

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)

Family Support Pilot Year Two Update: June 2016 through June 2017

This report update provides an overview of year one and two pilot activities (the school years 2014-15 and 2015-16) and describes the activities and results of the year three implementation of the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Family Support Pilot (school year 2016-17). You can view the full report of the previous year's work by opening the following link: [ECEAP Family Support Pilot Report](#).

The continued goal of the pilot is to strengthen outcomes for children and families participating in the Washington State (ECEAP through the use of new research-based approaches. ECEAP, overseen by the Department of Early Learning (DEL), is Washington's pre-kindergarten program. It is designed to prepare 3- and 4-year-old children from low-income and at-risk families for success in school and life. ECEAP's comprehensive "whole-child" approach includes preschool education; family support; parent involvement; and health and nutrition services.

Year One Work Group

October 2014- June 2015

In October 2014 DEL convened the "Preschool Operational Work Group" with 21 contractors and community partners to identify a menu of research-based family support services shown to improve family outcomes. Key goals were to strengthen family and child outcomes and to identify models that could help family support staff focus more time on the families who need more intensive services as a way to maximize family outcomes.

The Work Group made two recommendations about how to improve outcomes for families and provide tools to focus more time on families who need more intensive services. These recommendations became the key aims for implementation in the first year of the two-year ECEAP Family Support Pilot:

1. Pilot two research-based family support programs to improve family self-sufficiency and related outcomes.
2. Develop and implement a valid statewide ECEAP family assessment to provide clear and consistent assessment and reporting of family strengths, progress, and outcomes.

Year Two Family Support Pilot

July 2015-June 2016

In year two of this work, 14 self-selected contractors dedicated the following staff resources to the pilot, in addition to overall agency leadership and oversight:

- A designated family support pilot agency coordinator who communicated monthly with the state ECEAP team about pilot results, training needs and implementation issues. Coordinators oversaw the training of their agency's family support staff, facilitated development of internal systems and recordkeeping and supported direct service staff in implementing one of the two new models.



Family Support in ECEAP

Family support in ECEAP is about building relationships that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning for both children and parents. ECEAP's family support services are described in RCW 43.215.405. They include opportunities for families to:

- a) Increase their self-reliance;
- b) Actively participate in their child's early childhood program;
- c) Increase their knowledge of child development and parenting skills;
- d) Further their education and training;
- e) Increase their ability to use needed services in the community.

- Family support staff, who received training in the new model from agency coordinators, implemented the model in their work with families and documented family assessments, goals, and progress

The agency coordinators and DEL staff also developed, validated and tested a statewide family assessment, created the DEL ECEAP Bridge to Child and Family Self-Reliance and implemented one of the two research-based family support approaches in year two of this pilot work. DEL then collected the data gathered and analyzed it.

Assessment

The statewide 2015-16 *ECEAP Family Strengths and Needs Assessment* was designed to gather information from and about families while providing clear, consistent reporting on family needs, goals, progress and outcomes. This *ECEAP Family Strengths and Needs Assessment* gathered information in 21 areas of family functioning and was validated by the agency coordinator group with a consultant specializing in validation.

Bridge

With guidance from [Economic Mobility Pathways \(EMPath\)](#) and advice from pilot participants, ECEAP revised the original EMPATH *Bridge to Self-Sufficiency* to create an *ECEAP Bridge to Child and Family Self-Reliance*, tailored to fit the needs of Washington families. [Bridge to Child and Family Self-Reliance – Complete Version, 2016-17](#)

Data

Contractors participating in the pilot provided services in a range of communities in Eastern and Western Washington. 1,552 racially/ethnically and linguistically diverse families participated for the full year, providing a full set of data for analysis. Due to challenges with data collection and cross-matching data, the number of families with usable data was less than the total families served. Statistically significant differences were seen in the progress families made on goals that they set.

2015-16 Family Outcomes

Mobility Mentoring®

Statistically significant pre/post differences for families were seen in all 21 areas of family functioning. Areas of greatest change include parent engagement (.56), resource knowledge, (0.47), goal setting (0.46), budgeting (0.42) and adult education (0.41).

