



Program | 2018-19
Year

Early Learning and Family Services

Annual Report



opportunity
council

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Our Mission

The Opportunity Council (OC) helps people improve their lives through education, support, and direct assistance while advocating for just and equitable communities.

In support of the Opportunity Council's mission, the Early Learning and Family Services Department (ELAFS) ensures that all children and families have the knowledge, skills, and support for success in school and all future opportunities.

We are...

- Committed to working with families and communities to increase access to quality early learning experiences and family support.
- Strong believers in families as the best resource for children, and
- Confident that healthy, resilient, well-educated children will be successful in the changing world of the 21st Century and beyond.

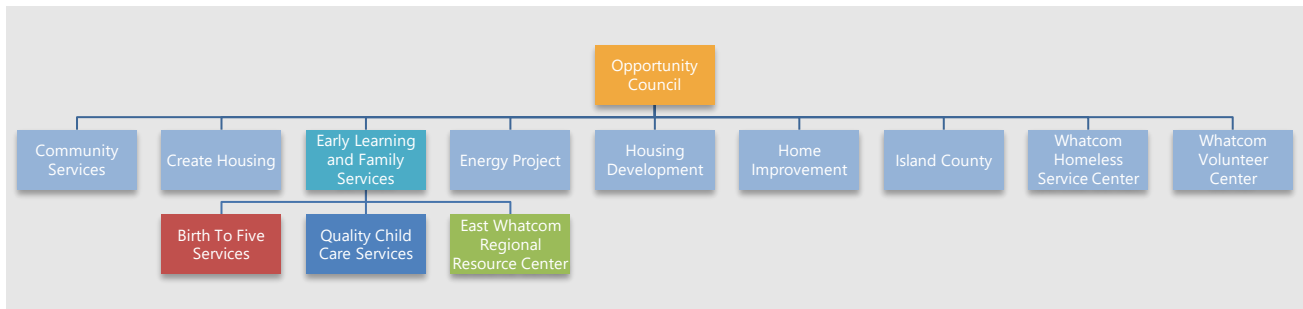
Our Programs...

- Enhance the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to enrolled children and families. They engage parents in their own children's learning and help them in making progress toward their educational, literacy and employment goals.
- Work with parents, families, child care providers and early childhood educators, businesses and community organizations to promote the availability of high-quality early child care and education programs in Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties.
- Help parents and families find quality child care environments for their children, and assist child care providers in supporting every child's learning and development.

Department Overview

Our programs promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families. They engage parents in their children's learning and help them in making progress toward their educational, literacy and employment goals.

Figure 1. Opportunity Council Organization Chart



Birth to Five Services

Early Head Start

This federally funded comprehensive child development program for families with low-income with infants, toddlers, and pregnant people enhances children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; assists pregnant people in accessing comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; supports parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and helps parents move toward self-sufficiency. It also features individualized planning and case management for children and parents. Services are provided in a home-based model.

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT)

ESIT serves families with children birth to three years old who have special needs and need support to maximize each child's development. ESIT provides early diagnosis and intervention services for infants and toddlers with developmental delays in their natural environments, and includes family resource coordination, screening and evaluation to determine eligibility, ongoing assessment, and therapy services. The Opportunity Council serves as the Local Lead Agency for Whatcom County.

Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)

These federally and state-funded comprehensive preschool programs provide free services and support to eligible children and their families. The programs promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of

educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families. These programs work systemically to assure alignment between prenatal to third grade services in our community (P-3 alignment).

Head Start and ECEAP engage parents in their children's learning and help them in making progress toward their educational, literacy and employment goals. Significant emphasis is placed on the involvement of parents in the administration of the program through the Parent Policy Council and other means. Included in parent preparation is the readiness to advocate successfully for their child in the K-12 system.

The goal of both programs is to help ensure all Washington children transition well and enter kindergarten ready to succeed. The program, which offers both part-day, full day and extended day options, includes:

- Early learning preschool
- Family support and parent involvement/leadership development
- Child health coordination and nutrition
- Linkages and referral to both other OC and community partners' services

Project X-it

Project X-it is an 18-month financial resiliency program for Head Start/ECEAP families. Project X-it features incentivized goal plans and dual-generational financial curriculum to aid Head Start/ECEAP families develop financial literacy. Families are matched with volunteer mentors from the community who act as financial partners to help plan goals and celebrate success. Financial learning and goal setting continue throughout the duration of the program, with an emphasis on participant driven curriculum.

