework*>

<SAMPLE QUOTE FROM EC COUNCIL LEADER OR OTHER LOCAL EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADER>

- “Our community continues to embrace the challenge of working with diverse partners to improve outcomes for children and families. The *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* is a valuable tool to help us build on existing efforts and achieve a strong, successful early childhood system.”
- “Children and families are the heart and soul of this work. Hundreds of passionate early childhood experts and key stakeholders engaged in a process to ensure the *Framework* reflects the latest research and progress in Colorado. “The investments we make in children prenatal through age eight help to achieve financial and social returns in our community, including savings on special education, increased high-school graduation rates, and decreased crime.
- The *Framework* provides a pathway for broader collaboration and ultimately better child outcomes. The *Framework* is embraced by business leaders, school districts, health and mental health providers, early childhood councils, foundations and others.
- We see our work in the *Framework* and will continue to use it to strengthen partnerships in our community to ensure all children are healthy, valued and thriving.”

The *Framework* will create better pathways for partner collaboration, inspire meaningful community conversations and serve as a useful resource for coordinated action at both state and local levels. Many Colorado communities used the original 2008 *Framework* for highly-effective community planning, resource development and service delivery.

The updated *Framework* incorporates the latest research in early childhood, including the importance of early learning and development prior to age three, the transition from preschool to kindergarten, and the integration of social-emotional well-being and health. Hundreds of stakeholders and content experts participated in the process to update the *Framework* to ensure it reflects what is happening in Colorado today.

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission led the project which was made possible because of the support received from Buell Foundation, Chambers Family Fund, Marsico Family Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, and Colorado's Office of Early Childhood. The *Framework* release was supported by The Ben and Lucy Ana Walton Fund at the Walton Family Foundation and The Colorado Health Foundation.

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About <Early Childhood Council or Organization Name>

About the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC)

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission serves as Colorado's state early childhood advisory council. The ECLC strives to increase the alignment and coordination of programs and services for expectant mothers and young children up to the age of eight. This high-level Governor appointed leadership commission is co-chaired by Lt. Governor Joe Garcia, Anna Jo Haynes and Barbara Grogan.

About the Office of Early Childhood

The Office of Early Childhood was established in 2012 in the Colorado Department of Human Services to align resources for children, families and early care and learning professionals. The Office provides collaborative leadership to best prepare Coloradoans for future success, through access to coordinated early childhood programs and family supports.

About the Early Childhood Colorado Framework

The Early Childhood Colorado Framework was originally developed in 2008 as a resource and guide for a comprehensive early childhood system. Numerous logic models, strategic plans, and blueprints served as building blocks for the information included in the original *Framework*. The ECLC led the effort to update the *Framework* with more than 600 key stakeholders, including early childhood experts and providers, policymakers, funders, early childhood coalitions and state agencies and departments.

Sample Newsletter Article

SUGGESTIONS

Effective newsletters celebrate an organization's accomplishments, inform and engage stakeholders, and promote the organization's mission. These missives are an essential part of any communications plan. Here's a few suggestions for sharing the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* update in feature articles:

- **Local voice:** Conduct an interview with a business leader, educator or other local influential using the list of FAQs as a starting point. Make it quick and simple by printing both questions and responses.
- **Local impact:** Share a success story of how the original version of the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* was implemented in the community.
- **Local perspective:** Use local data points to highlight challenges or needs in early childhood systems and services. Outline plans for utilizing the Framework in organizational and community collaboration.
- **Use or modify the attached sample article - "BUILDING ON SUCCESS".**

SAMPLE TITLE: BUILDING ON SUCCESS

The research is clear that the early years are the most effective time to invest and lay a foundation for future learning and achievement. Our community has made great strides supporting young children and their families. <Insert local examples here>. But we have more to do to ensure that all children are healthy, valued and thriving.

Today, thanks to the dedicated hard work of hundreds of early childhood stakeholders across the state, we have an updated roadmap, the *Early Childhood Colorado Framework*, to help continue to build on our successes and achieve an integrated and comprehensive early childhood system – across early learning and development, family support and education, and health and well-being.

Developed by a broad coalition of stakeholders from across the state and multiple interest areas, the updated Framework connects essential components of a robust, family-focused early childhood system to tangible results, including state and local economic and social benefits.

As a powerful pathway for community collaboration and conversations, the Framework prioritizes services and supports for children and families, and illustrates the connections between home, neighborhoods and schools. The *Framework* makes it clear - communities can better align early childhood learning and development, family support and health to achieve better outcomes for children and all of Colorado.

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