



Goal I: Ensure early learning environments in Thurston County where children birth to five will learn, grow and enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

<b>Objectives:</b>	A Support children and families	B. Support child care providers and caregivers	C. Evaluate the community need for parenting skills and stress reduction training	D. Increase availability of parent education services
<b>Strategies:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a local subsidy program for 100 low-income parents (including students) who are not eligible for state child care subsidies.</li> <li>2. Train child care providers on child social/emotional development where:  Consultants observe and reflect with the child care provider on a child's challenging behaviors.  Consultant and provider design a behavior plan and provider is assisted in implementing the plan to meet the child's social/emotional needs.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Award Block Grants to supplement provider wages, benefits and ongoing education. Award recipients would be evaluated at the start and end of the year using an Environmental Rating Scale.</li> <li>2. Conduct outreach to identify preschools operating in Thurston County.</li> <li>3. Offer incentives such as listing in a resource and referral data base or access to training and educational opportunities.</li> <li>4. Distribute a preschool evaluation tool for preschool self-evaluation.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaborate with United Way of Thurston County to include survey questions and needs assessment in the 2008 community survey.</li> <li>2. Conduct focus groups to enlarge survey information.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaborate with county providers to develop a menu of parenting skills, stress reduction and skill-building training/educational opportunities available to county residents.</li> <li>2. Coordinate with county providers to offer training/educational opportunities with an emphasis on low-income, at-risk parents.</li> <li>3. Develop a marketing campaign to promote parenting classes as a community-wide norm.</li> </ol>



*Thurston Early Childhood Coalition Strategic Plan October 2007*

<p><b>Outcomes:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have stable child care settings, contributing to optimal early learning experiences</li> <li>• Parents can afford stable child care for their children</li> <li>• Children improve relationships and learn to manage their own behavior</li> <li>• Providers increase their skills and knowledge to better respond to children's behaviors</li> <li>• Providers partner with families to facilitate children's success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool providers would participate in training and educational opportunities</li> <li>• Preschools would self-administer an evaluation tool and receive support for assessing and improving their practices</li> <li>• Turn-over would be less with higher wages and benefits available (Child care workers now make \$8.75 per hour average.)</li> <li>• Children would benefit from having consistent, more educated caregivers, leading to the stable relationships that enhance early learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A credible needs assessment for planning and implementation would exist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting training and education would be universally available</li> <li>• Parenting training and education would be culturally and linguistically varied to meet population needs</li> <li>• Parents would be more informed about child development and family functioning while children would develop more optimally and their early learning would be supported</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of WA</li> <li>• Campbell</li> <li>• Egeland</li> <li>• Kazdin &amp; Kendel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perry Pre-school</li> <li>• Abecedarian</li> <li>• Chicago</li> <li>• Harms and Harms (ECRS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Way of Thurston County</li> <li>• Thrive by Five</li> <li>• Department of Early Learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Washington State Institute for Public Policy</li> <li>• Children's Trust of Washington</li> <li>• Foundation for Early Learning</li> <li>• Department of Early Learning</li> </ul>



Goal II: Reduce community barriers and mitigate family risk factors that negatively impact the school readiness of children.

<b>Objectives:</b>	A. Increase the number of children and families who are enrolled in family support and early learning programs that are designed to serve children and families with high risk factors.	B. Increase the number of low-income and uninsured children birth to 5 years connected with a primary health care provider.	C. Increase the number of children on child care subsidies who are guaranteed a stable child care setting even if parent work status or schedule fluctuates.
<b>Strategies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustain and increase the enrollment in current programs underway in Thurston County that are identified by experts in the field as either “promising” or “evidence-based” for children, birth to five, who are at high risk. Those programs designated by the Washington Council on the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect include: Head Start/ECEAP, Nurse Family Partnership, Parents As Teachers, Promoting First Relationships.</li> <li>2. Identify “gaps” i.e.: populations of at-risk children, birth to five, who cannot be served effectively through existing promising or evidence based programs. For example: Children with serious social/emotional/mental health needs and children living with domestic violence.</li> <li>3. Identify additional evidence-based or promising programs to meet identified gaps.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enroll all eligible children on medical coupons or State Children’s Health Insurance Plan (SCHIP). Identify immigrant families and ways to reach them, work with CHOICE Regional Health Network and partner with community agencies that work with low-income families.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of providers who will enroll as patients, children on Medicaid and SCHIP. Consider implementing the Kids Get Care model in Thurston County by bringing together CHOICE, Providence St. Peter Family Medicine Residency Program, Thurston County Public Health and Social Services, Thurston-Mason Medical Society and Capital Medical Center.</li> <li>3. Identify a convener for implementing Kids Get Care model in Thurston County.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide organized input into the State’s Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) proposal regarding the need for pilot projects in which subsidized child care slots are contracted to centers that are willing to meet specific criteria identified in the Child Care Development Fund plan. Complete the statewide Survey Monkey, attend a community meeting, and provide comments and written input and complete the telephone survey.</li> <li>2. Confirm with the State that the above stated pilot project was included in the plan. If the answer is no, advocate again through a written campaign and confirm that the State plan was approved.</li> <li>3. Develop and implement a pilot program in partnership with Department of Early Learning where child care slots would be contracted to child centers that are willing to meet specific criteria identified in the State’s CCDF plan.</li> </ol>
<b>Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased percent of high risk children who are ready for school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved health outcomes for children at risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable child care placements</li> </ul>



