



# EVALUATION OF AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION OF KIDS MATTER FRAMEWORK

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## *STAKEHOLDER SURVEY REPORT*

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# Evaluation of Awareness and Utilization of Kids Matter Framework

## Executive Summary

*☞ The success of the early childhood systems work, and Kids Matter, has elevated early childhood issues to a much higher level in state government.*

-- Respondent Affiliated with  
State Government

### METHODOLOGY

**Purpose.** To document baseline data about the awareness and utilization of the Kids Matter plan among early childhood stakeholders.

**Process.** Data were collected by surveying individuals associated with groups or organizations that have been formally or informally introduced to the Kids Matter framework. The final sampling frame consists of 499 early childhood stakeholders at local, regional and statewide levels representing 298 groups and organizations. The final response rate was 54.7 percent (273 respondents). It is expected that this survey will be repeated annually.

**Survey Tool.** The online survey tool contained 14 open- and closed-ended questions regarding respondent background and affiliation, awareness and familiarity with Kids Matter, potential contribution of the plan for young children and their families, and current utilization of the framework including changing relationships, partnership or collaborations.

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- **There is widespread awareness of the Kids Matter framework.** Over two-thirds of respondents (68.8%) had heard of the Kids Matter plan prior to receiving the survey. Of these, almost 80 percent learned about the framework at meetings, participation in workgroups, or from a colleague. Fifty-eight separate groups and meetings were listed by respondents as the point of their initial awareness.
- **Stakeholders are familiar with specific content of the framework.** Almost fifty percent (48.4%) of respondents are 'somewhat' or 'very familiar' with the framework. Characteristics of the plan identified as having the greatest importance are that it:
  - ◆ Functions as an integrated and overarching framework with a comprehensive systems focus (57.1%)
  - ◆ Approaches systems building as a collaborative effort (13.8%)
- **Over one-third (35.5%) of respondents have developed new or different relationships, partnerships or collaborations through their familiarity and/or involvement with Kids Matter that advance early childhood outcomes.** Changes mentioned by respondents include: aligning existing collaborative work with Kids Matter, developing new relationships to further the goals of the plan, and sharing the plan with potential partners to encourage their involvement in efforts to improve outcomes for young children and their families.
- **Respondents are optimistic that a plan of this nature can be instrumental in advancing outcomes for children.** According to stakeholders, areas of potential contribution include:
  - ◆ Increased awareness about the importance of early childhood systems leading to increased resources and support
  - ◆ Comprehensive framework and research-based strategies that can be implemented locally and statewide
  - ◆ Encourages collaboration and coordination resulting in decreased fragmentation
  - ◆ Provides common outcomes and goals for increased accountability

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS, CONTINUED

### RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

#### **Geographic Focus of Work:**

Respondents focus their work at all geographic levels – statewide and local or regional. Forty-seven percent of respondents noted that their work and that of their organizations focuses on the local or regional level; 18 percent focus on efforts for the entire state; and, almost 35 percent are involved in both statewide and local efforts.

#### **Primary Affiliation:**

Respondents noted primary affiliation with a wide variety of agencies. The largest number are affiliated with local government (24.1%) or state government (18.9%).

#### **Involvement with Early Childhood Groups and Processes:**

Respondents are also involved in a wide array of groups and process related to early childhood. Over 25 percent noted involvement in Head Start/Early Head Start Programs (33.3%), the Born Learning Campaign (28.6%), Healthy Child Care Washington (26.0%), and the Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network (25.3%).

- **Fewer respondents are currently engaged in implementing the plan.** Almost 29 percent of stakeholders reported that they are currently using the framework. These stakeholders are more likely to have a statewide, than a local or regional, focus to their work. Specific applications that they identified include:

- ◆ Internal planning and strategy development (59.3%)
- ◆ Tool to increase understanding and awareness among stakeholder groups (37.3%)
- ◆ Develop and carry out outcome-based evaluation (15.3%)
- ◆ Support existing partnerships and collaborations and encourage the creation of new relationships (13.6%)
- ◆ Grant writing and other funding requests (10.2%)

*☞ I have re-focused my grant-writing strategy to include alignment with Kids Matter goals and outcomes. I worked with the Collaborative to ensure that the priority legislative items would be in alignment with the goals of Kids Matter.*