Results were discerned using a series of paired t-test statistical analyses, which measure whether subjects within a group vary over two points in time. Note that year one data were too limited to draw conclusions about the cause of the change.

Year Three Family Support Pilot

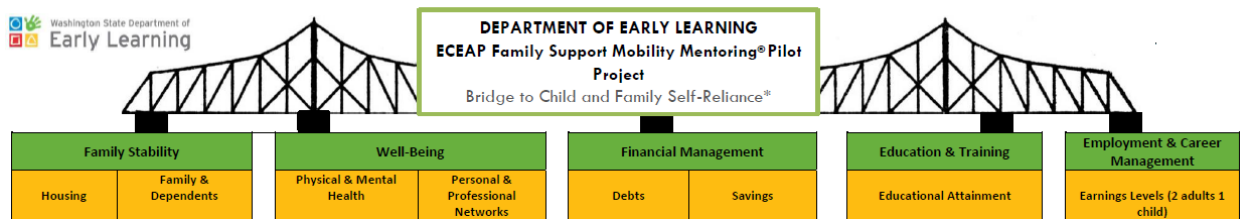
July 2016-June 2017

In year three of the pilot, ECEAP chose EMPATH's [Mobility Mentoring®](#) to implement with all of the 19 self-selected contractors participating in the pilot, refined the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment, increased training opportunities and developed data gathering and reporting capabilities in the Early Learning Management System (ELMS).

Mobility Mentoring

ECEAP family support staff trained to become Mobility Mentoring® coaches. They partnered with families to help them acquire resources and skills and to sustain behavior changes. Using the Bridge (*ECEAP Bridge to*

Child and Family Self-Reliance) to frame a deliberate one-on-one “partnership” between families and staff, families set goals based on their assessment of five critical pillars—family stability, well-being, education and training, financial management, and employment and career management. (see table below) Coaching is designed to improve family decision making, persistence and resilience over time. Through repeated practice, this process becomes internalized and enables families to mentor themselves. Also, EMPATH provides access to continuing research, training and ongoing participation in an online learning network through the [Economic Independence Exchange](#).



Assessment

DEL refined the initial *ECEAP Family Strengths and Needs Assessment* based on feedback from the previous year. The *Family Strengths and Needs Assessment* became a set of categories covering 17 outcome areas reflecting family strengths needs or areas for growth that more closely align with the pillars on the bridge. In February of 2017, DEL again worked with agency coordinators and a consultant to validate the updated assessment.

Training

Ninety-nine ECEAP sites participated in Mobility Mentoring. Each of the 19 contractors identified an Agency Lead Coordinator(s) to be trained in the model and attend monthly webinars. Topics for these monthly web-based trainings for contractor leads and quarterly web-based trainings for family support staff included:

- Motivational interviewing
- Coaching for economic mobility-family support coaches
- Early Learning Management System(ELMS) data collection
- Writing Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Based (SMART) goals.

Data

In 2016-17 the addition of data gathering fields in the Early Learning Management System resulted in increased data collection and analysis. ELMS now can show how many families have a family goal, what that goal is and progress that the family makes on set goal(s). Also, DEL built the DEL Child and Family Self-Reliance Bridge into ELMS and created a weighted point system that automatically levels families on the bridge. Three reports currently available in ELMS are the:

“The comprehensive Bridge model shows families the connections to the other pillars.”
Agency Coordinator Staff

- **Family Assessment and Goals Count:** The purpose of this report is a snapshot of the numbers and percentages of family support requirements completed at a specific time.
- **Family Goals by Child:** The purpose of this report is to show family goals listed in one place for a whole contractor, site or class. This can help with keeping up on goals with families, ensuring goals are SMART, and planning for resources or events for families.

- **Family Support Monitoring by Child:** The purpose of this report is to monitor family support pilot requirements.

Family support staff completed the assessment in the fall and the late spring. Once they completed the initial assessment they then used that information to set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals. These goals are designed to help adults get to a family-sustaining wage (not just a job) through a realistic family-informed goal-setting process which is individualized for participating ECEAP families. In 2016-17:

- 2,544 families received both a pre- and post-assessment.
- These families set 3,203 goals (average 1.3 per family).
- They met 1,583 of these goals during this school year.

