



Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting  
April 1, 2025

**Regional Coalition & Washington Communities for  
Children (WCFC) Updates**

**Regional Coalition Update**

**Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance, Northeast**

INWELA is continuing in our work to name a Fiscal Sponsor, create an Equity Statement and list of values, and make progress on our first charter. We have been thinking a lot about coalition sustainability in the face of our state's budget deficit and are excited to apply for grant opportunities in partnership with local organizations.

We have ramped up our efforts to talk with hard to reach families and health care providers about Vroom and the impact that simple, everyday interactions have on brain development and child well being. Our Regional Health Provider Voice Lead has really taken the lead on this, sharing Vroom materials en espanol with Manzanita House, Terra Connections, and multiple Spanish speaking families with young children at a parent/child community event, with Akin for their home based programing, and more!

Our Pend Oreille County Leads are continuing their work on the Early Childhood Comprehensive Services Grant cohort project - creating a database of resources for their rural community and surrounding areas. They will share these resources with the statewide Help Me Grow database.

Lastly, we revamped our local Child Care Voice meeting, and have seen an influx in participation. It's great to hear from and collaborate with providers on their needs and successes. As we continue to dive deeper into collaborating with local organizations and Spokane Public Schools around a shared Coordinated Recruitment and Enrollment System, this group will be a crucial source of information and knowledge.

**For more information, please contact: Colleen Condon, [colleen@lilaccityelc.com](mailto:colleen@lilaccityelc.com)**

**Investing in Children Coalition: Central**

Our team has been actively working to strengthen partnerships, advocate for key policy priorities, and support families in accessing vital services. Recently, we have focused on Advocacy Day efforts, collaboration with partners, and program developments.

## Regional Coalition Update

Looking ahead, we are excited to be hosting our 3<sup>rd</sup> Equity Workshop, which will provide a space for thoughtful discussion and learning around advancing equity in our work.

Additionally, we continue to track legislative updates, engage with community partners, and explore new opportunities to better serve families across the region.

**For more information, please contact: Lindsay Bowsell, [lindsayb@yakimavalleycf.org](mailto:lindsayb@yakimavalleycf.org)**

## King County

None currently.

**For more information, please contact: Logan Endres or Tristen Hall, [kcelc@childcare.org](mailto:kcelc@childcare.org)**

## North Central

The updates that the North Central Early Learning Coalition has to offer from our ongoing work are as follows:

In Chelan, Douglas, and Grant county's we have been expanding and strengthening our partnerships by engaging in community events with the following:

Community Foundation -Civic Design Team, partnership with support of parent advocacy and civil engagement, Mentoring Family Nurture Network to support family wellbeing

OVOF -symposium for Health improvement on social determinants of health

Attending the NCW ELC Home visiting committee meeting, collaborating with H.S, Nurse family partnerships, Parents as teachers, Maternal health supports at Confluence

Sharing early learning resources with early learning providers and families at outreach events.

Partnering with CCA of WA with advocate cohorts of parent and providers, engaging and updating them on the advocacy efforts at the state level, including providing testimony at advocacy days with senators and legislators.

Collaborating with DCYF and DSHS to bring a Fatherhood Cafe' to our south-central region

Connect NCELC Stategic plan and coalition cross walk at WCFC work group

Continued collaboration with the Early Childhood Developmental Health Systems work with Grant County Department of Health to develop resource coordination work

### **Regional Coalition Update**

We plan to attend Apple Blossom Parade, Family fun Fair and Resource Fairs at Saint Jude's Landing and Chelan Douglas Child Service Association, distributing Vroom materials in English and Spanish.

We are hosting families and providers to engage in the celebrations of NAEYC's Week of the Young Child with activities and a proclamation for the week of the young child signed by Representatives Mike Steele and Chelan and Douglas county Mayors

Okanogan county continues their work on:

Sharing out the report gathered on their Childcare needs assessment, of focus groups

Hosted regional meetings at OCCDA, with bright spark, CDHD and health systems

Received invitation to share childcare needs assessment information with the rural WA care economy work group

**For more information please contact: Nancy Spurgeon, [nspurgeon49@gmail.com](mailto:nspurgeon49@gmail.com)**

### **Northwest**

None currently.

