



# EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL OF LARIMER COUNTY

## 2012-2013 ANNUAL REPORT

### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

Dear Friends of the Early Childhood Council,

What an exciting year 2012-2013 was in the field of early childhood! We saw unprecedented community recognition, from both the federal and the local level, on the importance of early childhood and the profound impacts that result from such widespread support.

Strengthened by its partnership with the Colorado Department of Human Services and Department of Education, the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County continues to lead our community in building greater support and collaborations that help families develop stronger children for a stronger community. One of this past year's greatest accomplishments was the rollout of the Be Ready Campaign for school readiness, which encourages healthcare providers, school districts, childcare providers, agencies, and faith and service organizations to work together to ensure that all children in Larimer County will be successful when they start school.

The ECCLC enhanced its visibility through a successful Community Funded Campaign for the Best Start for Babies program this past spring. The Best Start for Babies programs serves at-risk by providing resourced to help them learn more about their child's development and get the parenting support they may need.

Involvement in these programs has brought significant visibility to the Early Childhood Council and has increased community awareness of the importance of the early years. We are proud of the important work the council is doing to increase support to children and families in our community. We thank all of our 2012-2013 funders and partners for working collaboratively with the council to better serve children in Larimer County.

Anne Lance, President  
ECC Board of Directors



*Local legislators attend the December 2012 Council meeting to discuss early childhood issues.*

Approximately 1300  
volunteer hours  
supported Council work.

### ECCLC PARTNERS WITH CITY OF FORT COLLINS

Last year, ECCLC was excited to partner with the City of Fort Collins' ClimateWise Program, a free program that teams with over 300 local businesses to address environmental challenges. In the fall of 2012, ClimateWise launched a new pilot: the ClimateWise Social Sustainability Initiative. This new initiative focused on the health of the economy, environment and quality of life in Fort Collins. This reflects an emerging trend in business management referred to as "Corporate Social Responsibility" or the "Triple Bottom Line."

At the kick off of the Social Sustainability Initiative, ClimateWise partners were asked to be Social Superstars by committing to address a social issue, and early childhood was the featured issue! As we all know, child care and the ability of children to have quality early childhood experiences are keys to the success of the workforce – both current and future. During the year, ECCLC met with four different businesses to help them assess their employee needs and connect them with resources. As a result of feedback received, we translated our Child Care Referral Program flyer into Spanish, and created a video about finding child care that businesses can show to employees. The video is now also posted on our website: <http://www.ecclc.org/families/child-care-referrals>

WORKING TOGETHER SO CHILDREN THRIVE

## SHARED OUTCOMES AND THE RESULTS BASED ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS

Most nonprofits strive to ensure that their work truly makes a difference and that funder's money is well spent, but measuring progress is not always easy. This year ECCLC was introduced to Results Based Accountability (RBA), a tool that can help nonprofits more effectively assess whether their work is achieving the desired result. The RBA framework uses three questions to guide thinking about effectiveness of services provided.

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Who is better off?

ECCLC, along with its partners, used this framework to identify data elements that can be used across the community to track progress on shared goals. ECCLC and over 16 other organizations agreed to provide data to support this measurement process. Although identifying and tracking these data elements is just the initial step in developing a robust evaluation process, the RBA framework promises to be instrumental in guiding our community in determining how our children are doing, as well as helping determine how services might be adapted to increase their effectiveness.

136 people attended the 9th annual After School Zone (ASZ) Conference in November 2012.

### Professional Development by the Numbers

\$47,029.68 awarded in college scholarships  
148 hours of training offered

## WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

### Social Emotional Development

Trend data identified in classrooms serving children ages 3-5 indicated that classrooms observed through the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) had some common strengths and weaknesses. The TPOT assesses the implementation of practices that support young children's social and emotional competencies. Another similar tool used in infant and toddler classrooms indicated these youngest children were supported by staff who were highly skilled at responding to the needs of these youngest children.

In the past year, we saw a decrease in children leaving programs because of challenging behavior. Staff who had greater access to training and supports were also less likely to leave a place of employment due to children with challenging behavior.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Environments	Scheduled & Routines
Supportive Conversations	Transitions
Strategies for Responding to Challenging Behaviors	Behavior Expectations
Involving Families in Challenging Behavior	Problem Solving

### Trends in Child Care Supply

Last year, we compiled information on child care supply data and identified some barriers for many working families. For monolingual Spanish speaking families living in Larimer County, finding a child care provider with whom they can easily communicate is difficult, especially for low income families. Of all child care programs located in Larimer County, only 6% or 18 programs have an employee fluent in Spanish and accept Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) payments..

For families who need care outside of typical 8am-5pm business hours, the choices are limited. Most Family Child Care Home providers open by 7:30 am and close by 5:30 pm, and centers open by 6:30 am and close by 6 pm; Mon – Fri. Care availability outside those options is very limited!

### Early Childhood Workforce

We conducted a survey of child care centers and preschools in the fall of 2012 on the impact of revised licensing qualifications for staff. We found that many programs were having a hard time filling vacancies due to the lack of qualified applicants. Many applicants lacked either education needed for the position or experience, or sometimes both.