DEL research and analysis team members analyzed data collected from ELMS, Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG) and surveys in the areas of staff input, family feedback, family assessments and TSG domains.

Staff Input

Agency Coordinators and Family Support Staff shared feedback with DEL when they completed a survey. Staff said that the following aspects of the model contributed most to staff success in supporting families achieving their goals:

- The opportunity to have meaningful conversations that allowed families to reflect on their needs, goal and resources. Staff reported that they felt like they got to know families much better with this process.
- The assessment format was useful in regard to identifying family needs more quickly to determine goals.
- It provided a structured way to have more in-depth conversations.
- The strength-based nature of the model helped to encourage and motivate families.
- Having a clear established plan of action and asking appropriate question to get a set plan.
- The bridge enabled them (families) visualize a path.

Using self-reported knowledge and skill collected at the end of the school year, staff reported the highest level of skill in areas related to engagement with families about their needs and helping families with education, training and career planning. Staff reported the lowest level of skills in areas related to engagement with families about financial topics, employment, wages and earnings. The survey consists of eight questions wherein respondents were asked to rate their level of skills, on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest level of skill (see table 1).

N = 61	Mean	Std Err.
Engage in a strength-based conversation with families about their family needs	8.56	0.14
Engage in a conversation with families about their health, mental health, and support systems.	8.08	0.15
Engage in a conversation about financial topics with families	7.19	0.21
Engage in a conversation about education, training, and career planning	8.39	0.14

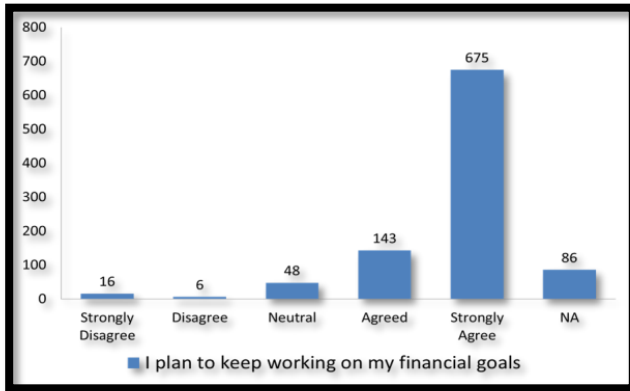
with families.		
Engage in a conversation about employment and wage earnings with families	7.59	0.20
Support families in setting SMART goals that increase their self-sufficiency.	7.98	0.16
Support families throughout the year in making progress on set goal	8.10	0.17
Work with families in ways that help them strengthen their executive function skill	7.75	0.22

Family Feedback

The ECEAP customer service survey included 14 questions relevant to family support and asked parents to select their level of agreement with the statement using a Likert-type scale (1= Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree). DEL researchers conducted a simple bivariate t-test to compare mean responses from families at Mobility Mentoring implementation sites to families at sites not implementing Mobility Mentoring and receiving family support services as usual. An analysis found that on average, families enrolled in Mobility Mentoring sites reported significantly greater levels of agreement with 10 out of 14 survey items related to customer satisfaction. The most considerable mean differences between the two groups were in areas of financial goal setting, executive functioning and family goal setting (see table 2).

Table 2. Mobility Mentoring Family Satisfaction Survey						
Mobility Mentoring						
	N	Yes Mean	No Mean	Diff.	t statistic	Sig.
I set financial goals with ECEAP family support staff this year	2,021	4.41	3.822	0.588	-11.779	<i>p</i> <.001
After ECEAP's support this year, it is easier for me to slow down and think my problems through to a solution	2,421	4.508	4.315	0.193	-5.487	<i>p</i> <.001
I plan to keep working on my financial goals	2,341	4.634	4.483	0.151	-4.424	<i>p</i> <.001
After working with family support staff, I was more able to identify my family needs	2,446	4.587	4.446	0.141	-4.444	<i>p</i> <.001
My family developed goals for important issues in our lives	2,602	4.637	4.498	0.139	-4.743	<i>p</i> <.001
ECEAP Staff helped me access medical services so my child's health care needs were met	2,121	4.614	4.478	0.136	-3.942	<i>p</i> <.001
The support I received from ECEAP made the transition to kindergarten easier	2,260	4.756	4.678	0.078	-2.648	<i>p</i> <.01

For the third question on table 2 we looked at the data more specifically and created a graph to show how many families plan to keep working on their financial goals. 983 families who received Mobility Mentoring coaching responded to the survey. Of those, 818 agreed or strongly agreed that they planned to continue working on their financial goals after leaving ECEAP.



