



ECPAC
EARLY CHILDHOOD
PARTNERSHIP
OF ADAMS COUNTY

STORIES OF IMPACT: *Professional Development*

Stories of Impact was developed to discover and share the results of early childhood efforts in Adams County. This edition explores how community service providers are prepared and supported through ... professional development.

What it is ...



Recognizing the importance of strengthening the entire system, **ECPAC provides professional development opportunities to community professionals across disciplines**, including those involved with health, mental health, social services, home visitation and housing partners, as well as childcare and preschool providers. These opportunities offer shared learning and improvement in service quality.

“Colleagues in the early childhood arena are people who have passion, but not always the education behind it. Having opportunities to bring them together benefits the community.”—Josefina Hernandez, Lead Preschool Teacher

“We believe that if we provide high-quality trainings through a countywide approach to service providers, they will be able to provide more comprehensive and higher-quality services to children and families. As a result, families will have better outcomes.”—Lisa Jansen Thompson, Executive Director

What is involved ...

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- **Providing or co-hosting** topic-specific trainings and learning events. Most popular topics include Toxic Stress, Equity, Social-Emotional Development and Trauma-Informed Care.
- **Making available to community professionals who work in related fields** a chance to implement what was learned and have a long-lasting impact

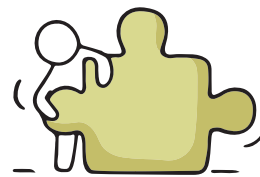
SCHOLARSHIPS

- Offering financial assistance through **scholarships for degree or certification programs in Early Care and Education**
- **Paying fees for professionals** to attend conferences and summits

What the numbers show...



- Of trainings focused on health and mental health topics:
- **100%** of attendees reported they would **apply new skills at their jobs**.
 - **100%** of attendees reported they **would share information** they received with others.
 - **92%** reported feeling like they **better understand children and families**.



Just in the 2017–2018 year, ECPAC provided 42 total trainings with 30 unique topics, **impacting 827 professionals** in the fields of early learning, family support and education, and health and mental health.



167 college scholarships have been provided to local early care and education professionals.

“I apply what I learned with all students, ... which makes for much more of a rich environment for the kiddos.”

—JOSEFINA HERNANDEZ, TEACHER



What people are saying...

ECPAC gave Josefina Hernandez the start-up support she needed to be able to complete her associate degree. It paid for one class a semester at Front Range Community College, and “little by little, I continued going to school, got a good GPA and was able to get more scholarships.”

Josefina is now a lead preschool teacher, with plans for more studies. She reflects on her studies: “The class on the [Exceptional Child] stuck with me. **I apply what I learned with all students;** we all have struggles and gifts, and things we need to work through. I take the time to know individuals, **which makes for much more of a rich environment.**”

Beyond post-secondary school, Emma Goforth and Marais Pletsch with the Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) Maternal and Child Health Program note the value of ongoing trainings, symposiums and other events. “**These events help us connect with other agencies, other staff, other programs who are doing direct touch with families—to really understand what other people are doing ... It’s a way to engage with thought partners,**” shares Emma.

Dolores Ramirez, chief program and impact officer at Growing Home, notes that its staff attended a conference funded by ECPAC and learned more about a long-term case management and mobility mentoring program called the EMPATH Model. Initially the only agency west of the Mississippi using the model, Growing Home has since worked with 33 families to help them overcome the stressors of poverty by providing a system for simplifying complex issues into reasonable action steps. Dolores says the program “has very quickly become a core project that we are hoping to continue to host and expand ... [and] grow it to eventually serve 200 families.”



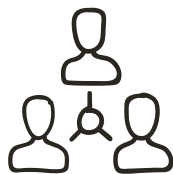
Sharon Penna, a member of the nurse support program through TCHD, has benefited from multiple ECPAC offerings. Through a Trauma-Informed Care training, she was reminded that “everybody comes from a different background ... providers need to be empathetic and meet them where they are.” Sharon also raved about an “**amazing, amazing presentation**” in an infant mental health class. Working with a first-time mother, she used some of the materials that really “**helped [the mother] understand how her baby was developing and thriving as [her daughter] grew.**”

THE BIG TAKEAWAY



Through individual learning, participants return to their workplaces with new ideas and approaches. As a result, professionals report feeling more knowledgeable and able to provide higher-quality services, helping children and families experience better outcomes.

How you can get involved...



—SHARE—

If you know someone who could benefit from ECPAC’s services, or would be interested in learning more, pass it on!



—GIVE—

Help ECPAC continue to be able to provide Adams County with quality early childhood services and resources.