## REFERRAL PROGRAM RECEIVES TOP SCORE IN THE STATE

Kimberly Gentert, our Referral Specialist, received the highest score in the state for her referral assessment call this year. Qualistar Colorado, the state network coordinating agency, secretly calls each Child Care Resource & Referral agency (CCR&R), acting as a parent needing child care, in order to assess each CCR&R's compliance with contract requirements. The assessment call evaluates three areas of the referral: data entry accuracy, quality of information provided over the phone, and quality of information sent to the client via email or through the mail. This is the third year the assessment call was completed.

The Referral Program works to ensure that individuals in need of child care have access to care options that meet their needs and have information to help them become knowledgeable, empowered consumers of child care. In order to meet these goals, staff:

- Provide 30-minute consultations, in English or Spanish, for parents seeking child care and provide both verbal and written information to help clients understand how to evaluate the quality of child care programs.
- Maintain accurate information (updated twice a year) on licensed child care programs. This data is used for child care referrals, informing local decision makers about early childhood issues and for the state Market Rate Survey.
- Provide information about the Child Care Assistance Program, encourage parents who may qualify to apply, provide referrals to sliding scale programs and brainstorm other options for low-income families.
- In addition, staff offer enhanced referrals/consultations for parents seeking child care for children with special needs or for parents with limited English speaking ability. This includes vacancy checks, discussing the child's specific needs with child care programs and helping programs assess their ability to accommodate the needs of the family and child. Each enhanced referral takes an average of 2 to 5 hours.



## EVICS IS A LEADER IN ESTES VALLEY EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY

In 2013, Estes Valley Investment in Childhood Success (EVICS) added a part-time bilingual parent educator to their staff, significantly enhancing our services and outreach to Spanish speaking families. The EVICS Scholarship Program continues to meet a critical need in the community. In 2012, they awarded \$15,500 in childcare assistance to families in need, making it possible for parents to work while children were cared for in safe and consistent settings. Licensed programs continue to be supported with training opportunities, resources, and information, targeted at improved quality of care.

The EVICS Parents as Teachers (PAT) program has received grant support from the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation for the last 3 years, and provides support and outreach to many young families in the Estes Valley community. Free monthly Family Nights, started in 2012, became even more popular in 2013, serving numerous families in the community with children ages -5.

In 2013, the EVICS Program received numerous state and national recognition. In March, its scholarship program was highlighted by the Colorado Children's Campaign in the annual Kids' Count Report as a "creative local solution" to addressing challenges in providing access to childcare. In May, EVICS Director, Nancy Almond traveled to North Carolina to participate as a presenter at the National Smart Start Conference. EVICS is also a founding partner in the Larimer County BE READY Campaign – a school readiness initiative to support parents in preparing their young children for school success. EVICS is taking the leadership role in promoting BE READY in Estes Park.



For the 2012-13 year, our Child Care Referral Program provided 585 families FREE child care referrals over the telephone or in person, with an additional 2,456 internet searches of the child care database.

## COMMUNITY MEMBERS INTRODUCE THE BE READY CAMPAIGN

In fall of 2012, ECCLC was a key partner in the initial soft launch of Larimer County's Be READY public education campaign. This campaign's goal is to raise awareness of the importance of helping children "be ready" for school. We know that school readiness is more than just learning the ABCs. It's about being healthy, getting along with others, and being ready to learn.

As part of the soft launch, the ten BE READY founding partner agencies distributed printed information to parents through schools and child care programs. This soft launch allowed us to test and refine language and strategies, with the goal of a full Larimer County-wide launch in August of 2013.

## SCHOOL READINESS PARTNERS WITH LOCAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ECCLC received a three year grant to support the quality care and education of young children in programs who may attend Putnam Elementary School. Putnam is a Title 1 school serving a large number of at risk children as defined by a variety of measures including limited income, homelessness and low academic performance of students. The intent of the grant is to support young children earlier in life and increase their ability to be successful in school and beyond. Six early care and education programs are involved in this work. Program quality is measured annually through the state's current quality rating and improvement system, Qualistar. Mini grants are provided to assure children have access to developmentally appropriate materials. Teachers are able to access scholarships and other professional development opportunities. Critical to the success of the project is a connection being made between Putnam Elementary staff and staff at the community early care and education programs to learn more about each other, the various roles each has with children and families, and better support the transition between pre-school and kindergarten.



*A kick off breakfast, attended by Putnam staff, community early care and education programs, school board members and state staff and legislators, was held in fall 2012 to bring everyone together in the effort to support school readiness.*

Quality Support Services was provided to 48 programs, totaling 94 classrooms. Over 1650 Children were impacted by these services and \$35,155.80 was awarded in resource grants.

ECCLC has received \$125,000 of funding over two years from the Colorado Trust to continue work on improving children's health. Of the original 20 councils that received three years of Health Integration funding in 2010, only 8 were awarded continued funding.



## BEST START FOR BABIES COMPLETES THIRD YEAR OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

In year 3 of the Best Start for Babies & Toddlers program (2012-2013), 116 parents graduated with approximately 158 children served.