Family Assessments

Using staff-administered assessments of family functioning scale, DEL investigated whether functioning changes from before to after the intervention. The questionnaire included 17 areas

of parental/family functioning, and at each administration, parents were asked to choose answers that corresponded with functional ratings from 1 (lowest) to 4 (highest). This analysis does not include a comparison group so DEL research team staff could not draw causal conclusions. As with Year 1 analyses, the family assessments show significant changes in family functioning from before to after the intervention especially in the areas of school involvement, community resource knowledge, healthy lifestyle, developing parenting skills, savings and personal professional networks.

Table 3. Mobility Mentoring Family Assessment Change

Construct	N	Pre Mean	Post Mean	Diff.	t statistic	Sign.
School involvement and advocacy	2,544	3.42	3.96	0.54	-28.431	<i>p</i> <.001
Community resource knowledge	2,542	3.84	4.3	0.46	-28.336	<i>p</i> <.001
Developing parenting skills	2,550	3.9	4.29	0.39	-25.332	<i>p</i> <.001
Healthy lifestyle	2,548	3.65	4.04	0.39	-26.561	<i>p</i> <.001
Savings	2,548	1.81	2.18	0.37	-20.397	<i>p</i> <.001
Family dependents	2,556	4.05	4.36	0.31	-19.05	<i>p</i> <.001
Personal professional networks	2,562	3.93	4.24	0.31	-20.438	<i>p</i> <.001
Basic household needs	2,560	4.2	4.49	0.29	-20.217	<i>p</i> <.001
Physical mental health	2,567	4.18	4.44	0.26	-17.778	<i>p</i> <.001
Debts	2,565	3.38	3.64	0.26	-12.83	<i>p</i> <.001
Conflict resolution skills	2,554	4.08	4.31	0.23	-16.598	<i>p</i> <.001
Managing parenting stress	2,539	4.29	4.48	0.19	-14.817	<i>p</i> <.001
Earnings level	2,538	2.49	2.68	0.19	-13.039	<i>p</i> <.001
Access to transportation	2,554	4.57	4.75	0.18	-14.15	<i>p</i> <.001
Housing	2,579	3.75	3.9	0.15	-7.61	<i>p</i> <.001
Legal issues	2,553	4.57	4.69	0.12	-9.123	<i>p</i> <.001
Educational attainment	2,565	2.3	2.34	0.04	-3.788	<i>p</i> <.001

2016-17 Family Outcomes

As detailed in Table 3 above, the pre-post differences observed in families in Mobility Mentoring in all 17 constructs measured were statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ by paired t-test. The greatest absolute differences observed were in school involvement (0.54), community resource knowledge (0.47), healthy lifestyle (0.39), developing parenting skills (0.39), savings (0.37) and personal professional networks (0.31). The smallest changes were in educational attainment (0.04), legal issues (0.12), housing (0.15), access to transportation (0.18) and earnings level (0.19).

With this outcome evaluation DEL attempted to more fully tell the story of how the Mobility Mentoring model is working with ECEAP families. The Mobility Mentoring model is already an evidence-based practice, thus this outcome evaluation is not intended to provide foundational evidence of model effectiveness or efficacy. Without pre-post family-level data for both intervention and comparison groups we are not able to make the strongest causal claims regarding outcomes of the intervention. However, we have comparison groups for some of the analyses and thus are able to provide stronger causal inferences in the 2016-17 analysis than in the 2015-16 analysis.

Teaching Strategies GOLD Analysis

Previous research supports that the multiple avenues to kindergarten readiness for children in low-income families include family support. DEL research staff conducted a comparative analysis of TSG growth using fall to spring child growth data for children in both the intervention (Mobility Mentoring sites/classrooms) and comparison (non-Mobility Mentoring sites/classrooms) groups.