Single-Entry Access to Services (SEAS)

Housed at Early Learning and Family Services, this program of Whatcom Taking Action provides a centralized intake system for families and medical professionals looking for services for children and youth in Whatcom County with known or suspected special needs.

Quality Child Care

Emergency Child Care Voucher Program

The Emergency Child Care Voucher program addresses the lack of child care options for families with low incomes. When families face unexpected financial emergencies, access to high-quality child care is vital to maintaining stability and financial resiliency, as well as reducing children's traumatic stress. The Emergency Child Care Voucher Program provides

temporary assistance to help families obtain or maintain high-quality, licensed child care during times of financial need.

Family Child Care Nutrition Program

The Child Care Nutrition program is part of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a USDA federally-funded program to help family home child care providers serve nutritious meals to the children in their care. Child care providers enrolled in the program receive meal reimbursements, onsite coaching/ technical assistance monitoring, and nutrition education to promote healthy eating.

Child Care Aware of Northwest Washington

Child Care Aware of Northwest Washington is one of six regions across the state that works with families, educators, businesses, and community partners to advance high-quality early learning opportunities in child care settings. As part of a statewide network of child care information and referral services, Child Care Aware helps families learn about their child care options and how to locate high-quality child care that works best for their children. Child Care Aware also champions advocacy efforts to increase financial subsidy, the number of licensed child care businesses, and access to high-quality child care and improve supports for child care providers and early educators.

Child Care Aware of Northwest Washington coordinates the following programs in Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Island, and San Juan Counties.

Early Achievers:

Early Achievers is a framework for improving the quality of early care in Washington. It provides a rating system for child care providers based on observable elements of quality that are good for kids. By participating in Early Achievers, early learning professionals show a commitment to improving quality in their programs. Early Achievers Coaches provide consultation and technical assistance to instill excellence in programs enrolled in Early Achievers.

QRIS Birth to Three Quality Initiatives (formerly Infant-Toddler Consultation Project):

QRIS Birth to Three Quality Initiatives provides coaching and consultation services to infant and toddler programs enrolled in Early Achievers. Coaching builds on strengths, improves caregiver skills, and expands high-quality care for young children and their families. Areas of expertise include infant and early childhood mental health, developmental screening, onsite behavioral and mental health consultation, the Filming Interactions to Nurture Development (FIND) model of intervention, the Infant and Toddlers Environmental Rating Score (ERS), and Infant and Toddlers Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS).

Teaching Strategies Gold Pilot:

Beginning in 2018, Child Care Aware of Northwest Washington provided selected child care programs in Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties with the opportunity to participate in a Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) pilot project. TSG makes it possible for child care programs, through observation, to document children's progress of developmental objectives and review progress by individual children, classrooms, or entire facilities. The initial Pilot Project ran from July 2018 through December 2019. Based on positive interest and additional funding, the pilot has been extended through June 2020. The Pilot included in-person and online trainings, additional coaching, technology to collect documentation, paid substitute time, and inter-rater reliability

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn Groups (KPL):

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn groups help families prepare their children ages birth to age 5 for success in school and life. Child Care Aware of NW Washington supports expansion, advocacy, and data collection from KPL groups in its five-county region, reporting monthly to Child Care Aware of Washington and the Department of Children, Youth, and Family Services (DCYF). Child Care Aware of NW Washington is also the primary grantor for the seven Mother Mentors Playscape (KPL groups) throughout Whidbey Island.

East Whatcom Regional Resource Center

The East Whatcom Regional Resource Center is a Whatcom County Parks facility, managed by the Opportunity Council and located in Maple Falls. The facility opened in September 2011, and provides space for a preschool program, youth and teen programming, community meetings, neighborhood events, private events, as well as a variety of information and resources and events throughout the year for residents in Eastern Whatcom County.

Accountability

Monitoring the goals and activities of Early Learning and Family Services (ELAFS) is an ongoing process. Through the use of regular self-assessments, federal, state and local reviews, routine monitoring tools, site visits, and an annual fiscal audit, ELAFS maintains high quality programs and participates in continuous program improvements.

