



An Introduction to
KIDS MATTER:

Improving Outcomes For Children in Washington State

For

EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITIES

**Working Together So That
Children Are Healthy and Ready For School**



*Learn how to use Kids Matter as a resource in your
early childhood systems-building efforts.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION: www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter



Dear Early Learning Communities:

This guide was designed for you, in response to your requests for more information and support in using Kids Matter. We hope you find it useful!

We know that Early Learning and Early Childhood Systems efforts are evolving in different ways and at different rates across the state. This, of course, makes it challenging to support communities with very different needs. This [Introduction to Kids Matter: Improving Outcomes for Children in Washington State for Early Learning Communities](#) (which we will call “the Guide” for short) is an attempt to move that process forward with Kids Matter. We appreciate the feedback we received from many of you in the drafting stage; and hope you will understand that the suggestions we received about reducing some sections from one reviewer, were often contradicted by another! We’ve tried to strike a balance, and hope this Guide will provide something for everyone.

The purpose of the Guide is to introduce communities to Kids Matter and show you how it can support your systems work in Early Learning. The Guide has information from Kids Matter documents, combined with real-life examples from people using Kids Matter effectively in Washington state. We could only list a few examples, but we hope it is enough to give you some concrete ideas about how Kids Matter can be used to further your goals.

The guide is divided into the following sections:

Section 1: Introduction— Why learn about Kids Matter?

Section 2: Kids Matter Basics—How to find the information you want to use

Section 3: Using Kids Matter—Enhancing community collaborations

Section 4: Getting Started—Tools to help communities use Kids Matter effectively

Within each section, there are short sub-sections with headers. You can quickly jump to the parts most relevant to your community, or to the particular conversation you are having. The detailed Table of Contents should make it easy to locate information you need. While you are welcome to read the Guide from start to finish, you do not need to do so. Look for a topic of interest, and get started!

Kids Matter can be useful to anyone who believes that working collaboratively toward common goals and outcomes will lead to greater success than is possible by working alone. The community level collaborations you are building will make a real difference for children and families across the state. We hope that this Guide will help connect communities with each other, and with state level processes, supporting your efforts to assure that the children in your community are healthy and ready for success in school and life.

Thank you for all you do each day for young children and their families!

-The Kids Matter Team

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I. INTRODUCTION: Why learn about Kids Matter



Kids Matter can help communities embrace the “whole child” approach; increase collaboration among early childhood stakeholders; and build upon complementary and existing efforts. Kids Matter bridges together health; social, emotional and mental health; early care and education/child care; and parenting information and support.



A. What is in this Guide?

The purpose of this Guide is to introduce communities to Kids Matter and demonstrate how it can help your community level systems work in early learning. The Guide is divided into four main sections.

Section 1: Introduction— Why learn about Kids Matter?

Section 2: Kids Matter Basics—How to find the information you want to use

Section 3: Using Kids Matter—Enhancing community collaborations

Section 4: Getting Started—Tools to help communities use Kids Matter effectively

B. What is Kids Matter?

Kids Matter is a collaborative and comprehensive strategic framework for building the early childhood system in Washington State in order to improve outcomes for children. Kids Matter offers a framework that supports the efforts of local and state stakeholders to coordinate, collaborate and integrate efforts that will lead to children being healthy and ready for school. Kids Matter identifies specific achievable outcomes within four goal areas: **access to health insurance and medical homes; mental health and social-emotional development; early care and education/child care; and parenting information and support.** Cutting across and integrated within each of these is a family support approach to achieving outcomes within the four goal areas.

C. What needs does Kids Matter address?

The current reality is that services, policies and systems that serve young children are inadequate to meet the needs of children and families. A comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted during the development of the Kids Matter framework determined four overarching gaps in Washington state systems for young children:

- Fragmentation—multiple, separate systems
- Funding gaps
- Challenges to focused policy guidance and decision-making
- Lack of public understanding of the importance of early childhood and early childhood services

D. What is meant by “early childhood systems” and “systems work”?

Kids Matter is based on the premise that a statewide early childhood system (or “system of systems”) that is integrated, accessible, and supported by policies and financing is essential to children’s health and school readiness. It will take considerable “systems work” to move from our current fragmented systems of services, to an overall system that works more effectively for families. Thinking about the work to be done as two inter-related processes—systems organizing, and service capacity building—may help communities conceptualize this “systems work” more clearly.

Systems Organizing

These are “systems” efforts to facilitate collaborative and integrated system planning, implementation and evaluation. Currently, many public and private systems and services are not designed to work effectively with each other. The goal is to facilitate development of a statewide integrated, early childhood system of systems; so that the parts of the system work well together from a child and family perspective.

Community Example: A community uses the Kids Matter framework in its public-private partnership planning efforts around Early Learning.

State Example: The Department of Early Learning’s Early Learning Advisory Council uses Kids Matter to frame its systems development work.

Service Capacity Building

These are “systems” efforts to build the capacity of an effective early childhood system which includes the four goal areas of Kids Matter (health insurance/medical home; social-emotional/mental health; early care and education/child care; parenting information and support). Currently, there is insufficient capacity to meet the needs of families for high quality services in many of these areas. The goal is to facilitate capacity building of services within the early childhood system of systems; so that the services families want and need are accessible to them.

State Example: A new investment is made in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) to enhance quality and increase access for more children; increasing capacity within the Early Care and Education/Child Care goal area of Kids Matter. Since ECEAP is whole-child, family-focused program, this investment actually addresses all four Kids Matter goal areas (including Health, Social-Emotional/Mental Health; and Parenting Information and Support)

Community Example: A community strategic planning process focuses on quality early learning experiences, considering access to child care, preschool, and home visiting services. The strategies devised will increase service capacity in two goal areas of Kids Matter: Early Care and Education/Child Care and Parenting Information and Support.

Neither “systems organizing” nor “service capacity building” work is more important than the other. In order to achieve the goal that children are healthy and ready for school, these processes must coexist, both in communities, and at the state level. Communities may find it helpful to consider which type of “systems work” they are doing in a given planning or implementation process. For more detail about “Systems Work” see the one page handout (see **page II** of Kids Matter Tools).

E. How does Kids Matter add value to early learning efforts?

Kids Matter provides a conceptual framework for creating a more integrated, accessible, effective early childhood system in Washington state. Anyone interested in early learning can find a place for themselves within Kids Matter. It provides a way to focus collaborative efforts strategically, while aiming toward common outcomes. It can help bring together the expertise of decades of work by individuals and organizations; with the energy, interest and commitment of new public and private partners. It is framed at the “50,000 foot level” so that all types of early learning efforts can use it in ways that work for them. Doing so also allows early learning stakeholders to align their efforts with others, helping contribute toward the “bigger picture” of statewide success for all young children.

F. Who owns Kids Matter?

Kids Matter belongs to all interested stakeholder groups and organizations who believe that working collaboratively toward common goals and outcomes will lead to greater success than is possible by working alone. It is intended to guide the actions of public and private stakeholders at the community, regional and state levels.

G. How was Kids Matter developed?

Kids Matter was developed with the participation of early childhood stakeholders at the community, regional and state levels over a two year period from 2003-2005. Three statewide system-building initiatives worked together to create one early childhood planning process: the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant in the Department of Health; the Washington Build Initiative, co-led by the Foundation for Early Learning and the Head Start–State Collaboration Office (HS-SCO), and the HS-SCO’s own systems-building work. The planning process was supported by this leadership, and stakeholder efforts culminated in the creation of the Kids Matter framework. The systems building partners continue to work together to support and guide its implementation, so that Kids Matter is a living, active plan in Washington state. From its inception, Kids Matter has been a public-private partnership, engaging the input and leadership of stakeholders from both sectors at both the state and local levels. For a full description of the process, see the Kids Matter Report at www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter.

