ECPAC is a partnership of community stakeholders in the areas of early learning, health, mental health, family support and education, and parents of young children who are committed to building a community where all young children can reach their full potential.

ECPAC is dedicated to improve the capacity of Adams County to improve access to available, quality supports and services for young children and their families in order to ensure children get the best start to life and enter school ready to be successful.

Research shows that a child’s first five years are a critical time for brain development, setting the foundation for life-long success. Because children are cared for by adults in their lives, ECPAC works to ensure that the needed resources and tools are in place in Adams County for parents, teachers, service providers, and other supportive systems to help children grow and learn.

Through Strategic Action Teams and other venues, ECPAC brings partners together to continually assess the strengths and gaps of the early childhood system in Adams County and agree upon strategies to implement together in order to move the community in a positive direction – leading to greater outcomes for young children.

Because Adams County has the highest percentage of children under age 5 in Colorado and is rated 23rd out of 25 rated counties for overall child wellbeing, (Kids Count 2014), scoring lower than the Colorado average on 10 of 12 health, economic, family, and education indicators, partners are very committed to our mission to build a community every young child can reach their full potential.
who

Members of the Pregnancy Related/Postpartum Depression (PRD) Action Team include representatives from health clinics, public health, the local mental health center, as well as a parent representative.

why

An infant needs their mother and other primary caregivers to be in the best health possible to ensure they develop to their fullest potential.

• Approximately 80% of women have the “Baby Blues” and up to 20% of women have pregnancy/postpartum depression, making PRD the most common complication of child birth.

• Pregnancy and the early years of parenting can be stressful times for parents. Research shows that in some cases, high levels of stress may lead to premature births; low-birth weight infants; infant mortality; and health, development, and learning challenges in infancy and early childhood.

what

To help increase the number of women who get the help they need, the goals of this group include:

1. Increase information regarding PRD provided to women and their supports pre and postnatally
2. Increase community providers’ ability to provide women and their supports with information
3. Increase women’s ability to engage in evaluation and treatment

how

HOW did we work to accomplish this over the last year?

• Brochures for mothers and their supporters were developed in English and Spanish and are being disseminated (can be found at www.ecpac.org) to help reduce the stigma associated with PRD. This year:
  » 770 brochures for women and 721 brochures for supporters were distributed

• MamaTalk, a group for new and expecting mothers, is underway and is offered in English and Spanish. This year 47 women participated, 27 having attended more than one group.

• A coordinated referral and status update process has been implemented to allow for easier access for women identified with a potential need for additional support or services; 7 organizations have been trained on this referral system and a total of 75 participants.

• Additionally, ECPAC co-hosted a Pregnancy Related Depression Lunch & Learn which also included a focus on Adams County referral processes. There were a total of 64 attendees, including (but not limited to) nurses, dieticians, behavioral health providers, and human services caseworkers.

“Within 2 weeks of delivering my baby, I developed severe postpartum depression and this experience was by far the scariest of my and my family’s life. I was desperate for help, calling every possible resource I could find and unfortunately I could not get help. I needed immediate help and was beyond frightened, I needed to hear from someone who went through the darkness, to tell me it would be ok. I don’t want anyone in our area to have to go through this experience. I want to be a resource to women who are starting to or in the depth of PRD.”

~ Adams County Mother
**HEALTH INTEGRATION ACTION TEAM**

The Health Integration Action Team consists of health clinics, school districts, early intervention, mental health, public health, parent representatives, the Department of Human Services, and others dedicated to children’s health and well-being.

In Adams County, only 5% of families, referred by a medical provider, follow through with a referral for a developmental evaluation (compared to 66% in Colorado); referrals made County-wide are at 58%.

- Many delays, including those related to speech, language, and social-emotional health, affect school readiness.
- According to the U.S. Department of Education, “fewer than half of children with developmental delays are identified before starting school.”
- “When a potential delay is present, the earlier a referral is made, the earlier a problem can be addressed through intervention and often ameliorated all together” (Colorado ABCD Project).

**WHAT**

The three overarching goals of this group include:

1. Expand implementation of a comprehensive health/developmental screening and coordinated referral system
2. Increase communication between service providers to deliver coordinated support to families
3. Develop and implement best practices for families support to follow through with referrals and access indicated developmental evaluations and health services through increased common messaging from community partners and increased parent information

**HOW**

HOW did we work to accomplish this over the last year?

- The Coordinated Provider Identification and Referral Roadmap has been finalized and implemented.
- Referral Roadmap training was provided to 7 organizations with a total of 75 participants having been trained. Over 80% of participants note they are “very likely” to implement this process when making referrals.
- Common messaging for families has been finalized and implemented to ensure that families have all the information they need to make the decision to follow through with an evaluation.
- Community programs and supports have been identified for those who do not qualify for traditional services.

**KINDERGARTEN READINESS ACTION TEAM**

The Kindergarten Readiness Action Team includes membership from 5 Adams County School Districts, the local Community College, several child care centers, Growing Home, Invest in Kids, and Head Start.

