



**ECPAC**

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP  
OF ADAMS COUNTY

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

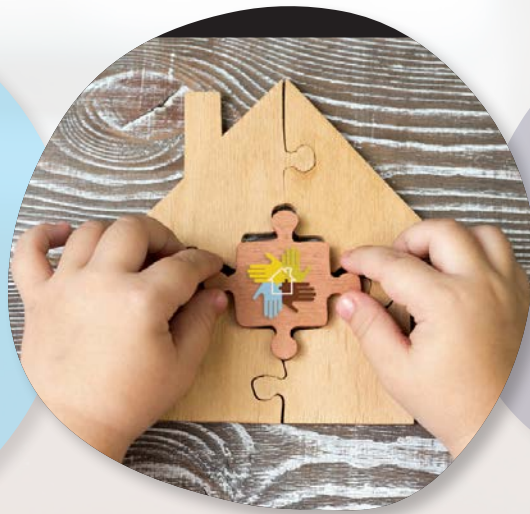
*A year of Flexibility, Resilience, and Hope.*

“ECPAC thanks the Adams County community for coming together to support our young children and their families this year!”



## Vision

All children and their families are valued, healthy, and thriving.



## Mission

Building a community where every young child and their family can reach their full potential.

## ECPAC's Ultimate Goal:

**All Adams County children enter school healthy and ready to learn and succeed.**

The following individuals and organizations support ECPAC's ultimate goal by serving on the Board, one or more of ECPAC's collective impact action teams or committees, the quarterly ECPAC Advisory Council or have otherwise contributed to ECPAC's overall mission.

A New Generation  
A Precious Child  
Adams 12 Five Star Schools  
Adams 14 Schools  
Adams County Government  
Adams County Human Services Department  
Almost Home  
Anythink Libraries  
The Arc of Adams County  
Aurora Housing  
Aurora Public Schools  
Be the Agenda  
Bell Policy Center  
Bright Horizons  
Brighton Housing Authority  
Bundles of Babies  
CASA of Adams and Broomfield Counties  
Centura Health  
Child Care Innovations  
Children's Hospital Colorado  
City of Brighton  
City of Commerce City  
City of Federal Heights  
City of Northglenn  
City of Thornton  
City of Westminster  
Clinica Family Health

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind  
Colorado Children's Campaign  
Cold Weather Care  
Community Reach Center  
Cultivando  
Community Uplift Partnership (CUP)  
DentaQuest  
Developmental Pathways  
Every Child Pediatrics  
Family Tree  
FISH of Commerce City Food Bank  
Florence Crittenton  
Front Range Community College  
Goal Academy  
Goddard Reunion and Thornton  
Growing Home  
Adams County Head Start  
Hope Montessori  
Invest in Kids  
Kaiser Permanente  
Kempe Center  
Kids First Health Care  
Kids in Need of Dentistry (KIND)

Little Giants  
Maiker Housing Partners  
Mapleton Public Schools  
Metro Denver Homelessness Initiative  
Mile High United Way -211  
Mountainland Pediatrics  
MSU Denver Early Family Literacy  
New Legacy Charter School  
North Metro Community Services  
North Suburban Medical Center  
Our Saviour Lutheran Church  
PASCO (Personal Assistance Services of Colorado)  
Peak Pediatrics  
Rocky Mountain Cradle 2 Career  
Salud Family Health Services  
School District 27J  
Step-by-Step Child Development Center  
Sweet Pea Center for Early Learning  
Tri-County Health Department  
University of Colorado - Denver  
Westminster Fire Department  
Westminster Public Schools

