

The purpose of CCECC is to design and establish a cost-effective early childhood system that integrates health, early care and education, and family resources and support. CCECC will accomplish its purpose by establishing an effective governance system and structure, high standards of program quality and professional competence, and financial sustainability. The early childhood system developed by CCECC will; (1) include multiple stakeholders, institutions, and levels of service delivery, (2) be based on research and best practices, and (3) provide measurement of impact and results. The following Strategic Plan consists of four main objectives, each with a detailed action plan. The objectives include providing access to high quality childcare, assisting children to start school ready to learn, support the early childcare workforce, and to connect families with resources.

Chaffee County Early Childhood Council



*Strategic Plan
2024 - 2026*

Objectives



Access to High Quality Childcare

- ✚ Continue to identify and recruit new childcare providers, support them through the licensing process, support their access to grant funding, and engage them in CCCAP and Colorado Shines, especially those serving infants and toddlers.
- ✚ Continue to support existing licensed centers and homes to stay open by promoting access to business supports, such as the Small Business Development Center, Early Childhood Service Corps, funding, evidence-based professional development supports, in-person mentoring, and working with them to embed proven models, curricula, and programs that support prioritized school readiness skills.
- ✚ Continue to work with Chaffee Department of Human Services CCCAP managers and childcare providers to recruit new Colorado Childcare Assistance Program (CCCAP) providers and increase the number of families served by CCCAP.
- ✚ Continue support for providers to maintain levels 3-5 in Colorado Shines. Maintain and increase the percentage of high-quality (Level 3-5) licensed providers.
- ✚ Establish systems and strategies to collect and use data provided by childcare programs to share with families and other groups looking to support the expansion of childcare in Chaffee.

Children Will Start School Ready to Learn

- ✚ Increase access to community enrichment and support programs for families with disparities and non-English speaking families by forming new community partnerships with those offering local programming.
- ✚ Form partnership with the Department of Human Services to offer training to childcare centers so they are familiar with all local programs designed to help families.
- ✚ Continue data analysis and program adjustments through sharing by CCECC members and community partners of semiannual (pre-and-post) school readiness data and analysis of data including DECA and Teaching Strategies (TS) Gold indicators.
- ✚ Support early identification and support for timely achievement of milestones by expanding the screening and referral system for children using developmental and social and emotional screenings and assessment (Ages and Stages:3, Ages and Stages Social-Emotional- 2, M-CHAT) birth to age 5 with the goal of universal screening.
- ✚ Continue to support community access to maternal mental health screening through local health clinics and home visitation programs.
- ✚ Continue to identify and support agencies embedding proven programs, curricula, and resources into their ongoing work.
- ✚ Collaborate with the state, local preschool programs, families, and all other early childhood community stakeholders to provide the necessary support for the successful implementation of Universal Preschool in Chaffee County to increase access to preschool the year before kindergarten.
- ✚ Continue to fund, promote, and support local Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Programs.

Support Early Childhood Workforce

- ✚ Form partnerships with the Early Childhood Service Corps and other local groups to engage the retired community in supporting existing childcare centers.
- ✚ Seek additional funding opportunities to support early childhood workforce wages and benefits.
- ✚ Continue to occupy advocacy space for affordable housing.
- ✚ Partner with local businesses to offer discounted wellness services for childcare providers.
- ✚ Continue to engage local professionals in training opportunities and CCECC's Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program.
- ✚ Continue to offer scholarships for professionals working in licensed centers to be Director and Lead Teacher Qualified.
- ✚ Create additional workforce and substitute pool with new ECE workforce pipeline.

Connect Families with Resources

- ✚ Create asset map of community resources to share local resources with the community on our website, social media, and the Bright by Text platform, while also encouraging others to share information with friends and neighbors about local resources.
- ✚ Create and coordinate a Nanny Sharing hub for families still on waiting lists and provide resources for those family friend and neighbor (FFN) childcare providers.
- ✚ Partner with other organizations to form a WIC workgroup for targeted outreach and more accurate community data.