-- Respondent Affiliated with a Nonprofit Organization

- **Stakeholders at all levels – statewide and local or regional - expressed substantial interest in receiving additional and ongoing support that would assist their organizations in using the Kids Matter framework.** Specific areas of assistance mentioned include:
  - ◆ More in-depth information about Kids Matter and how it connects to the work of respondents and their organizations (49.0%)
  - ◆ Training and information about implementing the plan, including practical applications and examples of current use (22.9%)
  - ◆ Communication materials about Kids Matter (e.g., summary documents, press releases) (14.4%)
  - ◆ Resources to support implementation (e.g., funding, staff) (10.5%)
  - ◆ Support in developing new and existing collaborations and partnerships (8.5%)

*☞ It's wonderful to have something that various organizations, both public and private, at all levels can use as a common framework for communicating and developing their efforts.* -- Respondent Affiliated with Local Government

*☞ Hear, see, and practice doing what others are already doing with the framework. I need the HOW of implementation.* -- Respondent Affiliated with Tribal Government

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# INTRODUCTION

*Kids Matter: Improving Outcomes for Children in Washington State* is a collaborative and comprehensive framework for building the early childhood system in Washington State in order to improve outcomes for children.<sup>1</sup> The system building partners that supported the planning process for this framework between 2003 and 2005 are the Foundation for Early Learning, Washington Build Initiative, Washington State Department of Health/Office of Maternal Child Health Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant (ECCS), and the Head Start-State Collaboration Office (HS-SCO). They were joined by over fifty local, regional and statewide partners who contributed to the planning and development of this framework.

This framework supports the efforts of local and state early childhood stakeholders to coordinate, collaborate and integrate efforts that will lead to children being healthy and ready for school. The plan 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. Additionally, family support principles, practices and approaches guide all aspects of this plan.

The success of the Kids Matter systems-building framework will be based largely on the extent to which state, regional and local partners connect their efforts with this overarching and comprehensive framework that intentionally bridges together health, social, emotional and mental health, early care and education/child care, parenting information and support, and family support outcomes as the approach to insuring that children are healthy and ready for school.

## SURVEY PURPOSE

The Kids Matter Stakeholder Survey was conducted in January 2006 to document baseline data about the awareness and utilization of the Kids Matter plan among early childhood stakeholders. It was administered by Organizational Research Services (ORS) an independent outcome-based planning and evaluation consulting firm. A copy of the instrument is included as **APPENDIX A**.

This data summary highlights findings from this stakeholder survey. The survey findings are intended to inform the implementation of the Kids Matter framework by guiding discussions, planning and actions that advance the work of early childhood systems building in Washington State. It is expected that this survey will be repeated annually.

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<sup>1</sup> The Kids Matter framework is available online at <http://www.earlylearning.org/kidsmatter.html>. For further information on the Kids Matter framework, contact: Lorrie Grevstad, Department of Health, Washington State, [lorrie.grevstad@doh.wa.gov](mailto:lorrie.grevstad@doh.wa.gov), Sangree Froelicher, Head Start-State Collaboration Office, [froelsm@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:froelsm@dshs.wa.gov), or Garrison Kurtz, Foundation for Early Learning, The Build Initiative, [garrison@earlylearning.org](mailto:garrison@earlylearning.org).

# METHODOLOGY

**Sample Selection.** The sampling frame is comprised of individuals associated with groups or organizations that have been introduced to the Kids Matter framework—either formally (e.g., presentations, engagement in planning processes) or informally (e.g., email, newsletter communications). ORS worked with representatives from the system-building initiatives, including the planning and work group leads, to identify this sampling frame. The final sampling frame consists of 499 early childhood stakeholders at local, regional and statewide levels who are part of groups or organizations that have been engaged with the Kids Matter framework to varying degrees. These respondents represent 298 groups and organizations.

**Survey Administration and Response Rate.** ORS piloted the survey with five stakeholders to enhance construct and content (i.e., face) validity prior to the full administration of the survey. The final survey contained 14 open and closed-ended questions. Respondents completed the survey online using SurveyMonkey, an online survey service. Responses were submitted directly to ORS to maintain confidentiality of the survey responses.