*Partners*

**LISA JANSEN THOMPSON**  
Executive Director

**CYNDI CARGILL**  
Director of Finance and Operations

**STEPHANIE HENDERSON**  
Director of Child and Family Health and Wellbeing

**RACHEL HUBBARD**  
Director of Early Learning

**LISA DOYLEY**  
Child and Family Advisor

**MELISSA SANTIZO**  
Family Support Specialist

**SALLY WERTZBAUGER**  
Administrative Assistant

### Early Care and Education Coaches:

**ALISHA MULLINS**

**JACKIE SLOAN HEE**

**SHELLEY JICHA**

**SUE LOHMILLER**

**NICOLE GONZALES**  
(also Professional Development Coordinator)

### ECPAC staff hired by partnering agencies:

**REBECA SNOWDEN**  
Family Initiatives Coordinator  
(hosted by Growing Home)

**MARTHA DE LUNA**  
Care Navigator  
(hosted by North Metro Community Services)

**ALIX HOPKINS\***  
Nurse Manager, Tri-County Health Department

**JULIA BRINK\***  
Quality Improvement Program Coordinator, Child Care Innovations

**KAYLIE WEESE\***  
Parent

**DREW O'CONNOR\***  
Deputy Director, Maiker Housing Partners

**ANITA DESHOMMES\***  
Chief Financial and Operating Officer, Growing Home

**CARRIE MORRIS**  
Director, North Metro Community Services

**ELBA AYALA**  
Parent

**KRISTEN MOREL**  
Director of Early Education, Mapleton Public Schools

**KRISTIN VOLLMAR**  
Owner of Sweet Pea Center for Early Learning

**JAZMINE ANAYA**  
Parent

**JILL ATKINSON/CANDICE LEIMKUHLER**  
Director, Community Reach Center

**NICOLE KINNEY**  
Head Start Family Services Manager, Adams County Human Services

**VINCE TRUJILLO**  
Local Business Owner

*\* Indicates Executive Officer*

*Staff*

*Board of Directors*

*Flexibility*





# System Successes

Towards improving child and family outcomes through shared accountability among partners, ECPAC provided leadership for various Strategic Action Teams and Collaboratives which included Health Integration, Kindergarten Readiness/ECE Workforce, Adams County Teen Parent Collaborative, Home Visitation Collaborative, Commerce City Services Alignment Team, Care Navigation Collaborative, Child Maltreatment Prevention, ECPAC-Child Care Assistance Program Collaborative, Housing Policy Collaborative, and an Early Care and Education/Child Care Response and Recovery Team (Figure 1).

Towards improved quality of services: 34 separate training/professional development opportunities, with 27 unique topics, were provided to a total of 711 (duplicated) cross-

domain service providers. 50% topics were focused on early learning; 32% on Health/Mental Health; 6% on Family Support and Education, and 12% on Systems.

ECPAC successfully wrapped up the 5-year Project LAUNCH initiative on September 29, 2019. Many areas of this work were sustained due to benefit to the community. See the final [LAUNCH Report](#) for more details.

ECPAC engaged in a 9 month strategic planning process to develop the [2020-2023 Strategic Plan](#). The plan was informed through the Board setting strategic priorities, a focus group with community partners, two focus groups with families, in English and Spanish, and a staff focus group.