H. What Kids Matter documents exist?

Kids Matter partners want to make useful documents available to communities across Washington state. As tools and resources develop, they will be posted on the web at www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter. The following documents are currently available:

The original “source” documents:

- [Kids Matter Executive Summary](#) – this colorful PDF provides an overview of Kids Matter and is the most commonly used document. It is also available in a printed version.
- [Kids Matter Full Report](#) – this longer report reveals more detail behind the development of Kids Matter, including background, needs assessment, and participants.

Evaluation documents:

- [Kids Matter Use and Awareness Survey, Executive Summaries, 2006 and 2007](#)
- [Kids Matter Use and Awareness Survey, Full Reports, 2006 and 2007](#)

Other documents:

- [An Introduction to Kids Matter for Early Learning Communities](#) (this Guide).
- [Understanding the Opportunities, Benefits, and Realities of Public and Private Partnerships: The Washington State Early Childhood Comprehensive System's Experience](#), an article featured in the Grantmakers for Children, Youth and Families publication, discussing the role of Kids Matter in early childhood systems development in Washington State.
- [Healthy Children Learn](#), a one page document about Health and Early Learning

I. What do people say about Kids Matter?

To date, there have been two Kids Matter Awareness and Utilization Surveys (2006 and 2007). These have confirmed broad awareness and familiarity with Kids Matter among early childhood stakeholders statewide. In 2007, 57% of the 470 respondents reported that the Kid Matter Framework had helped them to develop new or different relationships, partnerships or collaborations. Respondents also agree that the Kids Matter Framework will help organizations achieve positive outcomes for young children and their families. They also give many concrete examples of how they have, or plan to, use Kids Matter. The positive results of these surveys are important, because the more widespread its use, the more likely Kids Matter will be effective in facilitating the desired outcomes. For more information from the Evaluation Surveys, see Section 3 of this Guide.

J. Are communities required to use Kids Matter?

The use of Kids Matter is voluntary, but communities are encouraged to use it as a tool to incorporate best practices into early childhood systems and early learning efforts. Many regions of the state are using Kids Matter and have found it helpful. State level efforts, in both the public and private sectors, are increasingly embracing Kids Matter. For example, the Foundation for Early Learning is encouraging its use by communities applying for support; and the Early Learning Advisory Council to the Department of Early Learning is using Kids Matter to frame its efforts. Having Kids Matter support both community and state level processes will help facilitate the state-local connections and systems integration efforts that are necessary for effective early childhood systems development across the state.

K. How can this guide help communities use Kids Matter effectively?

This Guide is intended to introduce communities to Kids Matter in practical ways that help them in their ongoing efforts to improve systems and services for young children. Communities have asked for further support around the use of Kids Matter in their local efforts. Kids Matter systems partners hope this Guide will help communities:

- Better understand how Kids Matter and early childhood systems efforts can support early learning efforts in local communities
- Find practical ways to use Kids Matter to enhance community collaboration
- Support the “whole child” approach to early learning
- Understand the complexity of the needs of families and children from birth to five
- Collaborate strategically and effectively, so that families and communities can work together to assure that children are healthy and ready for school



Children’s health, social-emotional development, and all that they learn and do are connected. Recognizing the importance of all aspects of children’s development and school readiness, Kids Matter addresses systems development in four goal areas that are important to addressing the needs of the whole child and family.



A. The Kids Matter Executive Summary

Written in 2005, over 6000 copies of the Executive Summary have been distributed, and demand continues. It remains the best source document for those interested in Kids Matter. While this Guide draws information from the Kids Matter Executive Summary, it is not our intention to repeat its contents here. We suggest you read the Executive Summary and this Guide together. You can download the Executive Summary PDF file and request printed color copies at www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter.

B. The Hallmarks of Kids Matter

Kids Matter is a unique framework that may differ from strategic plans, business plans, or other planning documents with which communities may be familiar. As communities approach and work with Kids Matter, it is helpful to keep some of its key characteristics, or “hallmarks” in mind.

Kids Matter:

- Approaches early childhood systems as a collaborative effort
- Serves as an over-arching bridge for a comprehensive and integrated framework
- Defines common goals and outcomes
- Outlines specific strategies and partners
- Focuses on accountability and evaluation of progress

C. Kids Matter is an outcome-based, systems-change framework

Kids Matter is about changing systems in order to improve outcomes. Building from what science tells us, stakeholders collectively defined high-priority outcomes within each of the four goal areas. In keeping with the “systems” approach, desired outcomes were defined in three levels within each goal area:

- System Changes
- Parent and Caregiver Changes
- Child Changes

The “theory of change” is that improving systems (system changes) will enhance parents’ and caregivers’ ability to meet children’s needs (parent and caregiver changes), and this will in turn

improve outcomes for children (child changes). Collectively, these changes across all goal areas will help achieve the overall goal, that children are healthy and ready for school.

D. Kids Matter defines outcomes within four goal areas

Kids Matter outcomes are organized in four goal areas representing key systems impacting young children’s health, development and school readiness.

1. Access to Health Insurance and Medical Homes
2. Social, Emotional and Mental Health
3. Early Care and Education/Child Care
4. Parenting Information and Support

Within each goal area, Kids Matter defines a number of desired outcomes, as described in the previous section. In addition, broad strategies addressing each outcome area are described. These are provided by way of example, and were specifically chosen because they were thought to have momentum and likelihood for positive impact. These examples were considered relevant to all communities across the state, but were never meant to describe the only strategies needed. Communities should feel free to build from these strategies, defining those most useful to their local efforts.

E. Kids Matter describes resource and policy needs

While the development of Kids Matter focused on defining outcomes, it recognized that key resources would be needed to implement effective strategies which would in turn improve outcomes. In addition to system-building initiatives and the many engaged partners and stakeholders needed to support change, Kids Matter defined three overarching resource need areas: Infrastructure, Communication, and Funding. In addition, stakeholders recognized that almost all potential strategies to implement Kids Matter would require the development, promotion and implementation of new policies.

F. Kids Matter is grounded in science and best practices

Although Kids Matter was developed through a stakeholder driven process, it is grounded in national and state level research-based information. Kids Matter embraces best practices in early childhood systems building; service coordination and integration; and specific programmatic areas and practices. Kids Matter refers to this information as the “Pillars of The Plan.” The “national pillars” include No Child Left Behind; the National Education Goals Panel; Good Start: Grow Smart; Neurons to Neighborhoods; the Surgeon General’s report on Children’s Mental Health; and the Institute of Medicine’s Report -The Future of the Public’s Health. The “state pillars” include the Washington State Family Policy Council’s work regarding Thriving Children and Families; Family Support Principles; and Washington’s then newly developed Early Learning and Development Benchmarks. These pillars represented the most current information at the time of the Kids Matter planning process. Kids Matter partners continually look to incorporate the best research, policy, and practice information available; and encourage communities to do the same as they move forward in early childhood systems development. The Kids Matter framework is written at a “high enough level” to accommodate evolving knowledge around best practices in early childhood.

G. The Kids Matter Framework/Outcome Map—the ‘big picture’

Many stakeholders have found this “one page picture” of Kids Matter useful as an introduction, and as a communication and planning tool. The Kids Matter Outcome Map/Framework can be found on page 5 of the Executive Summary and **page IV** of the Kids Matter Tools at the end of this Guide. It contains all of the Kids Matter outcomes, strategies and resources. The colored version makes it easy to see the different goal areas of Kids Matter, helping guide the eye as groups discuss part or all of Kids Matter. For example, for the Access to Health Insurance and Medical Homes goal, the color is blue, reflected in the oval with the strategies, and the boxes around the outcomes below. Often people use this page visually to say “we’re talking about the whole thing” or “we recognize the whole system of systems represented by Kids Matter; and in today’s discussion we are focusing on the Green Column- Social, Emotional & Mental Health.” Or “...today we are focusing just on the outcomes, in the boxes at the bottom.” From a “Theory of Change” perspective, the Outcome Map is read from top to bottom:

Resources  Strategies  Outcomes  Overall Goal

H. Kids Matter Pyramids—a visual for each goal area

Communities also find the “Pyramids” on pages 6-9 of the Kids Matter Executive Summary to be useful visuals. Each pyramid represents one of the four goal areas (Access to Health Insurance and Medical Homes; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Early Care and Education/Child Care; Parenting Information and Support.) These are color-coded to match the outcome map (e.g. orange for Early Care and Education/Child Care), making it easy to pair the pyramids with the outcome map. The pyramid shows much of the same information as the outcome map- the outcomes and strategies are the same as those under each goal area in the outcome map. The Resources at the bottom of each Pyramid extend some of what is shown on the Outcome Map, and may give additional goal-area-specific information. From a “Theory of Change” perspective, the Pyramids are read from bottom to top:

Resources  Strategies  Outcomes  Overall Goal



A framework like Kids Matter can only enhance outcomes for children if communities are aware of it, and find it a practical support for their work. Two surveys in 2006 and 2007 document widespread and increasing levels of awareness, familiarity, and use of Kids Matter in collaborative efforts. Stakeholders believe that Kids Matter is helpful to early learning efforts, and that it can support both state level and community level processes.