All ECEAP children are assessed three times during the school year to track their social-emotional, physical, language and cognitive development and their early literacy and math skills. The DEL research team was able to test the extent to which the Mobility Mentoring family support intervention is contributing to children’s TSG growth from fall to spring. The main analysis is a child analysis where we directly test the impact of the intervention on the specific children whose families received the intervention while controlling for family, child and site factors (referred to as the child analysis). Additionally, researchers compared growth among children at Mobility Mentoring sites with those from non-Mobility Mentoring sites (referred to as the site analysis). Comparing results from these two analyses provides important insights.

Only a fraction of families enrolled in any given Mobility Mentoring site actively participated in the intervention. Additionally, the intervention was not randomly assigned to sites as would be preferable in a more controlled evaluation. Thus comparing results from the child-level and site-level analyses allow us to parse out actual impacts of the intervention (child-level analysis) from effects that may be seen site-wide because of otherwise high performing sites (site-level analysis). See Table 4 below for descriptive breakdown of these comparison groups.

Table 4. Site vs. Child Comparison Groups	
Child	N
Children whose families directly participated in Mobility Mentoring	263
Children whose families did not directly participate in Mobility Mentoring	9,349
Site	N
Children enrolled in Mobility Mentoring sites (Not all participated directly in MM)	2,990

Children enrolled in non-Mobility Mentoring sites (Did not participated directly in MM)	6,622
---	-------

Child Analysis

The main analysis to test the extent to which the Mobility Mentoring family support intervention is contributing to children’s TSG growth is accomplished by comparing growth among children whose family directly participated in the intervention with those children whose family did not participate in the intervention. Because characteristics of children and families vary between Mobility Mentoring and non-Mobility Mentoring sites in ways that might affect children’s fall to spring growth, DEL research staff conducted the comparison adjusting for characteristics that also might account for the observed differences. This allowed them to further isolate the effects of the Mobility Mentoring intervention. In generating the adjusted averages, they controlled for a vector of factors (i.e., race/ethnicity, poverty, age in months, fall TS-GOLD scale scores, primary language, prior year in ECEAP, part/full day, single parent and parent educational attainment). Additionally, they clustered the site level to produce robust standard errors to account for unobserved similarities among children within sites

The results of this analysis revealed that children whose family participated in the Mobility Mentoring intervention make comparable gains in all domains to children who did not participate in the intervention. While minor differences exist, none of these differences are statistically significant, and Cohen’s effect size suggests a small practical significance across all domains. See Table 5 below.

Table 5. Child Outcomes by Mobility Mentoring Family Participation (Child Analysis)						
Fall to Spring Growth in Scale Scores						
		Mobility Mentoring Participation				
Adjusted	N	Yes Mean	No Mean	Diff.	t statistic	Sig.
Social Emotional	2,315	68.49	66.54	1.95	-1.009	p=.313
Physical	2,321	61.59	60.17	1.42	-0.596	p=.552
Literacy	2,290	59.67	59.80	-0.13	0.143	p=.886
Language	2,316	73.24	73.55	-0.31	0.173	p=.863
Math	2,307	62.77	63.22	-0.45	0.435	p=.664
Cognitive	2,301	76.68	78.15	-1.47	0.786	p=.432

**Note: Sample size (N) reflects number of children with complete TS-GOLD information for fall and spring so numbers may be smaller than what was indicated in Table 4.*

Site Analysis

We conduct a similar site analysis, comparing all children enrolled in sites implementing Mobility Mentoring with those at sites that did not implement Mobility Mentoring, using the same statistical approach, the same vector of control variables and the same clustering of sites. Results of the site analysis indicate that children enrolled in sites using Mobility Mentoring had greater gains in Math and Literacy development than children in other ECEAP sites, even when adjusted for poverty level, race and ethnicity, age, primary home language, years in ECEAP, length of class day, single parent, parent education attainment, or starting GOLD® score. In this analysis, children in Mobility Mentoring sites show more advantage in fall to spring gains in Math and Literacy in the adjusted model. Children in

Mobility Mentoring sites show the smallest advantage (or no advantage at all) in fall to spring gains in Language, Cognitive, Social Emotional and Physical in the adjusted model. Finally, Cohen’s effect size suggests a small practical significance across all domains. See Table 6 below.