Access to High Quality Childcare

- ✓ Recruit at least two new childcare providers and connect them with CCAP Program and Colorado Shines Quality Rating System.
- ✓ Support 1 local community group in applying for the Employer-Based Childcare grant offered by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) to expand childcare slots in Chaffee County.
- ✓ Partner with the Early Childhood Services Corps (ECSC) in recruiting the first cohort of retired early childhood substitutes in Chaffee to ensure developmentally appropriate classroom ratios.
- ✓ Quarterly, promote access to online training from reputable sources such as the CDEC, Conscious Discipline, Zero to Three, Devereux Center for Resilient Children, etc. and promote local in-person training when available.

Children Will Start School Ready to Learn

- ✓ Contact at least 2 local enrichment programs serving young children and organize discussions with them around potential barriers to families with disparities participating in their programs.
- ✓ Host at least 1 training for childcare providers in partnership with Chaffee County Department of Human Services to inform them of all local services available to the families they serve and design a way to share that information with families.
- ✓ 100% of school districts will share bi-annual (pre and post) Teaching Strategies Gold data associated with prioritized areas such as language and vocabulary, math skills, positive approaches to learning, attachment, and self-regulation skills.
- ✓ 100% of CCECC's screening partners will report the number of developmental and

social-emotional screens conducted, and number of referrals made at their sites to CCECC each quarter.

- ✓ CCECC will recruit and train at least 2 new sites to become screening partners and provide access to the ASQ, ASQ-SE, Edinborough, and M-CHAT and support them in incorporating screening into their regular practices.
- ✓ At least 2 additional agencies serving young children and families will have embedded programs addressing prioritized school readiness skills such as Circle of Security, Seedlings, Conscious Discipline, and trauma informed practices into their ongoing work.
- ✓ Quarterly, CCECC will identify and promote cross-domain professional development to professionals working with young children including pregnancy centers, medical practices, home visitation programs, council members, and community partners.
- ✓ CCECC will utilize Universal Preschool (UPK) workgroup and feedback from UPK providers to assist the CDEC in improving the state-wide Universal Preschool Program and local implementation to ensure families who qualify for this program will have the opportunity to have access to it. The UPK workgroups are held monthly and communication with UPK providers is consistent and ongoing through facilitated meetings, emails, and one-on-one meetings with CCECC's UPK Manager.
- ✓ At least 2 more childcare providers will complete the 2-year Kid Connects Model (Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation), including the use of the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA), utilizing proven strategies to improve DECA scores, and measure progress with assistance from CCECC's Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Consultant.



Action Steps Continued

Support Early Childhood Workforce

- ✓ Promote the Early Childhood Service Corps (ECSC), Chaffee Cohort, quarterly through CCECC Newsletter and social media posts and collaborate with the ECSC to onboard at least 1 childcare provider as a pilot site for the program.
- ✓ Partner with CDEC and local government to locate and secure funding for Chaffee childcare providers to gradually increase their wages and benefits over time.
- ✓ CCECC will be represented in at least 1 regional or local group actively engaged in affordable housing solutions for Chaffee County such as the Heart of Colorado Regional Leadership Committee (CRC), to hold advocacy space for families with young children and early childhood professionals.
- ✓ CCECC will engage at least 2 local businesses in conversations about discounted services for early childhood professionals.

- ✓ CCECC will continue to monitor the professional development needs of early childhood professionals through CCECC's Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) Program and offer them locally or send professionals out of the county as funding allows. Ensure staff at active Kid Connects sites have opportunities to engage in reflective practice with ECMH Consultant through careful documentation of time spent at each site.
- ✓ Support at least 5 local professionals already employed at a childcare center in becoming either Lead Teacher qualified or Director qualified through CCECC Scholarship Program.
- ✓ Complete successful launch of Emerging Early Childhood Educators Program pilot in partnership with Colorado Mountain



Connect Families with Resources

- ✓ 25% of council members and community partners will be engaged in the asset mapping process during monthly meetings and workgroups to ensure CCECC has all local resources represented on our website, social media, and Bright by Text platforms.
- ✓ CCECC will create a focus group made up of local families to ensure that resources can be easily located on the CCECC website.
- ✓ CCECC will coordinate with at least 5 family friend and neighbor (FFN) childcare providers to create a nanny sharing contact list for families to access through CCECC's website and provide support for them to have additional training.
- ✓ CCECC will meet with Chaffee County Public Health to begin planning the formation of a WIC Workgroup, supporting them in engaging and inviting all the necessary community partners to begin developing outreach and data collection strategies.