A. Kids Matter is enhancing relationships, partnerships and collaborations

The 2007 Kids Matter Use and Awareness survey of 470 people provided considerable evidence for these impacts.

Existing collaborations, partnerships, relationships are developing and implementing policies, projects, funding streams and plans aligned with Kids Matter. (42% of respondents)

“Investing in Children (local Yakima Collaboration) used meetings, website and printed materials of Kids Matter Framework to focus our collaboration forward and to stay in tune with the ECE foment going on in Washington State.”

“The Kids Matter framework has reminded us that we need to be more thoughtful and intentional around the parenting information and support, and has spurred us to think about how to integrate health care access into our work.”

“Kids Matter Framework has helped not just our Advocacy and Policy Committee shape our policy agenda, but has provided our early childhood grant committee an excellent framework to begin to think about early childhood.”

New collaborations, partnerships, relationships are being developed to further the goals of Kids Matter. (22 % of respondents)

“The Kids Matter Framework was referenced in our efforts to build a collaboration of individuals involved in Early Childhood in our community. This group includes: Center Directors, Private Day Care, and interested citizens.”

“The Strengthening Families project built its outcomes to mesh with the Kids Matter framework. Future grant applications for professional development will reference the Kids Matter framework as a way to show how the projects are linked to other initiatives.”

Stakeholders are sharing the plan with potential collaborators and partners, encouraging their involvement in efforts to improve outcomes for young children and their families. (41% of respondents)

“Our local Snohomish County Early Learning Group has been working in sync and in a much more focused manner due to the Kids Matter Framework. New partners are easily able to see where the need and priorities are in our County.”

“The framework is a tool that will increasingly become valuable as our early learning community builds stronger relationships with local school districts. We (Child Care Leadership group) are currently planning a collaborative training with one of our local public schools around the topic of transitions for children from early care and education settings to public school Kindergarten.”

“The visual layout and the content provided a framework that could be tailored to the county--better than starting for scratch--and it aligned us with the state. The Kids Matter Framework is a convincing document when recruiting other county partners.”

B. Early childhood stakeholders believe Kids Matter is helpful

The respondents to the 2007 Kids Matter Use and Awareness survey (470 people), agree on the following:

The Kids Matter Framework will help organizations achieve positive outcomes for young children and their families (average=4.08 on a five-point scale in which 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree).

They can imagine how their organizations can use the Kids Matter Framework to achieve positive outcomes for young children and their families (average=3.93 on a five-point scale).

C. Kids Matter is being used by early childhood stakeholders

In the 2007 survey 39% of respondents reported using Kids Matter, compared with 29% in 2006. With an increased sample size, this also represents an impressive numerical increase (426 respondents using Kids Matter in 2007 vs. 231 in 2006).

Respondents noted they are using Kids Matter in the following ways:

Internal strategic planning, resource allocation and the development of strategies for service delivery (41%).

“As we design local strategies to improve learning we use the framework to help structure our strategic planning.”

“Our organization operationalizes the strategies and goals of Kids Matter in most of the work that we do. It is my goal this year to integrate the KM framework more purposefully into (our) work.”

“We used the four goal areas to guide our data collection work in preparing for a data driven strategic planning effort. We plan to use the framework ('layer cake method') to illuminate where our efforts are and are not.”

Tool to increase awareness and understanding of early childhood systems and issues among stakeholder groups (31%).

“(I have shared) the framework with my organization's leadership and our network to assist them in seeing the relationship between the prevention of child abuse & neglect/family support and the other domains of activity critical to achieving positive outcome for children in Washington.”

“The one-page Kids Matter visual (four boxes with Family Support underneath) has proven to be a very simple way to educate community members about what we mean when we talk about early learning--and remind us as well.”

“We have 41 staff working with children and I have distributed the Kids Matter framework to them to illustrate the agencies and aims which libraries can and do address.”

Supporting existing partnerships and collaborations and encouraging the creation of new relationships (20%).

“Collaboration among multiple early learning partners (early intervention, early childhood, preschool) has developed as a result of the work of Kids Matter Framework. The work and information is shared more broadly among public and private sectors.”

“(We) have used the Kids Matter Framework as a tool to gain attention of potential partnerships.”

“(We used the Kids Matter Framework) in meetings with a school district to help them analyze what types of services they could provide for outreach to the early learning community.”

Kids Matter in use at the community level

The following example describes how Kids Matter can be used at a number of levels at once: a statewide organization can use Kids Matter to support local organizations; a county based organization can provide support to another county's similar organization; who can in turn use Kids Matter for community engagement around a particular topic.

D. Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) care in Washington communities

The Kids Matter framework has been used by the Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network and Child Care Resources of King County in an effort to expand family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) work to additional local communities outside of King County. Through Kids Matter/Build funding, four grants were made to local resource and referral programs serving 10 counties--Community-Minded Enterprises in Spokane (Spokane, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Ferry, and Stevens Counties); The Opportunity Council in Bellingham (San Juan, Island, and Whatcom Counties); Volunteers of America in Everett (Snohomish County); and Volunteers of America in Mount Vernon (Skagit County). The four programs used the Kids Matter framework to begin planning conversations in their respective communities to create awareness, interest and strategies for working with the FFN population. The Kids Matter framework proved effective in the FFN expansion efforts, creating a starting point for community conversations to develop a strategic plan around FFN care.

"We have discovered that using the Kids Matter Framework as a way of engaging community conversations is extremely successful. From a small group of rural parents in Republic, Washington to the CEO's of higher education institutions, we found that the document led to excitement and group creativity. The rural communities immediately saw that they were the ones to shape their outcomes and set their strategies with the outsiders from Spokane acting as a resource. The old patterns of resentment to the outsider were broken. The language of Kids Matter seems universal and sparks creative group process at its introduction." -Community-Minded Enterprises in Spokane

E. Kids Matter in use at the state level

Kids Matter is increasingly being used by both public and private statewide organizations. This should help state-level early childhood efforts align with each other, and enhance their ability to connect with local communities who are also using Kids Matter. The following descriptions demonstrate some current state level efforts supporting the use of Kids Matter.

Department of Early Learning and the Early Learning Advisory Council

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) was created in 2006, and is developing its structures and policies to best meet the needs of young children and their families in Washington state. Kids Matter addresses many of the core services which DEL currently provides, including supporting parents and caregivers, and providing child care and early learning services. DEL is beginning to use Kids Matter in its departmental planning. A new advisory body to DEL, the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC), was created by legislation in 2007. The ELAC asked for a briefing about Kids Matter at its second meeting.

Foundation for Early Learning

The Foundation for Early Learning is encouraging communities to use Kids Matter in their local early learning efforts. The Foundation has found Kids Matter to be a wonderful tool for early learning coalitions. The Foundation is thrilled to see community groups strategically building their coalitions, while referring to the Kids Matter framework to engage more community members. The Kids Matter framework and the Kids Matter Guide help connect efforts within the early learning sector, while providing flexibility to meet the unique needs of each region.