Table 6. Child Outcomes by Mobility Mentoring Site Participation (Site Analysis)							
Fall to Spring Growth in Scale Scores							
Adjusted	N	Mobility Mentoring Site		Diff.	t statistic	Sig.	Cohen’s d
		Yes Mean	No Mean				
Math	2,307	64.27	62.68	1.59	-3.796	p<.001*	-.169
Literacy	2,290	60.39	59.50	0.89	-2.469	p<.05*	-.110
Social Emotional	2,315	67.18	66.34	0.84	-1.051	p=.294	
Physical	2,321	60.46	60.12	0.34	-0.346	p=.729	
Cognitive	2,301	78.06	78.12	-0.06	0.074	p=.941	
Language	2,316	73.36	73.62	-0.26	0.347	p=.729	

*Note: Sample size (N) reflects number of children with complete TS-GOLD information for fall and spring so numbers may be smaller than what was indicated in Table 4.

Summary of Findings

The main child analysis finds that the Mobility Mentoring intervention has no significant impact on child TS-GOLD growth from fall to spring, although the way the pilot was conducted does not allow us to make the best direct comparison. The presence of significant improvements in the site analysis but absence of significant findings in the child analysis may indicate that the sites chosen for implementing the Mobility Mentoring Year 2 pilot are likely high-functioning ECEAP sites that are already implementing the overall ECEAP intervention with high quality. It may also indicate that the relatively small number of families enrolled in the intervention may have some selection characteristic that made them less likely to benefit from the program.

Year-Four Family Support Pilot

July 2017-June 2018

Currently DEL is continuing to implement Mobility Mentoring with the same 19 contractors who implemented it last year. However, seven additional sites have been added, increasing the total number of participating sites to 106. Agency Coordinator staff continue to provide training to participating family support staff and attend the monthly professional learning community trainings and discussions with other agency coordinators and DEL ECEAP staff through the established Basecamp platform. Planned topics include:

- Digging deeper into setting SMART goals with families
- Executive Function
- Racial Equity
- Culture of Poverty
- Coaching as a Parallel Process

- Managing Challenging Conversations with Families

Agency coordinators will also have the opportunity to participate in the implementation of The Prosperity Agenda (TPA) Power Up Packs and Career and Life Coaching (CLC) training. The Prosperity Agenda has a decade of experience carrying out its commitment to design and test solutions that empower people to achieve economic security. Working in the strategic areas of career readiness and financial capability, they team up with staff and clients at nonprofit organizations and government agencies to design programs that result in increased income and assets for the individuals and families served in their communities.