**For more information please contact: Breana Ramos, [breana@nwelcoalition.org](mailto:breana@nwelcoalition.org)**

### **Peninsula Early Learning Coalition**

None currently.

**For more information, please contact: Elisia Anderson, [elisiaf\\_fstep@olypen.com](mailto:elisiaf_fstep@olypen.com)**

### **Pierce County Early Childhood Network**

Pierce County Early Childhood Network (PCECN) is hosting community partner listening sessions to help inform the direction and purpose of community partnership meetings. Family Voice and Health Provider Voice continue to host Q & A Sessions where medical providers are available to answer any and all questions from families, specifically Spanish speaking.

PCECN is currently awaiting and cautiously hopeful for the Final budget as the House and Senate finalize negotiations. We had a dynamic and fun Advocacy Day where Community Health workers, Child Care providers, Nurses, Community Partners and Members joined legislative meetings to advocate on behalf of PCECN.

**For more information please contact: Muriel Herrera-Velasquez [muriel@first5fundamentals.org](mailto:muriel@first5fundamentals.org)**

### **Southeast (SEELC)**

None currently.

**For more information, please contact: Brittany Hartikainen, [brittany@bh-consulting.org](mailto:brittany@bh-consulting.org)**

### **Southwest Washington Early Learning (SWEL)**

## Regional Coalition Update

Through the SWCCP (Southwest Child Care Partnership) we continue to work with bilingual bicultural licensed family child care programs. Recruiting new potential providers and supporting them through the licensing process.

We are making headway in our efforts to form a shared services alliance in SW WA. A shared services alliance according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, is “a partnership of child care providers working together to share costs and deliver services in a streamlined and efficient way. We have officially formed the SW Alliance for Child Care Success. We will provide business and leadership solutions for child care. We’ve had two recent successes we sent a survey to all licensed family child care providers. We want to know more about their business needs and their priorities. A new business success was the introduction of a child care management system for providers in our SWCCP program. They are embracing this new technology.

We are developing a plan to visit our rural community partners to do relationship building and engagement with the regional coalition. Additionally, with ECCS, we are piloting a taxonomy map to ensure that taxonomy entries are more consistent, thereby improving their interoperability.

**For more information please contact: Debbie Ham, [Debbie.ham@selfwa.org](mailto:Debbie.ham@selfwa.org)**

## Visions for Early Learning, West Central

VEL continues to support Grays Harbor in the Early Childhood Development and Health Systems (ECDHS) work, including the implementation of the Know. Go. Provide. Grow. communications toolkit and other promotional materials. This initiative aims to enhance positive public awareness around early childhood resources and the importance of a connected early learning system with outside sector stakeholders. In Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) efforts, VEL remains committed to strengthening partnerships, particularly with Help Me Grow (HMG), to refine the data exchange process and improve coordinated access for families. These ongoing collaborations ensure that families receive the right support at the right time while fostering a more connected early childhood system.

VEL is expanding Vroom outreach across the region to support early brain development through everyday interactions. In North Pacific County, Vroom tips are being included in diaper bags to provide families with simple, science-backed ways to engage with their little ones. In Grays Harbor, conversation starters linked to Vroom activities are featured on coloring pages, making learning fun and interactive. Additionally, bookmarks with Vroom tips are being shared with local libraries, and ring cards are being used by home visitors to help families integrate brain-building moments into daily routines.

VEL applied to participate in the Health Equity 2.0 Cohort with CHOICE Regional Health Network to ensure early childhood and family support resources are represented in broader health equity efforts. By joining this cohort, VEL aims to advocate for the unique needs of young children and

## Regional Coalition Update

families, strengthen cross-sector collaboration, and contribute to more inclusive and equitable community health strategies.

### Grays Harbor

Grays Harbor Early Learning (GHLE) coalition typically meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 1:30 – 3:00 pm. Contact [Molly Leithold](#), coalition lead to get connected.

GHLE is hosting an Early Learning Expo family fun/resource event in April. 18 other coalition member organizations will be present with fun takeaway activities for families. They also received a grant from the Grays Harbor Community Foundation to help with diaper giveaways too. GHLE is heavily involved in both the ECCS and ECDHS initiatives.