Head Start-State Collaboration Office

The Kids Matter framework has been an invaluable mechanism for thinking and planning systemically about the Head Start-State Collaboration Office's (HS-SCO) role in building early childhood systems in Washington State. Recognizing the distinct similarities between Kids Matter and the comprehensive model that Head Start represents, it provides a natural approach to building plans that satisfy and support the legislatively mandated priority areas for Head Start- State Collaboration Offices. KM provides a venue for the HS-SCO to "map" statewide linkages and foster local efforts to support comprehensive models that achieve positive outcomes for all children and families.

Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network

The Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network (R&R Network) developed a Logic Model in 2001, identifying several outcomes in each of the domains in which it operate (services to families and child care providers, and community collaboration and systems-building). The Kids Matter framework allowed the R&R Network to update those outcomes and identify how they connect to the broader, systemic goals the Network shares with many other agencies, programs and organizations. The R&R Network is now using the Kids Matter framework to develop a Theory of Change that explains and visually represents how its work at the local, statewide and national levels is connected to, enhances and is enriched by the other elements of Kids Matter. In addition, as the R&R Network undertakes a major assessment of the impact of child care resource and referral services, it is using Kids Matter to expand its evaluation questions to better encompass the Network's systemic goals.

F. Kids Matter in use in specific goal areas

Medical Home

There has been considerable momentum around increasing access to a Medical Home for children in Washington state in recent years; something supported by Governor Gregoire and the legislature. An idea which started as legislation to “Cover all Kids by 2010” with health insurance, has now broadened to the idea of “Access to a Medical Home” for all children, as described in 2007 legislation. Simultaneously, many public and private partners have come together to create a new Medical Home strategic plan for the state, moving from the original concept of Medical Homes being for children with special needs, to a broader concept of Medical Homes for all children. The Health/Insurance Medical Home outcomes defined in Kids Matter are being addressed by these efforts. Kids Matter has helped create a connection between health and early learning activities, showing how these two efforts are integrally connected with each other in the lives of young children and their families.

Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education

The Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education initiative was created to provide parents, child care professionals and others who work with children with resources, support and strategies that allow each to ensure that children receive the best possible start in life. Part of a national network, Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education Washington (SFECE WA) is a collaboration aimed at embedding Strengthening Families protective factors, principles and approaches in existing early learning systems. The work builds on the recognition of the important role child care providers play in building protective factors in families with young children. Protective factors help parents use resources, support and strategies that allow them to parent more effectively, even under stress. Research shows that quality child care and strong parent-provider partnerships can enhance the following protective factors: parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and social and emotional competence of children. SFECE WA addresses desired outcomes in all four goal areas of the Kids Matter framework, and is consistent with Kids Matter’s philosophy, where a family support approach is integral to all parts of early childhood systems.

G. The potential for Kids Matter

In addition to the community examples described earlier, respondents to the 2007 Kids Matter Survey believe that Kids Matter has further potential to impact

- Individual early childhood stakeholders
- Systems change in early childhood
- Early learning initiatives associated with the Department of Early Learning, Thrive By Five, and the Governor's Office

Many specific ideas were offered to describe this potential for Kids Matter, and the key concepts are summarized below.

Kids Matter can help influence public will....providing information for advocacy for funding/resources for early learning; and to engage voters, business leaders, and policymakers.

Kids Matter can help all kids... helping ensure inclusion of specific aspects of early learning and/or children and families' services and supports; such as children with developmental disabilities; Family, Friend and Neighbor care; and children from birth to age 3 years.

Kid Matter can help define the context for early learning services, supports and systems... including

- A systems approach, which helps eliminate silos and facilitates collaboration
- A "whole child" approach; including health, family support, parenting, mental health and social/emotional health, as well as literacy, numeracy and cognitive development
- A shared understanding and common language among early childhood stakeholders

Kids Matter can support service and system quality....by supporting and disseminating standards for practice, knowledge of research, and building the field

Kids Matter can support evaluation and accountability at multiple levels...including

- Planning efforts (for example, by providing common outcomes)
- Systems outcomes (for example, tracking progress toward interim outcomes)
- Population outcomes (for example, by helping to develop common school readiness measures)

IV. GETTING STARTED: Tools to help communities use Kids Matter



Respondents to the Kids Matter Use and Awareness surveys requested general information about Kids Matter, as well as specific information and training about how to implement Kids Matter.

This section provides tools which can help address those needs. By using these materials alongside the Kids Matter Executive Summary and Framework documents, communities can more readily put Kids Matter to use



Using Kids Matter to help frame your community's early childhood efforts will make a difference for children.

There is tremendous interest around early learning and early childhood systems in Washington State. Kids Matter was developed at the cusp of this increasing momentum, with a two year statewide planning process. While it may seem hard to believe now, the Kids Matter Report and Executive Summary were both completed prior to the Gates Foundation Early Learning Initiative, the Early Learning Council and Washington Learns, and the creation of both the Department of Early Learning and Thrive by Five Washington! These exciting new developments in early learning in Washington State are all relevant to the outcomes and strategies Kids Matter contains; and are in fact working to achieve many of the Kids Matter outcomes. Stakeholders at the state and local levels continue to build awareness of Kids Matter and are increasingly using it in their early learning efforts.

Early childhood is complex. Therefore the Kids Matter concepts and content may seem overwhelming at times. We hope that this Guide will support and encourage communities and programs to try to use it at whatever stage they are in. This Guide was created in response to the expressed desires of many communities for more support in understanding and using Kids Matter. We hope it reflects the complexity of early childhood systems building, while simplifying the information enough to make it understandable, practical, and helpful to your community.

The tools found in this section are intended to help support awareness, understanding, and use of Kids Matter. Many are one or two page documents which can be copied and used in various settings. As more tools are developed, they will be available (along with this Guide) at www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter.

Overview documents:

- “Systems Work” in Early Childhood
- Using Kids Matter: The Layer Cake approach

Framework/Outcome Map documents:

- The Kids Matter Framework/Outcome Map
- How to Read the Kids Matter Framework/Outcome Map
- Kids Matter Outcome Map combination example: Northwest Early Learning, Born Learning and Head Start-State Collaboration Office

Logic Model documents:

- The Kids Matter Logic Model
- A Regional Logic Model Example: Northwest Early Learning
- A Program Logic Model Example: Born Learning Washington Campaign (Draft)

Kids Matter Templates Available On-Line

In order to help communities create similar documents using Kids Matter, Word templates will be available at www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter. You can use these to create individualized documents (Logic Model, Outcome Map, Pyramids) by “filling in” your own text in a Word document. Kids Matter outcomes are pre-populated, so you do not have to type them in.

When communities...

...know what they can do to support children’s health and development

...work together in an outcomes based, strategic, collaborative process

...build an effective, integrated early childhood system

...children and families will thrive

**For all you do each day to improve outcomes
for young children and families....**



Thank you!