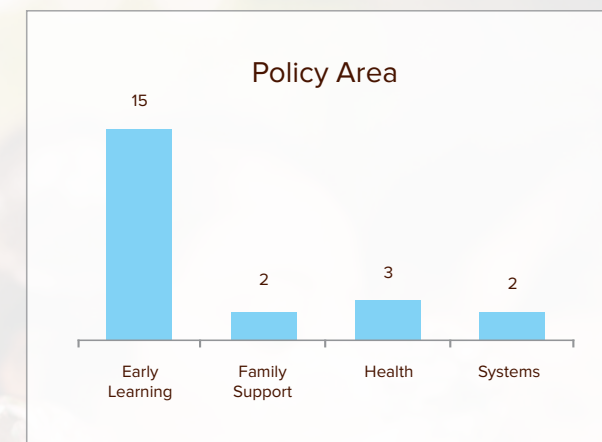


Figure 2

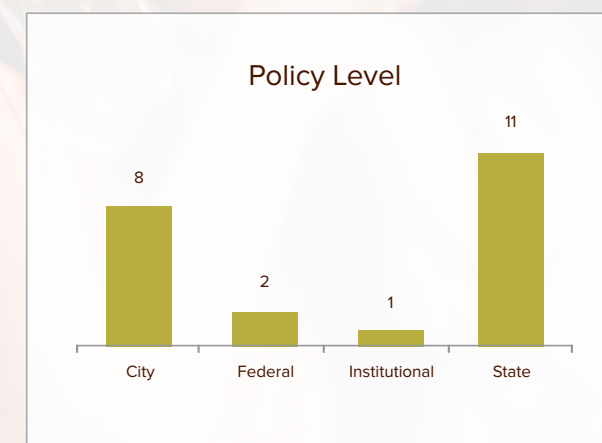


Figure 3

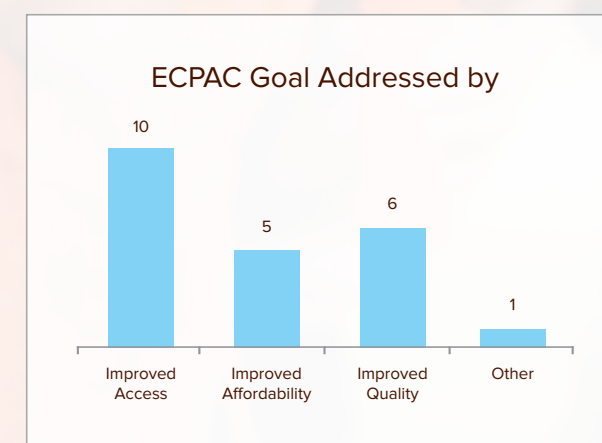


Figure 4

ECPAC was actively involved in policy efforts across multiple levels, focused on all areas of the Early Childhood and Family system including officially supporting five pieces of legislation, one city ordinance, one city code amendment, and four state/federal budget requests. All were approved (some with amendments) with one still under review. The charts on the left show efforts for January 2019 – June 2020. ECPAC worked with several City Councils related to zoning codes that present challenges for current Family Child Care Homes to expand capacity. Through strong partnership with the City of Brighton and advocacy from local Family Child Care Homes, the Brighton City Council approved removing some of the barriers for increased care capacity, including an improved process and lower fees (Figures 2-4).

ECPAC engaged in multiple efforts related to affordable housing, including providing input on the County’s plan, co-leading the Housing Policy Committee, co-leading the Collaborative for Healthy Adams County Families with Growing Home and Maiker Housing Partners, hosting a Community Conversation about Housing for 41 partners to increase understanding of the housing support options and to encourage advocacy for housing policy changes, and ECPAC participated in the Adams County Affordable Housing COVID Response and Recovery Team.

Partners report ECPAC supports community outcomes by:

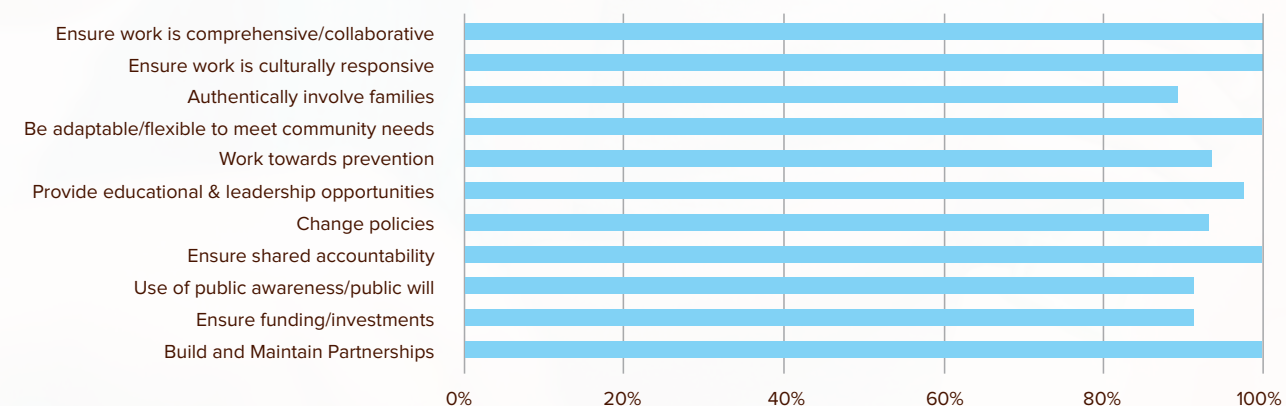


Figure 1







# Early Learning Pre-COVID Successes

In terms of **progress towards 60% of program engagement in Colorado Shines** (Level 2 or higher), the fiscal year started with an approximate 43% engagement rate and ended with 43.7%. The number of Level 2 programs increased by 4, although ECPAC supported 16 programs in achieving Level 2, with 12 programs either closing or not renewing.

**Adams County had 163 (57%) of ECE programs at a Level 1 : 100 Family Home Providers, 33 Centers, and 30 Preschool Programs**

163

**68 at Level 2 (23.7%) – a slight increase of 1.7%: 30 Family Home Providers, 27 Centers, and 11 Preschool Programs**

68

**56 at Levels 3-5 (20%) – a slight decrease of 1.0%: 7 Family Home Providers, 41 Centers, and 8 Preschool Programs**

56

Tremendous progress was made in outreach to **111 programs:**

We now have **26 new programs** engaged to work on L2.

Of the 26 programs who engaged more fully with ECPAC, **61.54% (16) reached L2.**

Of these – **34.5% (6) went on to sign an MOU** before the deadline in April.

There were a few **more interested** who did not meet the deadline and planning to apply in the new year.

In partnership with ELV (Early Learning Ventures), ECPAC implemented the first year of Early Head Start (EHS). A total of 5 site “classrooms” were identified and awarded EHS grants - serving 47 infants and toddlers. ECPAC provides coaching and support to programs in meeting Early Head Start standards. These programs also receive financial supports to help fund the gap of providing high-quality infant and toddler care.

ECPAC provided technical assistance to one childcare center owner/director to provide testimony at the capital in support of HB 20-1053. The early childhood mental health focus of the bill, will support programs working with a mental health consultant in using best practices to promote social-emotional development and prevent and respond to challenging behaviors.

ECPAC started an Early Care and Education Workforce Action Team just prior to COVID-19. This team is comprised of local partners including 3 school districts, 2 higher education entities, the library, Head Start, and an ECE site director. Work to-date has included aligning plans with the Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood, Early Milestones, Preschool Development Grant plan, and advocating for HB 20-1053 to improve pathways for a qualified workforce. Conversations will pick up again in the fall as we learn more about what support the ECE community needs to ensure there is a highly qualified workforce and to help implement HB 20-1053 in Adams County.

# COVID Response

The COVID-19 pandemic required ECPAC to increase both advocacy efforts for early care and education programs and families needing care, as well as shift to virtual support and supporting programs with more basic needs.

ECPAC was identified as the lead convener of the Adams County Child Care Response and Recovery Team – facilitated by the Rocky Mountain Partnership. Through this cross-sector team, the needs of families, childcare programs, and the business community were quickly identified and strategies set forth. ECPAC thanks Commissioner Pinter for her leadership on this team.

ECPAC quickly joined efforts at a state and local level to promote the state-led Emergency Child Care Collaborative for Essential Workers – which had a total of 69 Early Care and Education Adams County programs set up to care for children through this effort and a total of 431 families and 731 children receiving care.

ECPAC was able to provide support for 141 of 287 ECE programs who indicated a need for emergency supplies during COVID, with all programs receiving the option for this support. These efforts were made possible due to receiving grant funding from the Office of Early Childhood, City of Westminster, and COVID Relief Funds to provide various supplies in extremely high demand, with additional donations provided by WeeCycle and A Precious Child.