Audit Results

The Opportunity Council is the grantee for all Administration for Children and Families-Office of Head Start funds, the USDA/OSPI Child and Adult Food Program, and State of Washington financial support, for ECEAP, Child Care Aware/Early Achievers, Early Support for Infant and Toddlers (Part C IDEA), and more. Annually, according to the grantee's fiscal year of January to December, the Opportunity Council has a financial audit conducted by independent auditors according to OMB Circular A-133, and 2 CFR Part 200. The financial audit for the grantee's Fiscal Year 2018, which covers half of the Early Learning and Family Services Department's 2018-2019 contract year with ACF-OHS and State of Washington Department of Early Learning, was "unmodified" or absent of any findings.

Monitoring Reports

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers – Timelines for Service Elements

During the fourth quarter of 2018, the Washington State Department of Early Learning, State ESIT Office conducted an on-site monitoring review of the Opportunity Councils' Early Support for Infants & Toddlers program. This consisted of a written/documentation and database review of compliance with statutory timelines for service elements. A finding occurred in the area of child evaluations completed within 45 days, however a Corrective Action Plan was not required.

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers – Customer Satisfaction Survey

During March 2019, the Washington State Department of Early Learning, State ESIT Office conducted survey of all Whatcom County ESIT clients to determine customer satisfaction. The Opportunity Councils' Early Support for Infants & Toddlers program exceeded state averages and had the highest customer satisfaction among the three local providers. No findings or follow-ups were determined.

Head Start/Early Head Start – Focus Area 1 Comprehensive Review

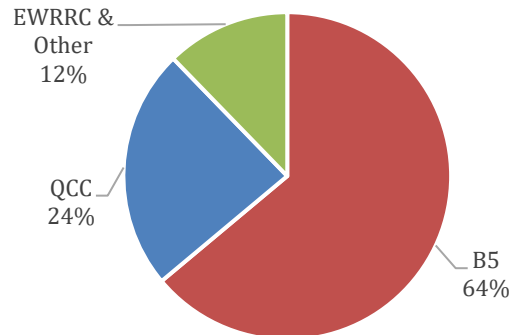
During March 2019, DANYA International on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, conducted the first of several phases in the 5-year grant project period. Focus Area 1

looks at comprehensive services, community and self-assessment, fiscal oversight, governance structures and readiness, and family engagement. The programs were found to be fully in compliance with all review criteria. No corrective actions required.

Financials - Revenue and Expenditures

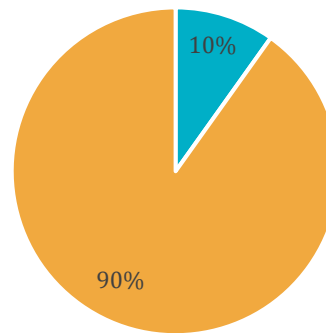
2018 Revenue	Amount
Birth to Five	\$6,691,116
Quality Child Care	\$2,493,078
EWRRC & Other	\$1,283,708
Total	\$12,263,397

Figure 2. ELAFS Program Revenue 2018-19



2018 Expenses	Indirect	Direct
Birth to Five	\$625,020	\$6,055,097
Quality Child Care	\$273,686	\$2,219,392
EWRRC	\$26,635	\$221,780
Total	\$925,341	\$8,496,269

Figure 3 ELAFS Program Expenses Direct/Indirect 2018-19



Birth-Five Services	Total	Indirect	Direct
Infant Toddler Early Prevention Programs	1,020,940	\$102,089	\$918,851
Early Intervention (ESIT)	\$244,854	\$24,578	\$220,276
Whatcom County Intervention Services	\$66,150	\$0	\$66,150
Early Head Start	\$541,285	\$57,995	\$483,290
Whatcom County – SEAS	\$60,408	\$6,472	\$53,935
ECEAP	\$2,076,848	\$190,528	\$1,886,321
Head Start	\$2,298,844	\$202,452	\$2,096,393
Bellingham Public NFS	\$120,000	\$12,857	\$107,143
Lynden School District	\$32,000	\$3,429	\$28,571
USDA-Lunch Program	\$200,637	\$21,497	\$179,140
Head Start Donations	\$29,150	\$3,123	\$26,027
Total	\$6,691,116	\$625,020	\$6,066,097