Each potential respondent received an introductory email from Lorrie Grevstad with the Washington State Department of Health, three follow-up messages from Organizational Research Services, and a reminder from Garrison Kurtz with the Foundation for Early Learning. Stakeholders who completed the survey before the due date were entered in a drawing to receive one of three Starbucks gift cards, valued at ten dollars each, as an incentive to respond. The final response rate was 54.7 percent representing 273 respondents.

**Methods of Analysis.** ORS examined the frequency distribution of the full sample and also reviewed qualitative responses for themes. Cross-tabulations and chi-square tests were also carried out when appropriate to compare response patterns and test for statistical significance among subgroups of respondents. A summary of the qualitative responses and themes, as well as a table of the chi-square test values, can be found in the *Kids Matter Stakeholder Survey Methodological Companion Report*.

# RESULTS SUMMARY

This section summarizes survey responses regarding:

- ◇ Background and affiliation of respondents,
- ◇ Stakeholder awareness and familiarity with Kids Matter,
- ◇ Changes in relationships, partnerships or collaborations resulting from Kids Matter,
- ◇ Potential contributions of the plan for young children and their families, and
- ◇ Current utilization of the framework.

## BACKGROUND AND AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENTS

The survey asked respondents to indicate the geographic focus of their work, their primary affiliation, as well as the groups or initiatives with which they regularly participate.

### Geographic Focus (See TABLE 1)

- ◇ *Respondents focus their work at all geographic levels—statewide and local or regional.*
- ◇ Forty-seven percent of respondents noted that their work and that of their organization focuses on policies, services or efforts for local or regional areas; 18.0 percent focus on efforts for the entire state; 34.8 percent are involved in both statewide and local or regional efforts.

**TABLE 1. Geographic Focus, N=267**

Geographic Area	N	Percent
Local or Regional	126	47.2%
Statewide	48	18.0%
Both Statewide and Local	93	34.8%

## Primary Affiliation (See TABLE 2)

- ♦ *Respondents noted primary affiliation with a wide variety of agencies.*
- ♦ The largest number of respondents indicated a primary affiliation of local government (24.1%) or state government (18.9%). Affiliation with nonprofit service providers (15.9%) and philanthropic organizations (13.3%) are the next largest affiliation categories reported.

**TABLE 2. Primary Affiliation, N=270**

<b>Affiliation Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Local Government Agency/Commission/Board	65	24.1%
State Government Agency/Commission/Board	51	18.9%
Nonprofit Service Provider	43	15.9%
Philanthropic Organization	36	13.3%
Educational Organization	23	8.5%
Community Member	9	3.3%
Advocacy Organization	8	3.0%
Health Organization	5	1.9%
Faith Based Organization	4	1.5%
Tribal Organization	4	1.5%
Federal Government Agency/Commission/Board	1	0.4%
Other	21	7.7%

## **Involvement with Early Childhood Groups and Processes**

(See TABLE 3)

- ♦ *Respondents are involved with a wide array of groups and processes that relate to early childhood.*
- ♦ Over 25 percent of respondents noted involvement (e.g., member, attend meetings regularly, frequent participation in group activities) with the following four groups and processes:
  - ♦ Head Start/Early Head Start Programs (33.3%)
  - ♦ Born Learning Campaign (28.6%)
  - ♦ Healthy Child Care Washington (HCCW) (26.0%)
  - ♦ Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network (25.3%)

**TABLE 3. Involvement with Groups and Processes, N=273**

<b>Groups/Processes</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent<sup>a</sup></b>
Head Start/Early Head Start Programs	91	33.3%
Born Learning Campaign	78	28.6%
Healthy Child Care Washington (HCCW)	71	26.0%
Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network	69	25.3%
Early Care and Education Coalition	62	22.7%
Early Childhood Education & Assistance Programs (ECEAP)	53	19.4%
Washington Learns: Early Learning Council	52	19.0%
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction	38	13.9%
Washington State Educational Service Districts	36	13.2%
Family Policy Council/Public Health & Safety Networks	34	12.5%
Foundation for Early Learning Advisory Council	33	12.1%
The Collaborative	33	12.1%
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies (HMHB)	31	11.4%
Joint Advisory Council (The Build Initiative, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant (ECCS), Head Start – State Collaboration Office, and Foundation for Early Learning)	31	11.4%
Partnerships for Supporting Children’s Mental Health	26	9.5%
Born Learning Campaign Coordinating Committee	24	8.8%
Medical Home Project	21	7.7%
Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Grant Planning Team and Work Group Leads	20	7.3%
Early Childhood Learning Affinity Group – Philanthropy Northwest	19	7.0%
Public Health Nursing Directors (PHND)	19	7.0%
Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregiving Leaders Team	17	6.2%
Northwest Early Learning Group	16	5.9%
Social Venture Partners Advocacy and Policy Committees	14	5.1%
Washington Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics (WCAAP)	13	4.8%
Kids Get Care	12	4.4%
Other	66	24.2%

<sup>a</sup> Percents total more than 100 percent as respondents may participate in more than one group or initiative.