### Lewis

Lewis County's Early Learning Coalition (ELC) typically meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month from 11:30 – 1:00 pm. Contact [Juli Jager](#), coalition lead to get connected.

The Lewis County Early Learning Coalition is planning a Bingo community event to raise funds in support of local early learning initiatives. This event will not only help sustain the coalition's efforts but also raise awareness about the importance of positive early learning opportunities for young children and families. Through community engagement and support, the coalition aims to strengthen early childhood resources and advocacy in Lewis County.

They also recently hosted a provider focused free training and dinner in appreciation for the early learning and child care providers in their community.

### Mason

The ELC of Mason County typically meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month from 8:30 – 10:00 am. Contact [April Messenger](#), coalition lead to get connected.

The Early Learning Coalition of Mason County is hosting Shining Stars, an appreciation event and resource fair dedicated to celebrating early learning and child care providers. Held in the evening at High Steel Bridges Co. in Shelton, the event will feature appetizers and an opportunity to connect with local resources. This gathering is a way for the coalition to express gratitude to providers for their dedication while fostering stronger partnerships and collaboration within the community.

### Thurston

The Thurston Early Childhood Coalition (TECC) typically meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month from 9:30 – 11:00 am. Contact [Shawn Thurman](#), coalition lead to get connected.

TECC hosted a child care provider focused professional development workshop. Providers received STARS hours. The coalition hosted the event which included a mini resource fair during lunch – all at no cost to providers who attended. The first 20 who registered also received a free copy of a book. The attendance was spectacular with over 40 participating and will help strengthen partnerships between the coalition and local providers.

## Regional Coalition Update

### Pacific

Know and Grow, North Pacific County's early learning coalition typically meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month from 2:00 – 3:30 pm. Contact [Rhonda Johnson](#), coalition lead to get connected.

Know and Grow showed appreciation to their local child care and early learning providers last month. A goodie bag appreciation gifts was assembled and door dropped to show their gratitude and continued partnership. Know and Grow's diaper bank continues to receive donations to help sustain their community needs. They rely heavily on donations to keep their supplies replenished. The most recent data report showed they have distributed over 9,200 diapers and baby supplies (wipes and ointment) since its inception.

**For more information, please contact: Sheila Kavanaugh, [kav.consulting231@gmail.com](mailto:kav.consulting231@gmail.com)**

## WCFC Updates – For more information please contact: [info@washingtoncfc.org](mailto:info@washingtoncfc.org)

### WCFC State Updates

#### WCFC Theory of Change

WCFC has been working hard to clarify our Network goals and we are excited to share our first ever [Theory of Change!](#)

#### WCFC 2025 Budget Request

This legislative session, Washington Communities for Children requested \$4 million from Washington State to maintain and strengthen the WCFC network infrastructure. The WCFC Network is a critical component of our state's early childhood system because of our coordination of cross-sector partnerships at the state, regional, and community level. [Here is a link](#) to a one-pager detailing our ask. [Here is a link to our legislative priorities](#). WCFC Was not included in the initial Senate budget. WCFC was included at \$300,000 over the biennium in the House budget. We will be activating our network to mobilize around our ask to ensure WCFC is included in the final state budget.

#### WCFC Workgroups

WCFC hosts a bi-monthly Diaper Bank conversation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. The next meeting is May 21, 2025. Ongoing topics of interest include sharing current best thinking/best practices, funding opportunities, sustainability, accessing discounted or free supplies, and diaper bank operations. [Contact Taylor Caragan](#) to join - all are welcome!

WCFC hosts a monthly conversation regarding the Washington State Early Learning Coordination Plan on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month from 2:00 – 3:00pm. The purpose of this space is to provide strategy to crosswalk the WCFC Network with the Goals and Strategies of the ELCP, and support local communities aligning their work with the ELCP. [Contact Linden Obel](#) to join - all are welcome!

### **Stay in Touch!**

Want to learn more about WCFC, be the first to hear updates, or get connected with your local early childhood coalition? Get in touch with us!

- Website: [washingtoncfc.org](http://washingtoncfc.org)
- Facebook: [WashingtonCFC](#)
- Instagram: [Washington\\_cfc](#)

**For more information please contact: Rachel Hall, WCFC State Lead,**  
[rachelh@first5fundamentals.org](mailto:rachelh@first5fundamentals.org)