Quality Child Care Division	Total	Indirect	Direct
CACFP (Nutrition Program)	\$70,661	\$7,609	\$63,052
Fee for Service	\$64,972	\$7,050	\$57,922
Child Care Aware of Washington	\$2,128,918	\$234,524	\$1,894,394
Teaching Strategies Gold	\$18,270	\$1,958	\$16,313
Infant Toddler Regional Systems	\$157,716	\$16,917	\$140,799
NWESD	\$3,250	\$348	\$2,902
United Way - WELA	\$30,000	\$3,214	\$26,786
United Way - Vouchers	\$19,291	\$2,067	\$17,224
United Way - Skagit	\$9,848	\$1,068	\$8,780
Total	\$2,502,926	\$274,755	\$2,228,172

Other	Total
Head Start Non-Federal Share	\$823,609
Early Head Start Non-Federal Share	\$155,319
Events/Private Donations	\$31,365
EWRRRC	\$248,415
WECU X-it	\$25,000
Total	\$1,283,708

Community Reach

Birth to Five Services

Early Head Start 2018-19

Cumulative Enrollment:	91
Number of Funded Slots:	50
Average Monthly Enrollment:	100%
Number of Center Based Classrooms:	0
Number of Home-Based Slots:	50
Percent of Children w/Health Insurance at End of Enrollment:	100%
Percent of Enrolled Children that Received Medical Exams:	70%
Percent of Children Enrolled for at least 6 Months who had Medical Exam	70%
Percent of Enrolled Children who are Income Eligible	100%

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers 2018-19¹

Average Number of Referrals made each month	14
Average Number of Evaluations to Determine Eligibility	15
Average Number Determined Eligible during the month	9
Average Number of New/Initial IFSPs completed during month	10
Average Number of Active IFSPs on last day of month	91
Average Number of all active IFSPs within the month	91
Average Children Transitioned within month	8

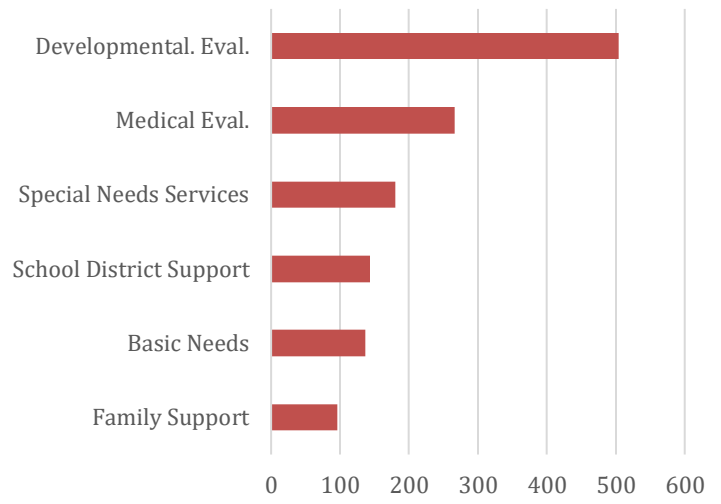
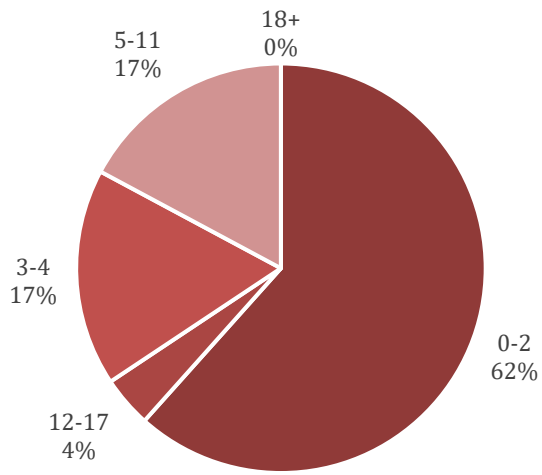
Single Entry Access to Services 2018-19

Total Number of Referrals	1,011
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Figure 4. Age of Children Referred for Service 2018-19

¹ Numbers are for OC direct services team, and do not reflect larger volume of service as Local Lead Agency

Figure 5. SEAS Needs Identified 2018-19



Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program 2018-19

Cumulative Enrollment:	205
Number of Funded Slots:	174
Average Monthly Enrollment:	100%
Number of Center Based Classrooms:	11
Meal Count:	36,046
Percentage of Enrolled Children who are Income Eligible	78%

Head Start 2018-19

Cumulative Enrollment:	273
Number of Funded Slots:	238
Average Monthly Enrollment:	100%
Number of Center Based Classrooms:	15
Meal Count:	46,666
Percentage of Enrolled Children who are Income Eligible:	96%