KIDS MATTER TOOLS



A way to conceptualize “Systems Work” in Early Childhood

Kids Matter: Improving Outcomes for Children in Washington State

Kids Matter is focused on supporting “systems work” as a means to improving outcomes for children. The following description of early childhood systems work may be helpful to communities and stakeholders as they consider how to use *Kids Matter* in their planning, systems, and program efforts.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT: TWO INTER-RELATED PROCESSES		
Overall <i>Kids Matter</i> Goal: Children are Healthy and Ready for School		
Premise: A statewide early childhood system that is integrated, accessible, and supported by policies and financing is essential to children’s health and school readiness		
TWO PROCESSES	SYSTEMS ORGANIZING	SERVICE CAPACITY BUILDING
Description	“Systems” efforts to facilitate collaborative, integrated system planning, implementation and evaluation	“Systems” efforts to build the capacity of an early childhood system including goal areas: 1. Access to Health Insurance and Medical Homes 2. Social, Emotional & Mental Health 3. Early Care & Education/Child Care 4. Parenting Information and Support
Goal	Facilitate development of an integrated early childhood systemso that the parts of the system work well together for families	Facilitate capacity building of services within the system ...so that families can access needed services
Strategies	Public and private partnerships and efforts which... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work to improve and integrate systems from a policy & program perspective at the state level work to improve and integrate systems from a policy, program, and service delivery perspective at the regional and local level 	Public and private partnerships and efforts which... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work to address the desired outcomes in <i>Kids Matter</i> goal areas at the state level work to address the desired outcomes in <i>Kids Matter</i> goal areas at the regional and local level
Relationships to <i>Kids Matter</i> For more information about <i>Kids Matter</i>, please see www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Kids Matter</i> helps bring people together with a common language <i>Kids Matter</i> helps people visualize a “system of systems” <i>Kids Matter</i> shows potential areas for collaboration and integration <i>Kids Matter</i> shows relationships between resources, strategies and outcomes <i>Kids Matter</i> is a tool communities can use to achieve local system priorities, and to connect them with statewide efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Kids Matter</i> describes desired outcomes and potential strategies to achieve them within goal areas Stakeholders in any of the goal areas can use <i>Kids Matter</i> to further their individual and collaborative efforts <i>Kids Matter</i> is a tool communities can use to achieve local service capacity priorities, and to connect them with statewide efforts
Community level example	A community engages stakeholders with <i>Kids Matter</i> to help define the scope of an evolving public-private partnership for early learning	A community uses <i>Kids Matter</i> to develop a local plan for increasing parenting information and support services community wide

Using Kids Matter: A “Layer Cake” approach

A **layer cake concept** has been useful to some communities as they think about where they are in early learning systems development, and how Kids Matter might help them move forward.

- The “layer cakes” give examples of potential ways Kids Matter can be used for planning efforts
- Communities and programs/agencies within them can use Kids Matter at any of the “layers” or “levels”
- Kids Matter is a tool and resource as you build from existing community strengths in a collaborative, strategic and outcomes focused manner.

The overall goal is to create an effective early childhood system so that....**Children are Healthy and Ready for School**

A Community Example

Northwest Early Learning

5-county regional Early Childhood Systems building effort

- Chose to use Kids Matter in its Early Learning efforts
- Highlighted on the KM Outcome Map the outcomes NWEL would address, and strategies it would use
- Thought about regional foci of interest
- Created a NWEL Logic Model, incorporating KM outcomes; identifying specific resources, strategies and detailed outcomes
- Created a NWEL Strategic Plan, incorporating the above
- Encouraged each of the 5 counties to do the same at the county level

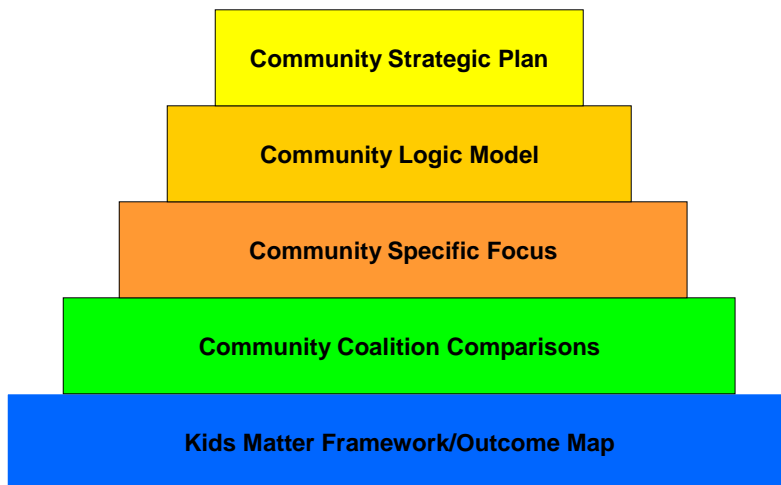
A Program Example

Born Learning Washington

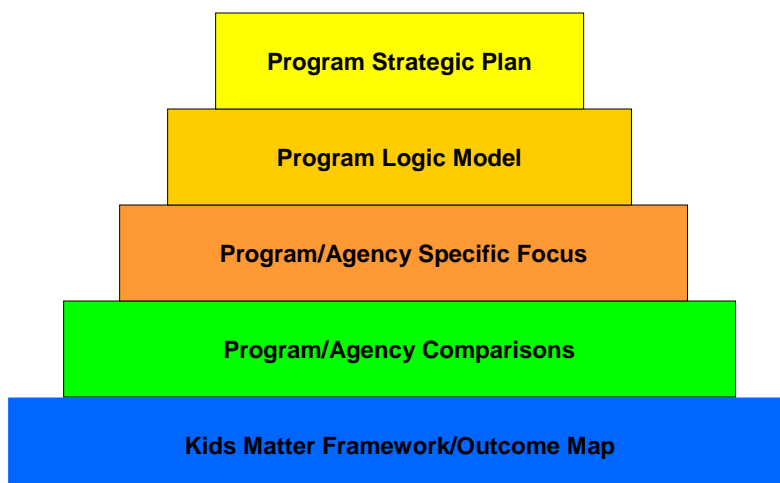
A statewide Public Awareness campaign with local campaigns

- Chose to use Kids Matter Outcomes to plan campaign
- Highlighted on the KM Outcome Map the outcomes BL would address, and strategies it would use
- Thought about statewide and local campaign specific foci of interest
- Created Born Learning Logic Models, identifying specific resources, strategies and detailed outcomes
- Created a Born Learning Strategic Plan, incorporating the above
- Used the above to inform strategies and measure outcomes of BL campaign at local and statewide levels

Kids Matter – “Layer Cake” for Communities



Kids Matter – “Layer Cake” for Programs



Tip: Use with the Kids Matter Framework & “How to Read the Kids Matter Framework”

KIDS MATTER FRAMEWORK

INFRASTRUCTURE

Research and Resources:
Infrastructure In WA State:
Projects and Initiatives:

COMMUNICATION

Children's Web Hub
211 Information and
Referral Line

FUNDING

Leverage public/private resources to
move the early care and education
agenda

KEY RESOURCES

STRATEGIES

ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE & MEDICAL HOMES

- Increase awareness among all who care for young children about the importance of comprehensive health care
- Enroll more eligible children in public health insurance programs (Medicaid, SCHIP Basic Health, SSI)
- Facilitate access to a Medical Home for all children (including medical, dental, mental health & vision services)
- Make developmental assessment & referral to Early Intervention (EI) accessible

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL & MENTAL HEALTH

- Ensure that communications with all who work with young children emphasizing the importance of social, emotional & mental health
- Promote existing program's awareness & implementation of models of services & supports for young families that are effective, culturally competent & community-based
- Promote existing programs' awareness & implementation of practices that provide opportunities for social connectedness for families
- Promote caregivers' knowledge of social, emotional & mental health of young children
- Promote collaboration among policymakers, providers & other stakeholders

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION/CHILD CARE

- Use Washington State Early Learning & Development Benchmarks as a tool to enhance the quality of early care & learning
- Improve the ability to evaluate & reward high-quality programs through development of Quality Rating system (QRS) & Tiered Reimbursement
- Promote children's health in early care & education programs (ongoing statewide collaborative effort: Healthy Children Care Washington - HCCW)
- Support high quality professional development services for caregivers
- Develop capacity within the early care & education systems to engage in family support
- Voluntary Universal Pre-K

PARENTING INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

- Provide information to parents & facilitate connection to needed services & supports
- Provide professional development programs, services & supports for professionals providing information & support to parents
- Strengthen & sustain the Washington Parenting Education Network (WAPEN)

SYSTEM CHANGES

- Increased number and percentage of children who have medical insurance

- Increased availability of appropriate and coordinated mental health services for children

- Increased number and percentage of child care & preschool programs that are quality rated
- Increased wages for quality child care providers
- Increased systems' recognition of families' role as the primary nurturer of their children
- The public sees early childhood education, health & school readiness as a major contributor of economic growth
- Increased ability for parents and caregivers to access community resources and support networks

- Increased availability of parent education resources & services

PARENT & CARE-GIVER CHANGES

- Increased understanding of the importance of comprehensive health care (including medical, dental, mental health & vision)
- Increased ability to recognize an emerging issue with their child's health or development and connect with appropriate services