Through enriching and high quality experiences, children will have the opportunity to reach their full potential and be prepared for a successful school experience. Each year, about 7,500 Adams County children enter kindergarten. It is estimated that on average at least half of children are entering kindergarten not fully prepared for school. When children start school behind, they have less of a chance of school success and are at risk of dropping out of school, abusing substances, teen pregnancy, and engaging in juvenile delinquent behaviors.

**WHAT**

A comprehensive kindergarten readiness approach includes ensuring that children are ready, families are ready, schools are ready, and the community is ready. Therefore, ECPAC strives to support all of these necessary components.

1. Provide common messaging to early learning professionals about components of kindergarten readiness and provide needed support in delivering quality early childhood learning services
2. Develop and implement culturally relevant activities to help parents understand developmental milestones/school readiness and feel supported during times of transition
3. Identify Family-Friend-Neighbor (FFn) networks and provide information and support to promote the components of kindergarten readiness

**HOW**

HOW did we work to accomplish this over the last year?

- 30 people received training in the Strengthening Families approach
- A “Preparing for Kindergarten: A Transition Guide for Families” was developed and distributed to families (699 English, 347 Spanish) with activities, developmental guidelines, and various resources and 370 additional parent resources were distributed
- Several Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFn) providers have been contacted and provided with initial information; process for identification, contact and support continues, as well as conjunct work with the Learning Collaborative community in efforts to approach key community leaders
- Numerous Early Care and Education Quality Improvement Efforts: see next page

“I was so happy to see this Guide. I feel like I now have a better sense of what my child needs to get ready for kindergarten.” — KG TRANSITION GUIDE FAMILY
EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Children who live in poverty are at a higher risk of not being ready for kindergarten, yet attending high-quality preschool programs leads to better school achievement, social skills and behavior than children who do not attend high quality preschool. Children who attended quality preschool scored higher on aptitude measures through 4th grade; were less likely to be placed in special education; had significantly higher grade point averages; were more likely to graduate from high school; had less criminal behavior at age 14, and were 5 times less likely to be incarcerated as an adult; and had higher monthly earnings at age 27. With these results, economists estimate that an investment in quality preschool returns an average public benefit of 7-to-10% every year thereafter.

HOW did we work to accomplish this over the last year?

ECPAC offers programs, quality improvement coaching, mental health consultation, funding for classroom learning materials, a quality rating, and up-to-date resources and information on state plans for enhancing quality of the early learning experiences for the children and families enrolled.

Of the programs involved in the Quality Improvement Project:
• 2 have a 4 star rating,
• 4 have a 3 star rating,
• 6 have a 2 star rating, and
• 3 have a 1 star rating.

ECPAC offers Professional Development opportunities to those providing care for young children.

✓ This year, 61 Adams County early childhood professionals were awarded 79 scholarship awards. In addition, approximately 25 child care directors gained exceptional leadership skills through the Directors’ Roundtable, and 87 individuals attended various professional development opportunities. This includes the Expanding Quality in Infant and Child Health and Development, and the Special Needs Education classes.

✓ ECPAC supported 41 School District preschool teachers to be trained in the Incredible Years program.

✓ Weekly newsletter sent to 117 child care providers/stakeholders with a 42% open rate.

ECPAC IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE COLORADO EFFORTS AROUND RACE TO THE TOP TO BRING A NEW RATING AND LICENSING SYSTEM, NEW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, AND VARIOUS OTHER PROJECTS TO ADAMS COUNTY PROVIDERS.

HOME VISITATION COLLABORATIVE

The Home Visitation Collaborative includes members from three of Adams County’s home visitation programs which are Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), Parents as Teachers (PAT), and Head Start – using the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters program (HIPPY).

When parents of young children are supported, their children are more likely to have healthy development. These three evidence-based programs provide a strong support for families who participate, to receive guidance and support from health and child development professionals.

This group is working to ensure families have access to these available home visitation programs by integrating home visitation into the larger early childhood system of support and services for families of young children in Adams County.

HOW did we work to accomplish this over the last year?

• A common referral for all 3 programs was developed and 139 professionals from 18 organizations received training on how to make a referral
• 5 teen parents received information on the home visitation options
• A Home Visitation poster was developed for display in community programs. To date, 25 English and 25 Spanish posters have been displayed around Adams County.
• 2 trainings in Bright Beginnings program were provided with 7 agencies participating with a total of 18 attendees; as a result of these trainings, 10 families have received a Bright Beginning visit.