Figure 6. Race/Ethnicity of Head Start/ECEAP Children 2018-19

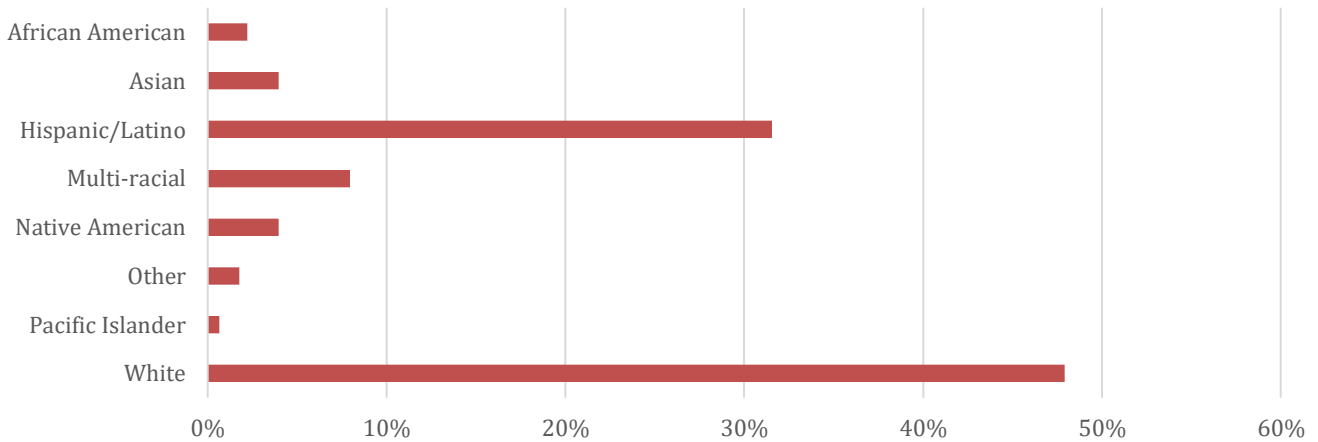
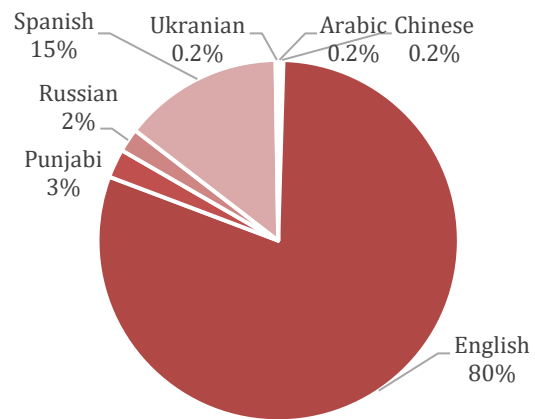


Figure 7. Primary Language of Head Start/ECEAP Children 2018-19



Quality Child Care Division

Emergency Child Care Vouchers July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

Unduplicated families who received assistance	35
Unduplicated children who received assistance	61
Direct Assistance	\$13,436.18

2018-2019: Child Care Aware – Early Achievers Quality Rating and Improvement System

Providers Enrolled in Early Achievers Total	460
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Professional Development Training 2018-19

Total number of training hours	550.50
Total number of training participants (duplicated)	2036

Child Care Nutrition Program

Total number of Reimbursed Meals:	166,225
Average number of Reimbursed Meals Per Month	13,852
Average Number of Children Served Per Month	568

Teaching Strategies Gold

Total number of participating child care providers	17
Total number of children enrolled	491

Birth to Three Quality Initiatives (formerly Infant-Toddler project)

Total of Infant-Toddler programs served by the FIND project	30
Total of Infant-Toddler programs connected with coaching and consultation	40