Money Power Up Packs

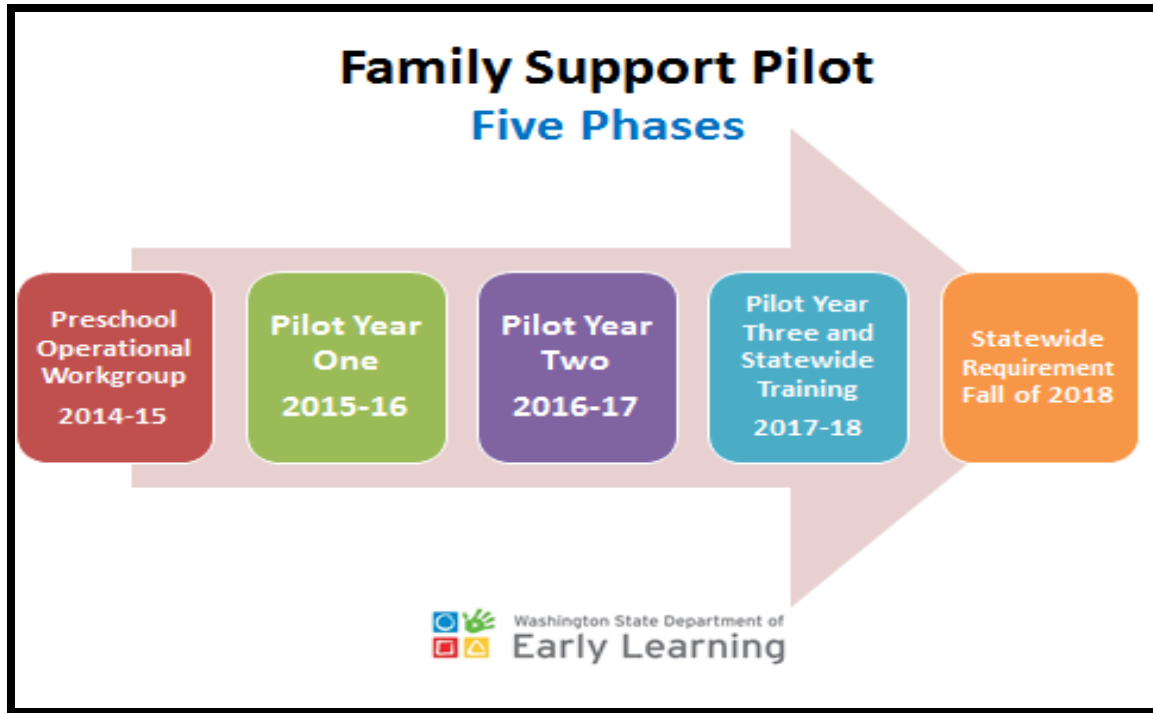
Money Powerup Packs are a series of eight themed event kits designed by The Prosperity Agenda. A pack takes 30 days to implement from start to finish, ending with a 60-90-minute event. The goal of the Money Powerup Packs is to build community, celebrate progress, and create memorable experiences with the goal of creating financial resilience and increasing savings behaviors. The Powerup Packs create opportunities to discuss non-traditional savings tactics, reflect on needs vs. wants, the social and cultural pressure to spend, and decision-fatigue around finances.

Career and Life Coaching

CLC provides a way for staff and participants to partner in an intentional goal-setting process to take measurable steps towards a career with advancement potential and a family-sustaining wage. This coaching approach is based on a combination of evidence-driven frameworks such as Social Learning Theory, a strengths-based approach and SMART goal setting. CLC applies these frameworks using a Coaching Conversation Model that includes several specific tools to guide the coach to effectively engage and work with participants. Added resources on financial coaching and career exploration (including educational goals) allow coaches to holistically guide participants to financial stability.

DEL began to explore these additional coaching supports when agency coordinators provided feedback on additional supports needed that could compliment the Mobility Mentoring approach. The goal is to offer training through TPA on the CLC approach to see if these supports help to increase confidence for staff when coaching families.

Also, DEL ECEAP is currently in the process of scheduling two three-day “train the trainer” Mobility Mentoring Essentials and Pilot overview trainings in March of 2018. ECEAP contractors are required to identify Mobility Mentoring Lead staff who will attend this training. Once trained, these staff will return to their ECEAP contractor to make needed changes to the start-up process and paperwork. All ECEAP contractors will be required to implement Mobility Mentoring with families in the Fall of 2018. Below is an overview of the phases of work that help to outline the work that occurred and the plans for the future.



Analysis of the 2017-18 data

DEL will continue to administer training questionnaires for family support staff, ECEAP family surveys, and family assessment data entered into ELMS child GOLD outcomes.

- **Training questionnaires for family support staff**
 DEL ECEAP will administer Survey Monkey questionnaires to family support staff at all participating sites in May of 2018.
- **Customer satisfaction surveys from participating families**
 DEL will collect data from the customer satisfaction survey responses from families.
- **Family assessments in ELMS**
 Pre and post family assessment data will be collected in ELMS and then analyzed to determine significant statistical growth in all 17 assessment areas.
- **Child GOLD Outcomes data analysis**
 DEL will continue to analyze GOLD Outcomes data for children enrolled in ECEAP whose parents also received Mobility Mentoring supports. Specifically, they will compare TSG Outcomes from year to year, looking at the number of years sites have implemented Mobility Mentoring and whether families participated in the program for one or two years.