Goal III: Increase public awareness and understanding of early brain development and readiness to learn

<b>Objectives:</b>	A. Increase public access to information and materials on early brain development and readiness to learn ages prenatal to eight.	B. Increase seamless transitions for children from home and community early learning experiences into school age settings based on common understanding and agreed upon definition of readiness.
<b>Strategies:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a replicable, research based community event to engage and educate the public, creating a signature event for enhanced public will and recognition of the importance of early learning.</li> <li>2. Implement a community wide awareness campaign to increase understanding of early brain development and school readiness.</li> <li>3. Recruit a Coalition coordinator who will: gather and compile relevant and reliable local early learning information including parenting classes, workshops and early childhood educator trainings; centralize current resources on brain development information such as Brain Net, Raising A Reader, Parents As Teachers and Born Learning; coordinate information on how to access brain development and school readiness resources; perform outreach; and identify the “first ten” community partners who would initiate a pilot campaign.</li> <li>4. Establish a marketing plan: develop a logo; finalize criteria for first ten community partners; establish a presentation team to generate community partnerships; and establish champions who will further the campaign by making public statements in support of early learning.</li> <li>5. Map points of access for brain development and readiness information: Include doctor's offices, dentists, libraries, schools, early learning settings, the home school community, faith based organizations, communities of color, businesses, booths at community events, etc. Explore the viability of permanent exhibits or displays.</li> <li>6. Deliver campaign information in a variety of modalities such as: proclamations; logo awards for community organizations and businesses; public service announcements; mailings; web sites; in person at meetings or home visits; community activities, etc. Have information included in bags provided to parents of newborns at hospitals.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organize opportunities for conversations between parents, child care providers, school staff and administrators to create a common understanding and agreed upon definition of school readiness by: identifying related resources and events in progress within Washington State; organizing forum logistics in local communities convened by community leaders; creating sample forum agendas and discussion questions and gathering and consolidating input.</li> <li>2. Develop strategies for schools to become places where families are welcomed to become part of the school community, from prenatal to birth and beyond.</li> </ol>



<b>Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater public will for early learning</li> <li>• Increased understanding of early brain development and school readiness</li> <li>• Increased involvement of community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened school-family relationships and communication</li> <li>• Enhanced school/community connections</li> </ul>
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Goal IV: Strengthen and coordinate funding and advocacy efforts to adequately fund early learning environments in Thurston County.

<b>Objective:</b>	A. Locate sources of funding and create partnerships with local, state and federal government, corporations and foundations.
<b>Strategies:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand advocacy for state legislative funding (grants or fee reimbursement) for early learning initiatives.</li> <li>2. Solicit corporate and local fraternal group sponsorship of early learning programs that assist and empower parents, providers, and children. Encourage members of the Thurston Early Childhood Coalition to join these groups, bringing early learning discussion to the table.</li> <li>3. Conduct one to two major fund raising events each year to establish and sustain a fund.</li> <li>4. Apply for private foundation and federal grant support for "promising practice" and "evidence-based" programs.</li> <li>5. Advocate for passage of the Thurston County Family Investment Initiative for a 0.3% local sales tax increase targeting \$6.7 million for early prevention/intervention programs for children.</li> </ol>
<b>Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased state funding of programs</li> <li>• Increased involvement of community</li> <li>• Increased local funding</li> <li>• Increased funding for identified programs</li> <li>• \$6.7 million for early intervention/prevention programs</li> </ul>