East Whatcom Regional Resource Center

Information and Referral Services 2018

Walk-in Clients:	5,144
Phone Clients	1136
New Users:	299
Volunteer Hours	1,122

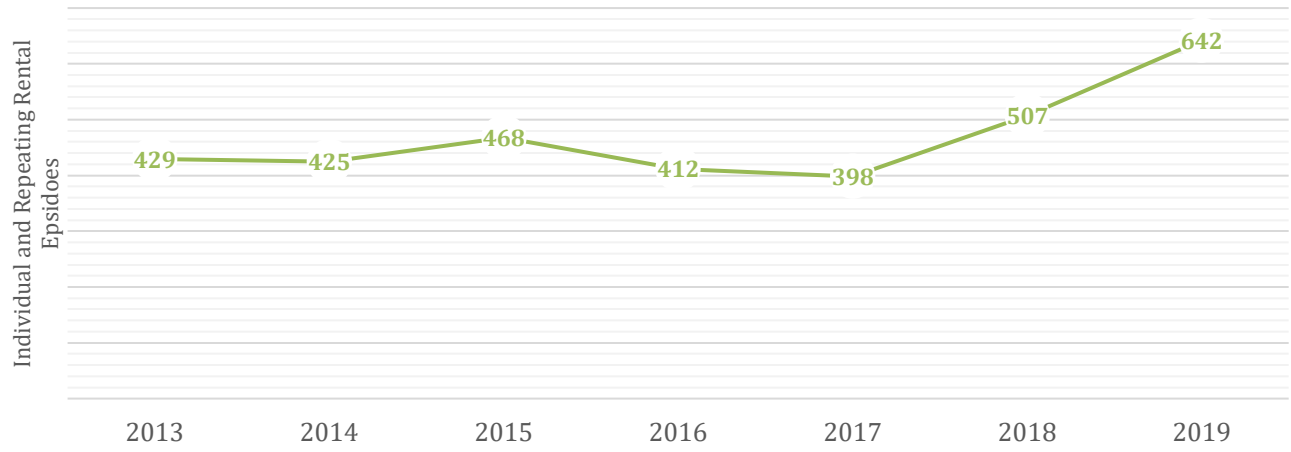
Event Attendance 2015-19



Summer Kids Days 2018

Number of Kids that Attended	98
Average Number of Kids Attending Per Day	22
Highest Attendance	38
Meals Served	1,510
Volunteer Hours	494

EWRRRC Total Community (Non-OC) Rental Episodes² Per Year



² A renter episode may be of any length

Parent Engagement Activities

Parent engagement and involvement begins at the time a parent chooses to enroll their child in Early Learning and Family Services programs. ELAFS staff recognizes that parents are the first and primary teachers of their children. Together, parents and staff decide what roles parents and other community agencies will play in planning activities that are consistent with families' needs and interests.

Opportunities for parents include:

Birth to Five Services

- Welcoming parent participation in classrooms as volunteers who help with daily activities or as observers.
- Working with parents to schedule home visits and socializations at a time when they are best able to fully participate.
- Participating in and/or taking leadership roles in Center Parent Committee Meetings at sites.
- Attending and participating in the Health Service Advisory Committee where parents meet with community health professionals to address child and adult health issues/needs in our communities.
- Providing input in curriculum planning and activities.
- Making recommendations for menu options in collaboration with our food service staff.
- Sitting on interview panels during ELAFS staff hiring processes.
- Working part-time in our administrative office as Parent Helpers providing clerical support.
- Parent events focusing on enhancing parent-child relationships and parent education, including father-child activities, movement and physical activity at home, various events sponsored by Parent-to-Parent, and learning new strategies for guidance and discipline and healthy nutrition.
- Representing others at Parent Center Committee as well as at the HS/ECEAP/EHS Policy Council where parents participate in policymaking and other decisions about the program.
- Participating in various surveys on issues of interest to parents.
- Providing input on program assessment and grants.
- Sharing testimonials about our programs.

- Helping to recruit families in the summer as a Volunteer Parent Recruiter.
- Participating in Motherread/Fatheread, our research-based parenting curriculum focused around the themes in children's books that teach parents skills to build early literacy and to reflect on parenting practices.
- Gaining advocacy skills by attending Advocacy Day in Olympia to support early learning programs and/or becoming WSA (Washington State Association) parent ambassadors.

Quality Child Care Division

- Participating in Kaleidoscope Play and Learn groups (KPL) to learn how to promote learning into everyday play and activities at home
- Family conferencing to learn how their child care program individualizes learning opportunities for their children through the Teaching Strategies Gold Pilot
- Attending parent nights at select child care programs to learn more about how Early Achievers makes a difference for their children and early learning programs statewide
- Advocating at the local, state, and national level for public investments in early learning and child care programs

East Whatcom Regional Resource Center

- During school breaks parents of attending East Whatcom Regional Resource Center (EWRRRC) Kids Dayz are welcome to stay with their child and participate alongside their child.