HOME VISITATION HAS BEEN FOUND TO:
• Improve maternal and prenatal health
• Infant and child health and development
• Increase children’s school readiness and school success in academic and social-emotional areas
• Help in the prevention of child abuse and neglect
• Improve family socio-economic status
• Decrease parental stress
• Improve coordination of referrals to community resources and supports
• Reduce crime and domestic violence

THANKS TO ECPAC'S COORDINATED EFFORTS, BOTH PROGRAMS ARE HAVING USEFUL CONVERSATIONS TO ASSIST FAMILIES WHEN TRANSITIONING FROM ONE PROGRAM TO THE OTHER. THE EFFICIENT WAY THESE MEETINGS ARE HELD WITHIN THE TIME FRAME GIVEN SUPPORTS A BETTER DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS AND SERVES THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH BOTH PROGRAMS MEET: TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES.
The 3rd Grade Reading Action Team has membership from the Boys and Girls Club, Anythink Libraries, Senior Hub, the Adams County Youth Initiative, and Growing Home.

**why**

Children who are unable to read with proficiency in 3rd grade are at greater risk for not graduating from high school. Therefore this Action Team is dedicated to help parents and children (kindergarten – 3rd grade) have access to literacy opportunities during out of school time. In Adams County, two in five 3rd grade students (over 2,300 students) are not reading at grade level according to the Colorado Department of Education in 2011. This is 10% lower than the state average. The American Education Research Association has found that a student who is not reading at 3rd grade level and living in poverty is 13 times less likely to graduate on time than her/his proficient wealthier peer.

1. Increase the number of Kindergarten - 3rd graders, within one school and one afterschool program, that receive a literacy-based program at a library.
2. Increase the number of families who receive information around community-based programming that promotes school literacy activities for Kindergarten - 3rd grade.
3. Increase number books distributed to students for home libraries.

**how**

HOW did we work to accomplish this over the last year?

- Promotion of the Summer Library Reading Program
- Use of data to target outreach and strategic partnerships to increase available supports
- 2nd Annual Book drive with 6,343 books donated (up from 1740 last year) with 18 businesses serving as collection sites (up from 11 last year)

ECPAC would like to thank the following businesses for supporting the 2nd Annual Book Drive:
Adams County Youth Initiative/Adams 12 Star Schools, Barnes and Noble Book Store, Boys and Girls Club, City of Commerce City, City of Westminster, Community Reach Center, ConocoPhillips, Google, Horizons North Credit Union, Hope Montessori Academy, Kaiser Permanente, Metro North Chamber of Commerce, Senior Hub, Step-by-Step Child Development Center, Sweet Pea Center for Early Learning, Target, Thornton Police Department, United Power, and 17th Judicial District Attorney’s Office.

**CDHS-ELGC:**
- CO Dept. Human Services – Early Learning Challenge Grant (Race to the Top)

**CDHS-MIECHV:**
- CO Dept. Human Services – Home Visitation Systems

**CDHS-SB:**
- CO Dept. Human Services – Systems Building

**CDHS-SRQP:**
- CO Dept. Human Services – School Readiness Project

**CDE-EQIT:**
- CO Dept. Education – Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care -- Professional Development

**CDPHE – MIECHV:**
- CO Dept. of Public Health/Environment – Home Visitation Systems – moved to CDHS in Jan 2014

**Mile High United Way:**

**CDE-EQIT:**
- THB: Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation
- CO TRUST: Health Integration
- IY: Incredible Years – Materials
- TR: Annual Teacher Recognition Event (Donations)
- OTHER: Donations, Class Registration Fees

**FUNDING SOURCE:**

- COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – School Readiness Quality Improvement Program
- ColoraDO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – Early Learning Challenge Grant (Race to the Top)
- COPE – MCHS
- MILE HIGH UNITED WAY
- COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – Expanding Quality in Infant and Toddler Care
- COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – Systems Building Grant
- MILE HIGH UNITED WAY
- COLORADO TRUST
- AMERICA’S PROMISE
- OTHER FUNDS (includes specific funds less than 1% and unrestricted funds from fees and donations)
WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THOSE WHO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT ADAMS COUNTY THROUGH FUNDING OR OTHER DONATIONS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNDERs</th>
<th>Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| » Colorado Department of Human Services  
  » Mile High United Way  
  » The Colorado Trust  
  » Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation  
  » America’s Promise  
  » Colorado Department of Education | » Lakeshore Learning  
  » Kaplan Early Learning Company  
  » John R Green Company  
  » Margaret Carpenter Recreation Center  
  » Constructive Playthings  
  » Martin/Martin Engineering  
  » Jansen Strawn Consulting Engineering | » Service by Air  
  » Duane Jansen  
  » Lynda Freas  
  » Ronda Ronczka  
  » Westminster Presbyterian Church  
  » Stukey Elementary  
  » Anonymous |

THANK YOU TO INDIVIDUALS FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS OF RESOURCES OR YOUR TIME.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| » Michelle Dalbotten  
  » Jennie Garner  
  » Traci Chamberlain | » Susana Ramirez  
  » 5 teens  
  » Boys & Girls Club  
  » Americorp Volunteers (CRC, D12 ReadingCorp, and Goodwill Industries) | » Ellen Duran  
  » Marla Draper  
  » Gloria Sanchez  
  » Phil Corn  
  » Suzie Holper |

Thank you to Mapleton Public Schools for their generous support as ECPAC’s Employer and Fiscal Sponsor.