One family home provider noted: *“when I opened my front door and saw the supplies, I was in shock! These supplies supported me in staying open and providing care to my families and children.”*

Recognizing the constantly changing landscape during COVID-19, ECPAC hosted virtual opportunities for ECE professionals through

every other week CHATS (Conversations, Help, and Training Sessions) to offer programs and providers peer to peer support, updates on state and local mandatory guidelines, redefining self-care during a pandemic and how to maximize the resources, funding and subsidies during a time of high need. 121 providers attended these sessions (duplicated) and continue to identify the need for connection, accurate information and support to strengthen and build resilience during this time of unrealistically high expectations placed on the sector.

ECPAC shared in the advocacy for Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) reimbursement of slots/absences and waiver of parent co-pays as a result of COVID impacts on enrollment and parental loss of income. We thank Adams County for paying one of the highest amounts of absences (22) per month and waiving parent fees in order to best support providers and families.

One local center director/owner, sent a letter of thanks to CCCAP department explaining, if it weren’t for the payment of absences, she would not have been able to financially remain open through the initial shutdown.

ECPAC continued to advocate for the passage of HB 20-1053, which originally was set to be postponed to next legislative session due to shortened time of the legislative session. This bill addresses the shortage of the Early Care and Education workforce, the need for improved support for children’s mental health, and the need to improve support for high-quality early care and education. The impacts of COVID-19 with the economic and health trauma of the pandemic made the passage of this bill extremely important during this time.





# Child and Family Health and Well-being Pre-COVID Successes

In response to the policy priority “Providing Services and Supports where Families Spend their Time,” and the need identified by both families and community partners, ECPAC began to pilot Family Resource Center Hubs, with a vision that these Hubs will be available in multiple locations across the County as a way to decrease barriers to access.

In addition to providing services and supports at Adams County Human Services with 18 additional community organizations, ECPAC also opened “The Family Center” in Commerce City in partnership with Our Saviour Lutheran Church, where the FISH of Commerce City Food Bank is also located. Data shows that a number of disparities exist for many Commerce City residents and this may be exacerbated by the fact that several programs left the city in 2017, leaving a significant gap in services for this community. In response, the implementation of a shared services model with community organizations provided the following supports:

On-site support from **Adams County Human Services** Enrollment Specialists twice per month resulted in 44 individuals being supported in applying for public benefits.

In partnership with **North Metro Community Services** and **Growing Home**, 62 families were provided with 91 supportive referrals; 37 of the families received extensive Care Navigation.

ECPAC hosted a no-cost dental screening event in collaboration with **Kids in Need of Dentistry (KIND)** and **DentaQuest** in which 14 individuals were provided with preventative care, education and resources, and referral support.

72 caregivers attended one of 8 different series of classes or groups for families provided by ECPAC in collaboration with community partners – all at locations where families spend their time.

Several family support opportunities were added this year, including the following which allowed for ECPAC to provide supports to families with children of all ages:

In partnership with **The Kempe Center**, ECPAC piloted two series of “The Best Start for Families: a Health Equity Approach,” an evidence-based, trauma-informed two-generational program that aims to prevent child abuse and strengthen caregiver-child relationships.

Through **Illuminate Colorado**, ECPAC began offering Circle of Parents in Recovery, a weekly group for caregivers seeking peer encouragement and accountability, as well as social support as it relates to substance use recovery.

ECPAC initiated conversations with **The Arc of Adams County** to meet the expressed need of families to provide opportunities for learning and social connections for caregivers of children with special needs.

Through ECPAC’s Child Maltreatment Prevention work, and in response to policy priority “changing social norms,” the following messages were developed in order to promote the importance of responsive caregiving and to decrease stigma related to asking for help.



## COVID Response

In response to COVID-19, ECPAC’s Family Initiatives Coordinator, in partnership with Growing Home, guided 307 families towards needed resources. Housing, food, and clothing were the most requested needs expressed.

Additionally, Adams County families were offered a care package that consisted of food, hygiene items, household products, baby items, and/or children’s activities based on the family’s identified priorities. ECPAC delivered 134 care packages, supporting more than 600 individuals, right to their door step!

In order to support social connections and children’s learning at home, ECPAC began offering a Virtual Parent Group in English and Spanish. This group will continue into the new year, as well as additional virtual parenting classes/groups, including Circle of Parents in Recovery and Strengthening Families.