- Improved understanding and practice of nurturing behaviors to promote children's optimal social-emotional development and mental health

- Increased understanding of what children need for optimal health & development (physical, social-emotional, cognitive & language)

- Increased stress-reduction skills
- Increased knowledge & skills to support children's health & development

CHILD CHANGES

- Increased number and percentage of children that receive recommended preventive care (e.g., well-child, immunizations)
- Increased number and percentage of children who have access to comprehensive health care (including medical, dental, mental health, vision)

- Increased number and percentage of children entering kindergarten with social-emotional skills

- Increased number and percentage of children entering kindergarten healthy & ready for school, including: 1) physical well-being, health & motor development; 2) social & emotional development; 3) approaches toward learning; 4) cognition & general knowledge; and 5) language, communication & literacy

- Increased number and percentage of children who live in safe, stable & supportive families

GOAL

CHILDREN ARE HEALTHY AND READY FOR SCHOOL



Family Support approach, strategy, or outcome

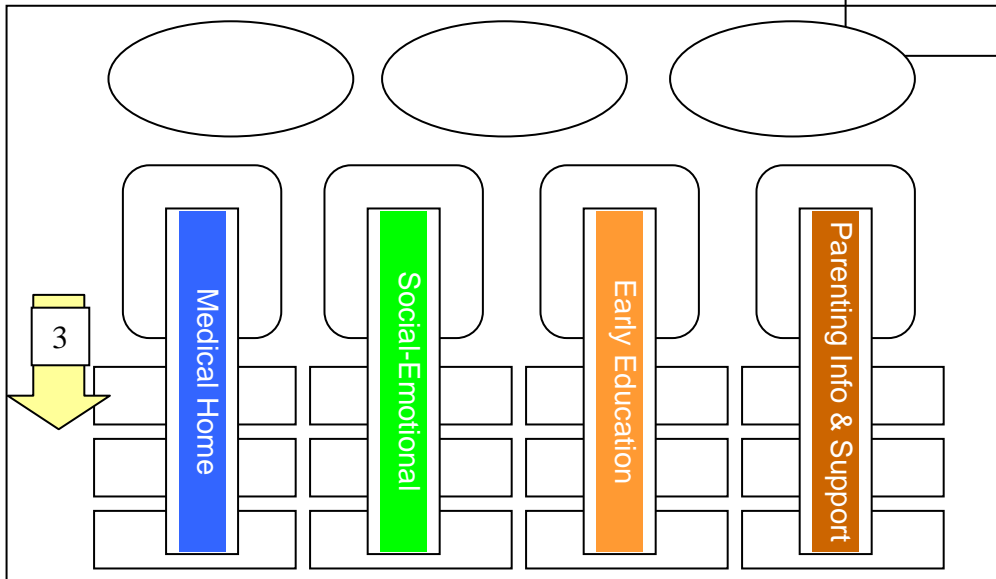
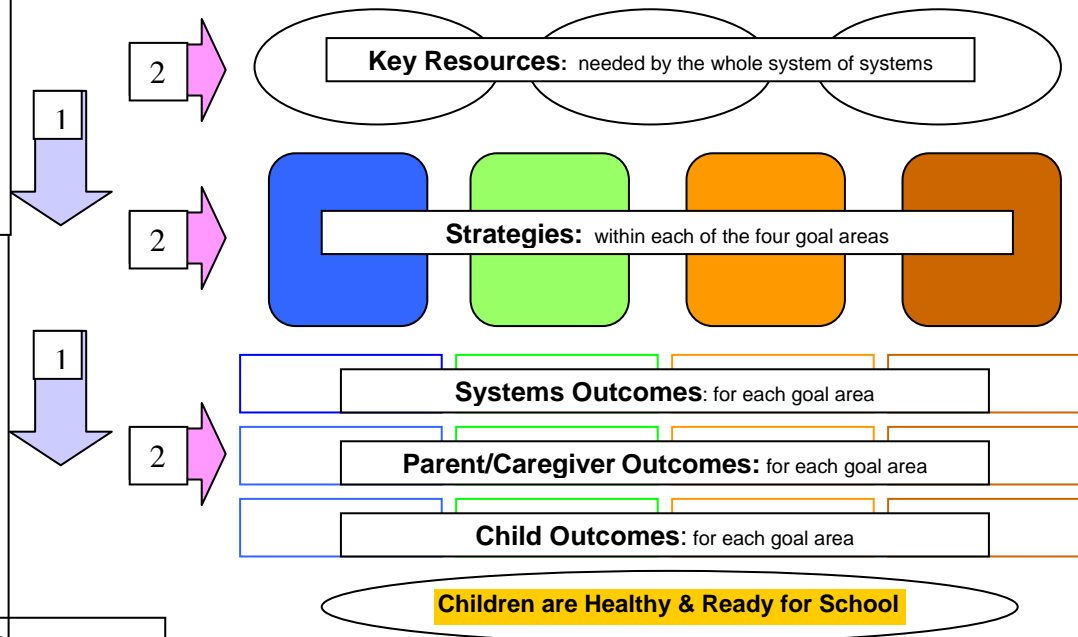
How to Read the Kids Matter Framework/Outcome Map. Many stakeholders have found a “one page picture” of Kids Matter useful as an introduction, and as a communication and planning tool. Found on page 5 of the Kids Matter Executive Summary, the Kids Matter Framework/Outcome Map contains all of the Kids Matter outcomes, strategies and resources. The colored version makes it easy to see the different goal areas of Kids Matter, helping guide the eye as groups discuss part or all of Kids Matter. It can help to focus on one part of the map at a time. This page can be used with the one page Framework/Outcome Map to help orient stakeholders to Kids Matter.

(1) From Top to Bottom:

RESOURCES are overall, not specific to columns beneath
STRATEGIES are contained in each goal area
OUTCOMES are defined as Systems Changes, Parent & Caregiver Changes, & Child Changes within each goal area.
OVERALL GOAL: Children are Healthy and Ready for School.

(2) From Left to Right within one line:

RESOURCES: Top line -black &white ovals represent resources needed by the whole “system of systems”
STRATEGIES: 2nd line - color-shaded boxes represent strategies within each of the four goal areas
OUTCOMES: 3rd line - rectangles list outcomes within goal areas, outlined in color to match strategies: 1st row system changes, 2nd parent & caregiver changes; 3rd child changes.



(3) From Top to Bottom within a color-coded goal area:

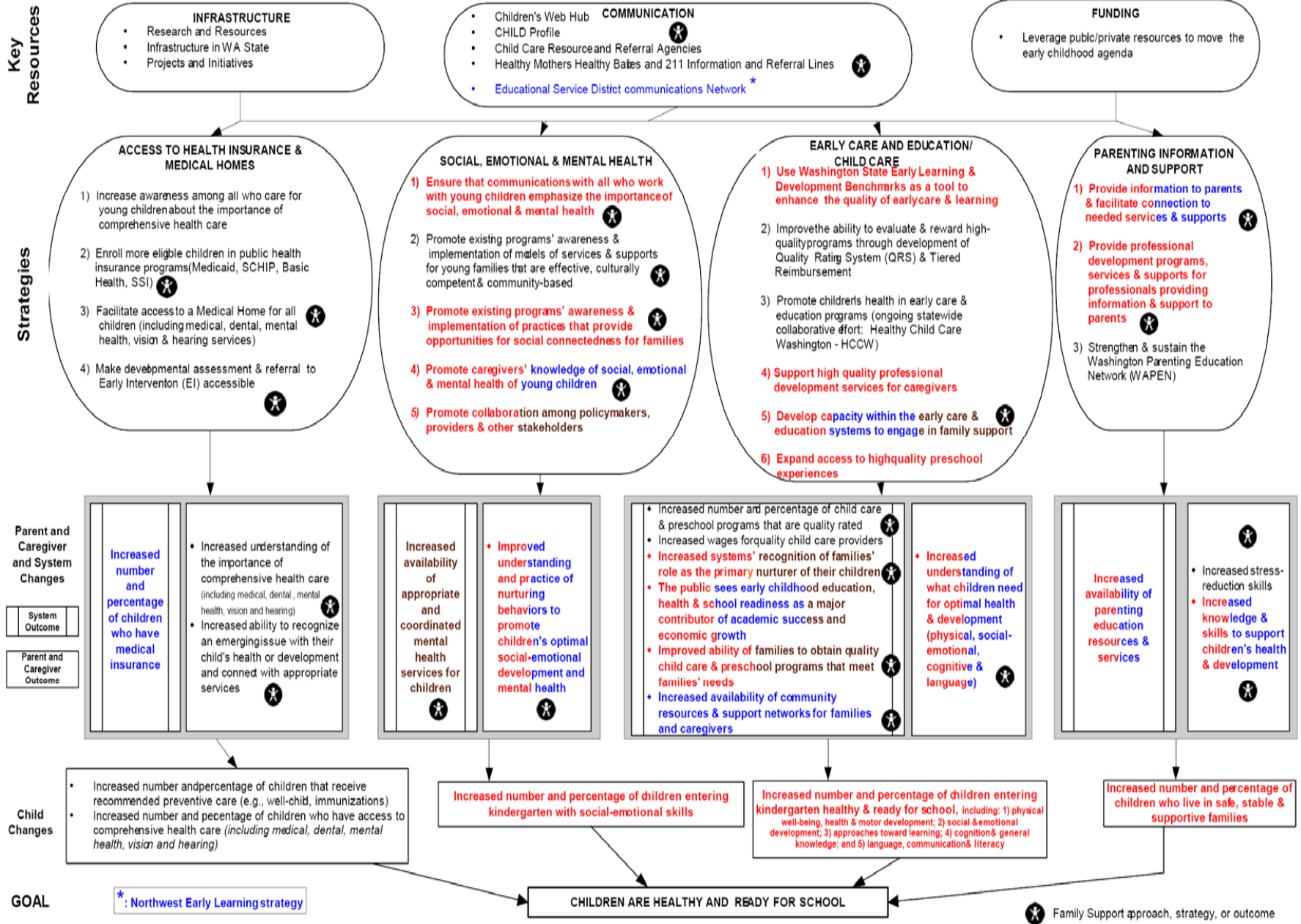
The **STRATEGIES** are in color-shaded boxes within a specific goal area (for example, blue for Access to Health Insurance and Medical Home). Directly below each are the associated **OUTCOMES**, at Systems, Parent/Caregivers, and Child levels.

Tip: Use with the Kids Matter Framework, page 5 of the Executive Summary at www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter.

Kids Matter Outcome Map- Mapping: Some communities and efforts find it helpful to literally “highlight” their work on the map. This example combines three different efforts –NW Early Learning (red); Born Learning (blue); Head Start-State Collaboration (brown)

KIDS MATTER Framework: Getting on the Same Page

Northwest Early Learning; Born Learning; Head Start-State Collaboration Office



Logic Model -Kids Matter: Improving Outcomes for Children in Washington State

When Kids Matter was developed, the logic model below was created. The contents of this logic model were inserted into the Kids Matter Framework/Outcome Map and the Goal Area Pyramids, in order to provide the same information in a more graphical or “picture” view. Some people can understand Kids Matter better using a more traditional logic model format; others find the pictures more helpful. A more detailed “long” version of the logic model can be found in the Kids Matter full report at www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter.

Resources	Strategies/Action Areas	Outcomes
<p>System Building Initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECCS Grant – Department of Health • BUILD Initiative • Head Start - State Collaboration Office • Ambassador of the Kids Matter Plan <p>Participating Systems: <i>Participating systems include:</i> <u>State and Local Government Entities:</u></p> <p><u>Coalitions and Associations:</u></p> <p><u>Foundations and Other Private Funders:</u></p> <p>Infrastructure: <u>Research and Resources:</u> <u>Infrastructure in Washington State:</u> <u>Projects and Initiatives:</u></p> <p>Communication:</p>	<p>A. ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE & MEDICAL HOMES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase awareness among all who care for young children about the importance of comprehensive health care 2) Enroll more eligible children in public health insurance programs (Medicaid, SCHIP, Basic Health, SSI) * 3) Facilitate access to a Medical Home for all children (including medical, dental, mental health, vision and hearing services) * 4) Make developmental assessment and referral to Early Intervention (EI) accessible* <p>B. SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL & MENTAL HEALTH</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensure that communications with all who work with young children emphasize the importance of social, emotional and mental health * 2) Promote existing programs' awareness and implementation of models of services and supports for young families that are effective, culturally competent and community-based * 3) Promote existing programs' awareness and implementation of practices that provide opportunities for social connectedness for families * 4) Promote caregivers' knowledge of social, emotional and mental health of young children * 5) Promote collaboration among policymakers, providers and other stakeholders 	<p>Parent and Caregiver: Increased understanding of the importance of comprehensive health care (<i>including medical, dental, mental health, vision and hearing</i>) *</p> <p>Increased ability to recognize an emerging issue with their child's health or development and connect with appropriate services *</p> <p>System: Increased number and percentage of children who have medical insurance</p> <p>Child Changes: Increased number and percentage of children that receive recommended preventive care (<i>e.g., well-child, immunizations</i>) Increased number and percentage of children who have access to comprehensive health care (<i>including medical, dental, mental health, vision and hearing</i>)</p> <p>Parent and Caregiver: Improved understanding and practice of nurturing behaviors to promote children's optimal social-emotional development and mental health *</p> <p>System: Increased availability of appropriate and coordinated mental health services for children *</p> <p>Child Changes: Increased number and percentage of children entering kindergarten with social-emotional skills</p>

Resources	Strategies/Action Areas	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Web Hub • 211 Information and Referral Line* <p>Parent Leadership: * Parent Leadership is an essential part of high quality services and systems. The goal is to promote this resource for system and/or specific strategies</p> <p>Guiding Principles*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be child-focused and family-centered. • Recognize that families are children’s first teachers. • Interact with consideration and respect. • Be flexible and responsive. • Build on strengths. • Provide high quality services. • Use evaluation to inform decisions. . <p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage public/private resources to move the early care and education agenda forward 	<p>C. EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION / CHILD CARE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Use Washington State Early Learning and Development Benchmarks as a tool to enhance the quality of early care & learning 2) Improve the ability to evaluate & reward high-quality programs through development of Quality Rating System (QRS) and Tiered Reimbursement 3) Promote children’s health in early care and education programs (ongoing statewide collaborative effort: Healthy Child Care Washington – HCCW) 4) Support high quality professional development services for caregivers 5) Develop capacity within the early care and education systems to engage in family support * 6) Expand access to Voluntary Universal Pre-K 	<p>Parent and Caregiver: Increased understanding of what children need for optimal health and development (<i>physical, social-emotional, cognitive and language</i>) *</p> <p>System: Increased number and percent of child care and preschool programs that are quality rated * Increased wages for quality child care providers Increased systems’ recognition of families’ role as the primary nurturers of their children* The public sees early childhood education, health and school readiness as a major contributor of economic growth Increased ability for parents and caregivers to access community resources and support networks *</p> <p>Child Changes: Increased number and percentage of children entering kindergarten healthy and ready for school, including: 1. physical well-being, health and motor development 2. social and emotional development 3. approaches toward learning 4. cognition and general knowledge, and 5. language, communication and literacy</p>
	<p>D. PARENTING INFORMATION AND SUPPORT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provide information to parents and facilitate connection to needed services and supports * 2) Provide professional development programs, services and supports for professionals providing information and support to parents * 3) Strengthen and sustain the Washington Parenting Education Network (WAPEN) 	<p>Parent and Caregiver: Increased stress-reduction skills * Increased knowledge and skills to support children’s health and development *</p> <p>System: Increased availability of parent education resources and services</p> <p>Child Changes: Increased number and percentage of children who live in safe, stable and supportive families</p>

