



ECPAC
EARLY CHILDHOOD
PARTNERSHIP
OF ADAMS COUNTY

STORIES OF IMPACT: *Quality Improvement*

Stories of Impact was developed to discover and share the results of early childhood efforts in Adams County. *This edition explores how children learn and grow in high-quality learning environments through .. quality improvement.*

What it is ...



ECPAC works with local early care and education program providers—including family childcare homes, centers and preschools—and strives to enhance systems to help **improve the access, affordability and quality of early childhood services** through quality improvement initiatives for licensed childcare. These initiatives provide a framework grounded in best practice and are provided by ECPAC staff.

“Every individual, every business has room for improvement. We help them ... set goals, determine how to work towards it, reach it, and keep going around and around the cycle so that at the end of the day, overall childcare business practices are improved so that children’s outcomes in their daily lives are improved.” —Rebecca Wilson, Early Learning Initiatives Manager

What is involved ...

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COACHING

- ECPAC coaches **meet regularly with providers** to identify individual goals and to support staff with making progress and adjustments and ultimately meeting those goals.

MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

- ECPAC works closely with early childhood mental health consultants to **promote social-emotional development and address concerns.**

What the numbers show...



Research shows that children, especially economically disadvantaged children, who **attend high-quality** preschool programs, **have better school achievement, social skills and behavior** than children who do not participate in a preschool experience or who are enrolled in a low-quality program.



Since 2016, **mental health consultants (funded through ECPAC) have supported 59 children with challenging behaviors** through the development of individualized strategies.



Among the Adams County programs that report children leaving their program as a result of behavioral issues, **those that receive consultation report far fewer expulsions.**

“Our preschool program has this quality Level due to the help and involvement of ECPAC.”

—LISA LAMBRECHT, BRIGHT HORIZONS

What people are saying...

Sweet Pea Center for Early Learning (Sweet Pea) was one of the first programs to go through the Colorado Shines Quality Rating System, supported by an ECPAC coach. The center initially rated a Level 3 and is currently working toward a Level 5 (the highest) rating.

Traci Chamberlain, director at Sweet Pea, shares that as a result of ECPAC coaching, she and her staff feel more prepared to go through the process again. **“ECPAC provides the hands-on piece for childcare centers, with resources and information to get you to the quality that is needed.”**

Acknowledging that quality is important, early care and education programs that participate also commit to making themselves vulnerable with regard to sharing their practices and ideas. Being aware of and sensitive to this, ECPAC coaches are able to ease nerves and address hesitations to beginning and staying committed to the process. As Sharon Juel, director of the Preschool at City of Thornton Community Center, shares, “We have a small center ... Moving into the rating system was scary for everyone. It was the first time for teachers being rated in that way. **When the coach came in, the tension level dropped noticeably.** The coach really helped calm anxieties of teachers.”

Lisa Lambrecht, preschool director at Bright Horizons Early Education Center, spoke to the incredible value of having

access to current best practices within early childhood care and education and to a network of resources. Bright Horizons is committed to ongoing improvement for the benefit of its children and families, moving through Level 1 and Level 2 ratings, to its current rating of Level 3. “As an Adams 12 Five Star School District Preschool, we are rated at a Level 3, and it is due to the help and involvement of ECPAC.” Bright Horizons is already working with its coach to achieve a Level 4 or Level 5 rating in 2019.

Summing up the value of improving quality, Sharon noted, **“We will have a better generation because of the support.”**

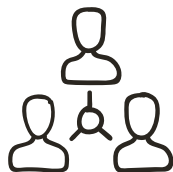


THE BIG TAKEAWAY



High-quality early childhood education, environments and experiences make the difference for ensuring children are ready for kindergarten and to excel academically and socially.

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.