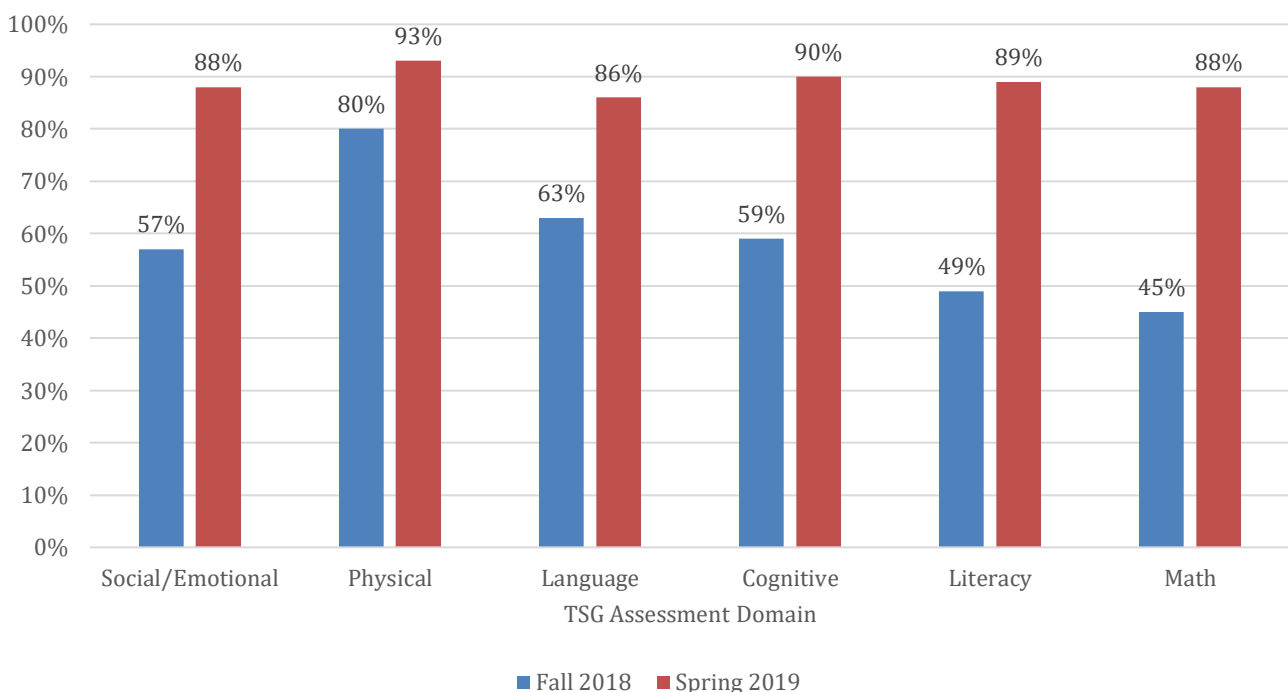
School Readiness Efforts

ELAFS school readiness goals are based on collaborative efforts with local school districts toward Preschool-3rd grade (P3) alignment efforts. The agreed upon goals include all five domains required by the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (language and literacy development; cognition and general knowledge; approaches toward learning; physical well-being and motor development; and social and emotional development).

Head Start and Early Head Start programs are required to measure and report children's progress based on the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. The framework was developed to guide programs in curriculum planning and ongoing assessment of children's progress and development while enrolled in the program. It includes seven general domains, and numerous domain elements relating to children's skills, abilities, knowledge, and behaviors. Similarly, the Washington D.E.L. has early learning guidelines that direct our work.

Our program uses Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG), a valid and reliable research-based assessment, as our measuring tool. The charts below indicate the percent of children in Opportunity Council Head Start and ECEAP programs that were found to be at or above the widely-held expectations at the end of the 2017-18 Program Year.