# AWARENESS AND FAMILIARITY WITH KIDS MATTER

Respondents were asked to respond to questions regarding their general awareness and familiarity with Kids Matter and their knowledge of specific hallmarks of the plan as defined in the Kids Matter Executive Summary.

## Awareness of Kids Matter

- ◆ *Over two-thirds of respondents (68.8%) had heard of the Kids Matter Plan prior to receiving the survey. (See TABLE 4)*
- ◆ Respondents were asked to answer an open-ended question about how they heard about the Kids Matter framework. These responses were reviewed and coded into the themes listed in TABLE 5.
  - ◆ *Almost 80 percent of respondents learned about Kids Matter through presentations at meetings, participation in workgroups or conversations with colleagues.*
  - ◆ Fifty-eight separate groups and meetings were listed by respondents as the point of their initial awareness of the Kids Matter framework. (Please see the *Kids Matter Stakeholder Survey Methodological Companion Report* for a complete list of these groups.)
  - ◆ Thirteen percent of respondents learned of Kids Matter through written or electronic materials they received, including the Kids Matter Executive Summary and information via list-serve or email.

**TABLE 4: Awareness of Kids Matter, N=266**

	N	Percent
Yes	183	68.8%
No	45	16.9%
Not Sure	38	14.3%

**TABLE 5: Method of Awareness, N=180**

Method <sup>a</sup>	N	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Presentations at meetings, participation in ongoing workgroups, conversations with colleagues	142	78.9%
Written or electronic materials (e.g., articles, website, list-serve, emails)	24	13.3%
Participation in Kids Matter planning process	21	11.7%
Unsure	4	2.2%

<sup>a</sup> These categories were developed by reviewing responses to an open-ended question. Individual responses were then coded allowing for the calculation of frequencies.

<sup>b</sup> Percents total more than 100 percent as respondents could provide more than one answer.

## Familiarity with Kids Matter

- ♦ *Forty-eight percent of respondents are ‘somewhat’ or ‘very familiar’ with the Kids Matter Plan. (See TABLE 6)*
- ♦ *Almost half of the total survey respondents (135 of 273) were able to identify at least one Kids Matter hallmark when asked to list ‘one or two of the most important hallmarks of the Kids Matter framework.’ Respondents provided 254 specific hallmark responses, which were coded to match the five Kids Matter hallmarks using the key words and phrases noted in TABLE 7. Select responses illustrating these hallmarks are included below.*
  - ♦ **Fifty-seven percent of responses match the hallmark - ‘serves as an overarching bridge for a comprehensive and integrated framework.’**
    - Model that can be used at all levels. - Respondent Affiliated with Local Government*
    - Framework for integrating efforts of many diverse organizations and structures. - Respondent Affiliated with State Government*
    - Develop a state system for early learning inclusive of child care, preschools, baby classes, etc. - Respondent Affiliated with a Higher Education Institution*
  - ♦ **Fourteen percent of responses relate to the hallmark - ‘approaches early childhood systems as a collaborative effort.’**
    - Multi-stakeholder. - Respondent Affiliated with a Philanthropic Organization*
    - Networking between individuals/organization concerned about early childhood issues. - Respondent Affiliated with Local Government*
    - Improve outcomes for children through collaborative systems approach. - Respondent Affiliated with Tribal Government*

- ◆ About twenty percent of responses were distributed across the other three hallmarks: ‘**defines common goals and outcomes,**’ ‘**outlines specific strategies and partners,**’ and ‘**focuses on accountability and evaluation of progress.**’

**TABLE 6: General Familiarity with Kids Matter, N=254**

<b>Level of Familiarity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Very familiar	25	9.8%
Somewhat familiar	98	38.6%
Little or no familiarity	131	51.6%