According to Dr. David MacPhee of Colorado State University, parents who completed Best Start for Babies and Toddlers this year improved their parental self-perceptions overall. Of the five sessions completed, 80% of the parents significantly improved their knowledge of child development.

One mother said in a survey: "I thought coming to this class would almost be boring...but that's not the case at all. It's an amazing class even my husband loves coming and that's a hard one!!"



Another young mother, leaving an abusive relationship, spoke to the trainers after the classes were complete saying: 'The classes really helped and I feel like I'm going to be better at being a parent'. Her own mother, Grandma, attended the last class with this young mother and 'Grandma' told the trainers that the classes really helped her daughter through this tough time and gave her confidence for parenting on her own.

## TRYING OUR HAND AT CROWD SOURCING

Last April, board and staff members launched our first Community Funded campaign for the Best Start for Babies program. Community Funded is a crowd-sourcing platform, based out of Fort Collins, which uses social media to fund-raise. Over our 60 day campaign, we raised almost \$10,000 for the program! The money raised through this campaign secured another year of education and support for multi-risk families in our community. We hope to serve more than 80 parents in this intensive program in the upcoming year.

41 students completed the EQIT course this year and we provided approximately 193 hours of on-site coaching for students in these classes.

## NEW EQIT TEAM MEMBERS

In 2013, two trainers and coaches were welcomed to the EQIT (Expanding Quality for Infants and Toddlers) Team. Leah Grossmann and Cheri McConnell bring valuable work experiences to their new roles. Leah is a skilled infant teacher with a passion for connecting with parents and creating training opportunities for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers. Cheri has experience working as an infant and toddler teacher, center director and regional coordinator for a child care program. She currently works with family child providers with the Weld County Early Childhood Council.

All new EQIT team members are required to complete the 70-hour EQIT Training of Trainers course that includes writing a series of reflective papers and responding to on-line discussion groups. Additionally they as well as complete an adult learning seminar and the two-day EQIT RELATE Coaching Seminar. Trainings for EQIT Teams are provided through the State EQIT Initiative at no cost to counties.

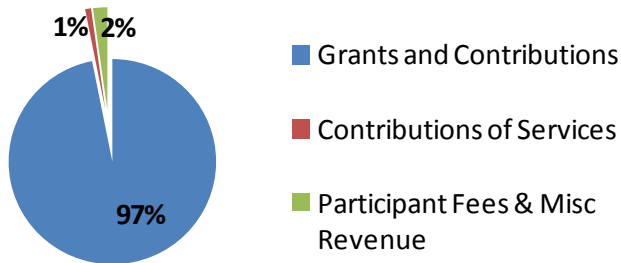
Doubling the size of the team means it is possible to provide additional professional development opportunities, coaching and community outreach to caregivers and teachers working with infants and toddlers.

During spring 2013, the Larimer Expanding Quality for Infants and Toddlers (EQIT) program was one of three EQIT programs across the State who completed their second and final year of participation in the University of Denver's Marsico Institute's research study. The study looked professional development opportunities for caregivers who work with infants and toddlers. A report on the results of study is to be released early in 2014.

## BUDGET AND FINANCIALS

**2012-13 Revenue**

Total Revenue \* = 794,743



We deeply appreciate the support provided by the following major funders during our 2012-13 fiscal year:

*Bohemian Foundation*  
*Colorado Department of Education*  
*Colorado Department of Human Services*  
*Colorado Trust*  
*Qualistar Colorado*  
*Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation*  
*Tony Gramscas Youth Services Program (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment)*

Thanks also to the following major funders of the Best Start for Babies Program, a collaborative program with United Way of Weld County:

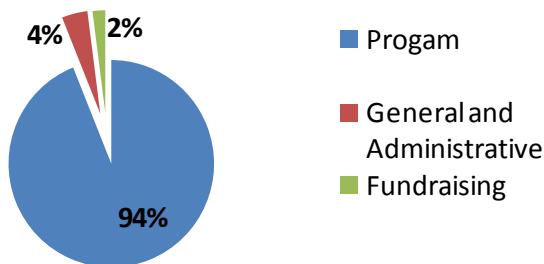
*Colorado Children's Trust Fund*  
*El Pomar Foundation's North Regional Council*  
*Kaufman Family Foundation*  
*Nordson Foundation*

Our thanks also go to the many individuals and businesses who supported us with their generous contributions.

*\* Note: Some revenue received in FY 2012-13 was carried over to FY 2013-14.*

**2012-13 Expense**

Total Expenses = 713,319



## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our continued thanks and appreciation for our governing Board of Directors. They dedicate their time to attend monthly Board meetings and serve on various committees for our work.

Anne Lance, **President**

*Teaching Tree Early Childhood Learning Center*

Karen Caplovitz Barrett

*CSU Human Development & Family Studies*

Linda Geis

*Pediatrician*

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*Thompson School District*

*All Board and Staff may be contacted through [www.ecclc.org](http://www.ecclc.org)*

*Executive Director: Beverly Wood Thurber*