* Family Support approach, strategy or outcome

Using Kids Matter: A Regional Logic Model Example. Northwest Early Learning (NWEL) organized its efforts in three goal areas, and developed a logic model with resources, strategies, outputs, short and long term outcomes. Strategies and outcomes slightly modified from Kids Matter are highlighted below. (This table represents a portion of the NWEL logic model)

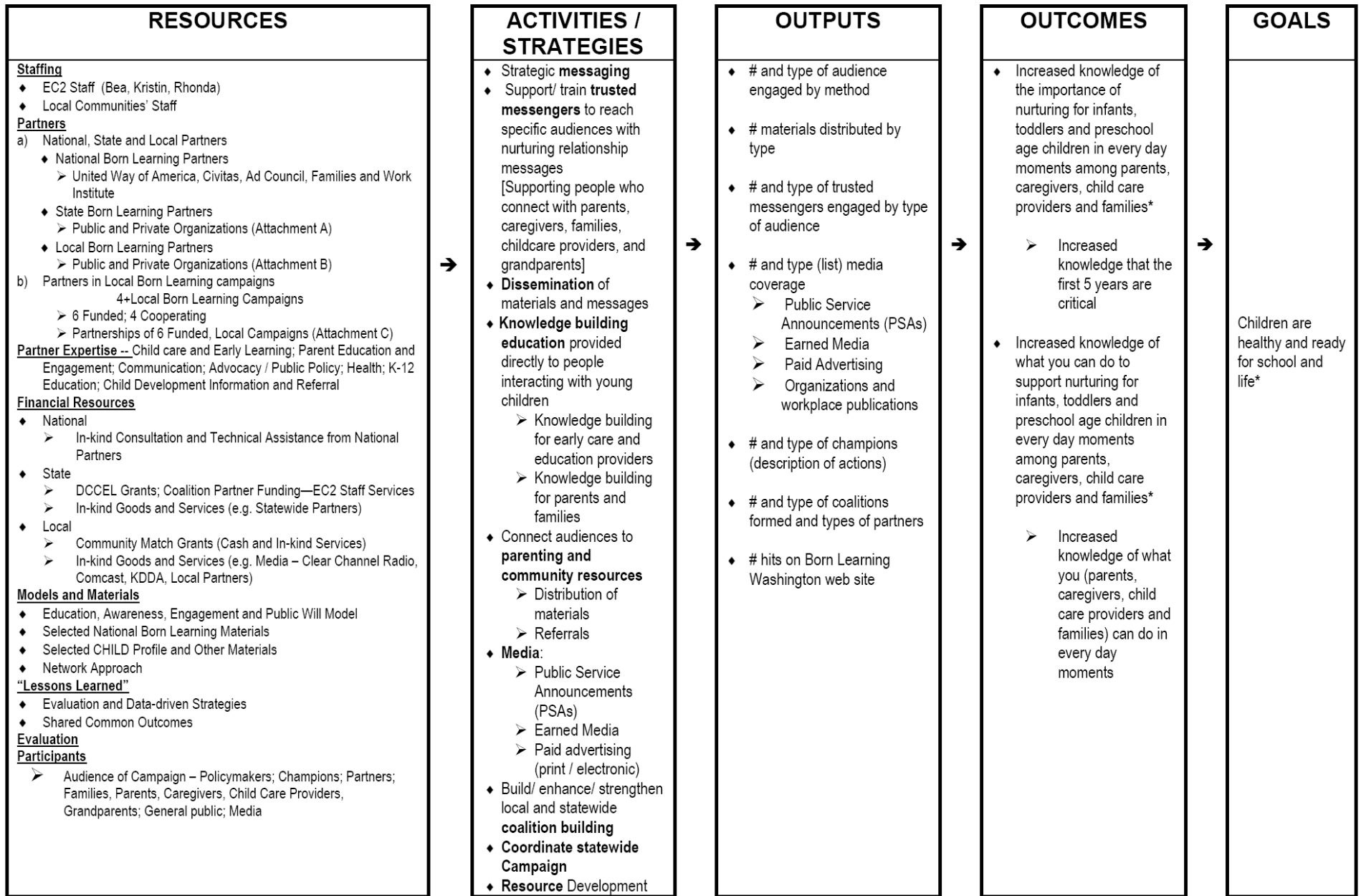
Overall Goal for NWEL: To assure that the five counties in the NWESD 189 services district has a system for all expectant families and families with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and their caregivers that provides the families and caregivers with the tools and services they need to promote the healthy development of children in their care so that they can be ready to succeed in school.

Sub-Goal: (depicted in logic model below)

All parents and caregivers have the ability to promote positive social and emotional development of young children in their care.

Resources	Current Strategies	General Strategies	Outputs	Short Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes
<p>Infrastructure NWESD 189 ECE Department Advisory Panel, Operating Principles County Systems Planning Groups Island – hopefully Children’s Commission San Juan – Network & Health Department Snohomish – Early Childhood Committee of the Children’s Comm. of Snohomish County Skagit – Children’s Council of Skagit County Whatcom – Whatcom Early Childhood Systems Planning Group</p> <p>Very committed and involved community partners</p> <p>Communication (See Below)</p> <p>Funding (See Below)</p>	<p>Born Learning Campaign Media and materials to public to emphasize social and emotional development.</p> <p>Parent/Infant/Toddler Groups Parent/infant groups, modeled after the <i>Welcome Baby</i> program in Skagit County, support the initial bonding and attachment that is necessary for healthy social and emotional development.</p> <p>Curriculum Support Implementation of the <i>Steps To Achieving Resilience (STAR)</i> curriculum to structure social/emotional and emergent literacy learning activities in preschool environments. Training and support early childhood programs to use Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA).</p>	<p>1. Ensure that communications with all who work with young children emphasize the importance of social, emotional and mental health.</p> <p>3. Promote existing programs’ awareness and implementation of practices that provide opportunities for social connectedness for families.</p> <p>4. Promote providers knowledge of social, emotional, language development, and mental health of young children.</p>	<p>(see goal area C)</p> <p>Number of parent/infant groups held: 198 Number of parents: 1050 Number of children: 1011</p> <p>Number of EC teachers trained in DECA: 126 Number of DECA Kits: 40 Number of EC teachers trained in the STAR curriculum: 58</p>	<p>(see goal area C)</p> <p>Parent report on the Parenting Ladder survey indicates increase in knowledge and skills. (see sample of reporting summaries)</p> <p>Pre and post DECA assessment scores indicate gains in social and emotional development. (data still being collected)</p>	<p>Parent and Caregiver Changes: Improved abilities to demonstrate nurturing behaviors to promote children’s optimal social- emotional development.</p> <p>System Changes: Increased availability of appropriate and coordinated mental health opportunities for families that promote and maintain healthy child social- emotional development.</p> <p>Child Changes: Increased number and percentage of children entering kindergarten with developmentally appropriate social- emotional skills.</p>

Draft 06.05.06 Born Learning Washington Campaign Logic Model A



* Where the Born Learning Washington campaign is working to advance the outcomes of *Kids Matter: Improving outcomes for children in Washington State*. Born Learning Washington is a statewide public awareness and engagement campaign. Kids Matter is a collaborative and comprehensive strategic framework for building the early childhood system in Washington State in order to improve outcomes for kids.

Kids Matter is a framework for building a comprehensive early childhood system which helps assure that all children in Washington are healthy and ready for school. We encourage you to review and become familiar with the Kids Matter documents listed below, which can be found at www.earlylearning.org/kids-matter.

References:

- I. Kids Matter Executive Summary
- II. Kids Matter Full Report
- III. Evaluation of Awareness and Utilization of Kids Matter Framework: A Stakeholder Survey Report
- IV. Evaluation of Awareness and Utilization of Kids Matter Framework: Second Annual Stakeholder Survey Report

Kids Matter acknowledgements:

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- Washington Build Initiative
- Washington State Department of Health/Office of Maternal Child Health
- Washington State Head Start-State Collaboration Office

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For more information contact:

Lorrie Grevstad, Kids Matter/ECCS lead, Washington State Department of Health;
lorrie.grevstad@doh.wa.gov