Percent of ELAFS Head Start/ECEAP Children Meeting and Exceeding Widely Held Expectations on TSG Assessment



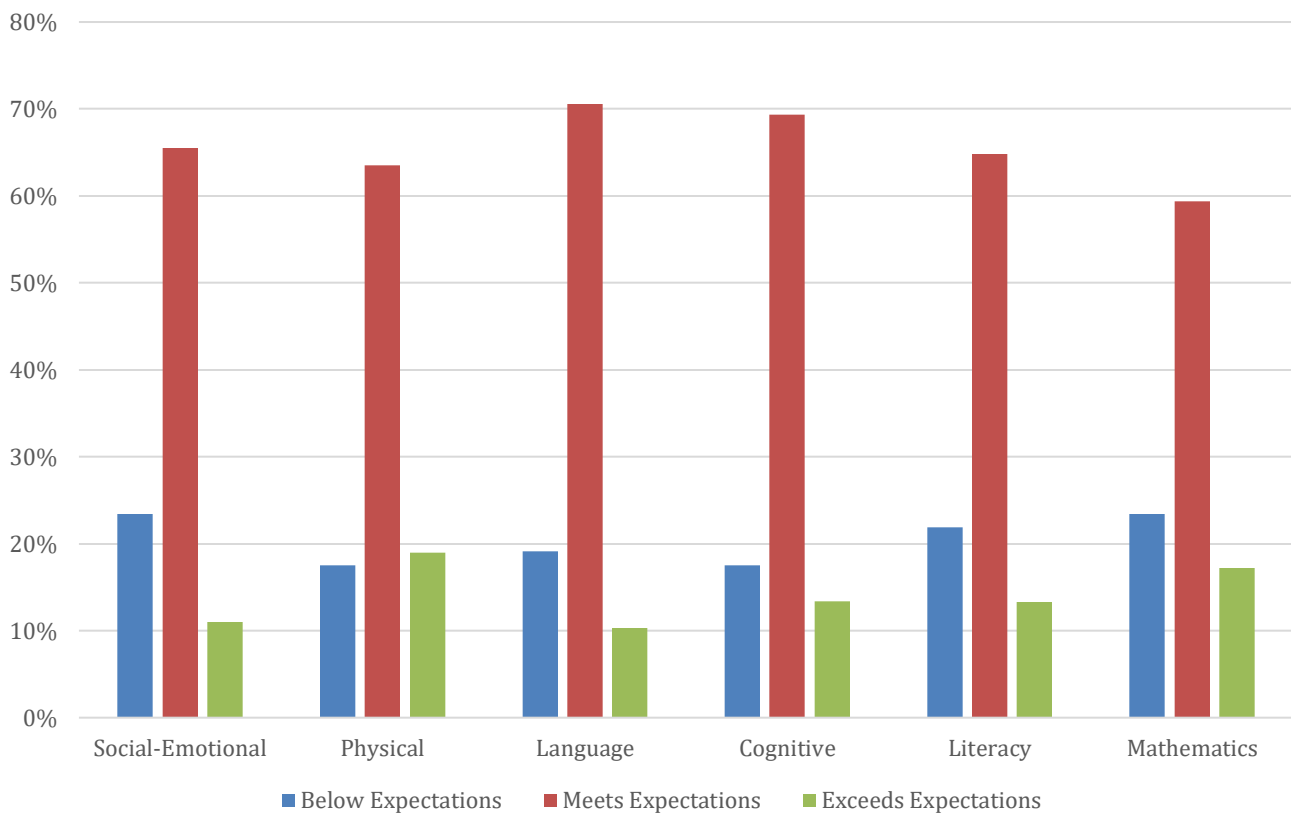
Teaching Strategies Gold Pilot

Beginning in 2018, Child Care Aware of Northwest Washington provided selected child care programs in Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties with the opportunity to participate in a Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) pilot project. The initial Pilot Project ran from July 2018 through December 2019. Based on positive interest and additional funding, the pilot has been extended through June 2020.

For the TSG Pilot from July 2018-December 2019:

- 17 child care providers participated (10 centers and 7 FCCs)
- 491 children were enrolled in the Pilot at some point during that time period
- Participants in the TSG Pilot have engaged families in a variety of ways. Some have shared documentation and checkpoint levels through a Family Conference Form or the Individual Child Report, some have shared documentation, and some have had conversations with families discussing how they are individualizing for their child.

TSG Pilot Checkpoint 5 Snapshot Graph
Fall 2019/2020 - Widely Held Expectations



Funding Sources and Collaborations

In addition to these key funders and collaborators, ELAFS is proud to also benefit from the support of local private and community foundations, as well as individual donors who support our work.

Child Care Aware



Head Start



United Way of Whatcom County



USDA



Washington State Dept. of Children, Youth & Families



Whatcom Community Foundation



Whatcom County



Whatcom Educational Credit Union



Whatcom Taking Action