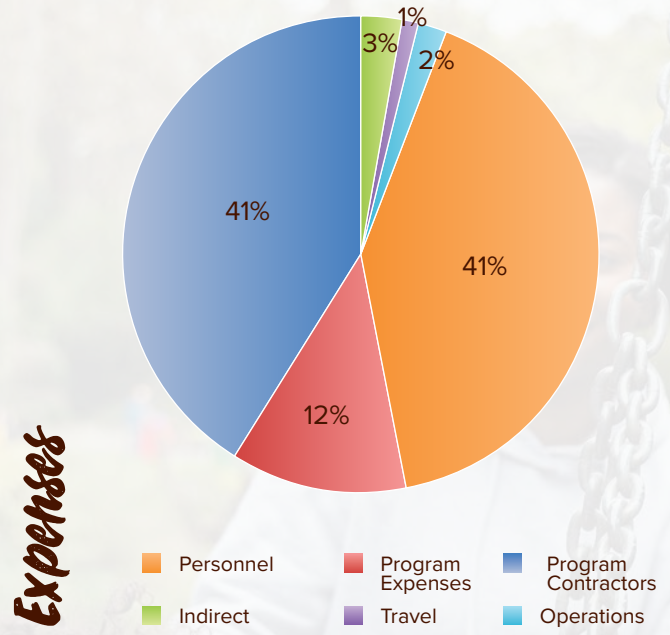
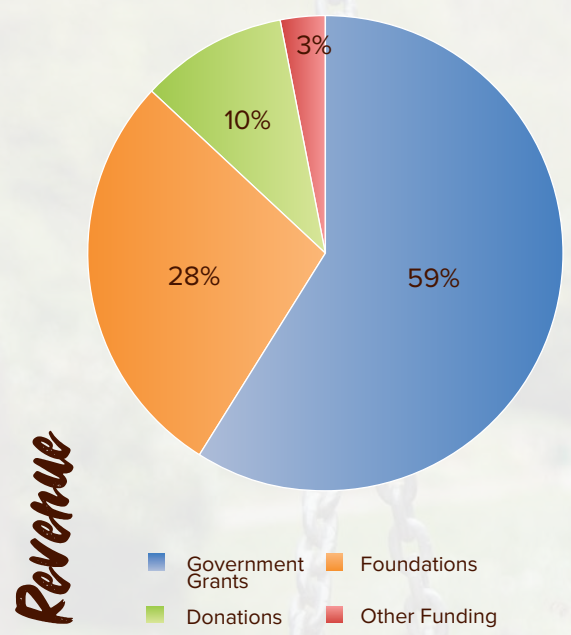
*These materials, and more, are available to partners and families – reach out!*







# Financials



ECPAC WOULD LIKE TO THANK THOSE WHO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT US THROUGH FUNDING OR OTHER DONATIONS.

## Our Donors

### Individuals

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- » Wass, Valerie
- » Weese, Kaylie
- » Wertzbaugher, Sally
- » Wilson, Eric and Rebecca
- » Zeman, Sharon
- » Children's Hospital Colorado
- » City of Commerce City
- » City of Northglenn
- » City of Westminster
- » Clinica Family Health
- » Community Reach Center
- » First Bank
- » Front Range Community College Foundation
- » Jagger Roofing
- » Kroger
- » Little Giants
- » LockedIn Logistics
- » Mapleton Public Schools
- » Network for Good
- » North Metro Community Services
- » Third Sector Innovations, Inc.
- » Tri-County Health Department
- » Truist
- » Union Housing Partners
- » Westminster Public Schools
- » Woodlake Wealth Management
- » Adams 12 Five Star Schools
- » Adams County Government
- » Amazon Smile
- » Bundles of Babies

### COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

|  |       |              |
|--|-------|--------------|
| • Project LAUNCH   | ----- | <b>15.5%</b> |
| • Maternal, infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) | ----- | <b>0.7%</b>  |
| • Systems Building Grant                                       | ----- | <b>10%</b>   |
| • Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care                     | ----- | <b>11%</b>   |
| • Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)               | ----- | <b>3.3%</b>  |
| • Colorado Shines GAE  | ----- | <b>16.3%</b> |
| • School Readiness Quality Improvement Program                 | ----- | <b>8.7%</b>  |

|  |       |             |
|--|-------|-------------|
| CO DEPT PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT THROUGH GROWING HOME | ----- | <b>1.3%</b> |
| EARLY LEARNING VENTURES                                    | ----- | <b>3.1%</b> |
| ILLUMINATE COLORADO  | ----- | <b>0.5%</b> |
| STRENGTHENING WORKING FAMILIES INITIATIVE CCA              | ----- | <b>4.1%</b> |
| ADAMS COUNTY CSBG - COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT         | ----- | <b>2%</b>   |
| BROOMFIELD EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL                         | ----- | <b>1.9%</b> |
| MILE HIGH UNITED WAY                                       | ----- | <b>2.8%</b> |
| TEMPLE HOYNE BUELL FOUNDATION                              | ----- | <b>5.9%</b> |
| ROSE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION                                  | ----- | <b>0.5%</b> |
| COLORADO TRUST   | ----- | <b>2%</b>   |
| CARING FOR COLORADO  | ----- | <b>3.6%</b> |
| COLORADO HEALTH  | ----- | <b>3.6%</b> |
| PITON  | ----- | <b>3.2%</b> |

## Our Funders

# Together





**ECPAC WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATIONS OF TIME AND RESOURCES.**

## *In-Kind Donations* ::

- » A Child's Song
- » A New Generation
- » A Precious Child
- » Adams 12 Five Star Schools
- » Adams County Human Services Department
- » Alberto Andrigetti
- » Ann's Nails
- » Anythink Libraries
- » Baker School Apartments
- » Brian Bauer
- » Brittany Van Riper
- » Brookside Physical Therapy
- » Bundles of Babies
- » Christa Riojas
- » City of Northglenn
- » City of Thornton
- » City of Westminster
- » Community Reach Center
- » Compassionate Journey Therapeutic Massage
- » Directors Roundtable Executive Attendees
- » ECHO
- » Elise Ahlswede
- » Ellen Wetzig
- » FEMA
- » Front Range Community College
- » Good Samaritan Medical Center
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- » Little Giants
- » Lisa Jansen Thompson
- » Lord of Life
- » Luke Dunham
- » Luna Roaster Gourmet Coffee & Tea
- » Lutheran Center
- » Michelle Dalbotten
- » Nicole Gonzales
- » Northglenn Christian Church
- » Colorado Office of Early Childhood
- » Our Savior Lutheran Church
- » PEAK Beverage
- » Purple Moon Early Learning Center
- » Rachel Hubbard
- » Robert Redmond
- » Rosemarie Regan
- » Soft Surroundings
- » Soledad Marisol Dominguez
- » Starbucks-45 East 120th, Thornton CO, 80241
- » Step by Step Child Development Center
- » Stephanie Hamburg of Shining Star
- » Stonebrook Manor
- » Sue Lohmiller
- » Suresh & Karla Maharjan
- » Sweet Pea Center for Early Learning
- » Tammy Hayashi
- » Tri-County Health Department
- » Teachers Treasure Trunk
- » Tierni De Forest & Book Club
- » Timeless Expressions
- » Unison Housing Partners (now Maiker Housing Partners)
- » Wee Cycle
- » Westminster Fire Department
- » Westminster Public Schools

## *Our Volunteers* ::

- » Aja Martinez
- » Dawanta Parks
- » Doug Wertzbaugher
- » Ida Cossitt-Glesner
- » Jamie Roth
- » Katharine Brown
- » Laura Hager
- » Lauren Finch
- » Lindsey Hendon
- » Nate Thompson
- » Shawn Crespin
- » Stephen Decatur
- » Zach Chapman



**ECPAC**  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP**  
**OF ADAMS COUNTY**

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*Thank You*