**TABLE 7: Familiarity with Kids Matter Hallmarks, N=254<sup>a</sup>**

<b>Hallmarks</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Serves as an over-arching bridge for a comprehensive and integrated framework</b> (e.g., the “what” – focus on systems change and what those systems look like, overall systems planning and approach, alignment, comprehensive and detailed framework, shared vision, inclusive and broad-based, integration of individual elements, notes Kids Matter domain area). <sup>b</sup>	145	57.1%
<b>Approaches early childhood systems as a collaborative effort</b> (e.g., the “how” – people and agencies working together to accomplish systems change, furthering collaboration and cooperation, focus on intentional partnership and relationship building). <sup>b</sup>	35	13.8%
<b>Defines common goals and outcomes</b> (e.g., focused thinking on outcomes, outcomes based planning, logic models, notes specific goal or outcome of Kids Matter). <sup>b</sup>	23	9.1%
<b>Outlines specific strategies and partners</b> (e.g., notes specific partner(s) of Kids Matter or role(s) of those partner(s), notes specific strategy of Kids Matter). <sup>b</sup>	20	7.9%
<b>Focuses on accountability and evaluation of progress</b> (e.g., outcome-based measurement, evaluation, accountability). <sup>b</sup>	8	3.1%
<b>Other</b> (i.e., builds on existing work, usability, visibility, timely, prevention, encourages resource efficiency, focus on the achievable, demographic data, gaps).	23	9.1%

<sup>a</sup> Respondents were asked to provide up to two hallmarks. 135 of the 273 total survey respondents (49.5%) answered this question, providing 254 individual hallmark responses.

<sup>b</sup> Response category corresponds with Kids Matter Hallmark outlined in the Kids Matter Executive Summary. Individual responses were reviewed and then coded to these categories allowing for the calculation of frequencies.

## **Awareness and Familiarity Cross-Tab Analysis (See TABLE 8)**

Responses to questions about awareness and familiarity were also examined for differences among groups of respondents based on the geographic focus of their work and their primary affiliation group. We found statistically significant differences in awareness and familiarity for both of these variables.

- ♦ **Geographic Focus.** *Over 60 percent of respondents, regardless of the geographic focus of their work, are aware of Kids Matter.* As a group, respondents with a statewide focus are the most aware (83.0%). This group is also the most familiar with the Kids Matter plan with 75 percent reporting being ‘somewhat’ or ‘very familiar’ with the plan. Familiarity is markedly lower for respondents with a local or regional focus (32.8%).
  
- ♦ **Primary Affiliation.** *Over 60 percent of respondents in all affiliation groups are aware of Kids Matter.* Respondents noting affiliation with a state government agency, commission or board are the most aware (81.6%). This group is also the most familiar with elements of the Kids Matter plan, with 72.9 percent reporting being ‘somewhat’ or ‘very familiar’ with the plan. Less than 50 percent of respondents in all other affiliation groups report the same level of familiarity.

**TABLE 8: Awareness and Familiarity Cross-Tab Analysis**

<b>Geographic Focus</b>	<b>Aware of Kids Matter **</b>	<b>Somewhat or Very Familiar with Kids Matter ***</b>
Statewide	83.0% (39)	75.0% (33)
Local or Regional	61.8% (76)	32.8% (39)
Both Statewide and Local	70.0% (63)	55.1% (48)
<b>Primary Affiliation</b>	<b>Aware of Kids Matter *</b>	<b>Somewhat or Very Familiar with Kids Matter **</b>
Educational Organization	60.9% (14)	20.0% (4)
Local Government Agency/Commission/Board	65.6% (42)	46.7% (29)
Nonprofit Service Provider	67.5% (27)	39.5% (15)
Philanthropic Organization	61.1% (22)	45.5% (15)
State Government Agency/Commission/Board	81.6% (40)	72.9% (35)
Other	69.2% (36)	47.0% (16)

\* Chi-square test, p<.05.

\*\* Chi-square test, p<.01.

\*\*\* Chi-square test, p<.001.

# CHANGES IN RELATIONSHIPS, PARTNERSHIPS OR COLLABORATIONS RESULTING FROM KIDS MATTER

The survey asked respondents to assess the level of change in relationships, partnerships or collaborations they have experienced as a result of their familiarity and/or involvement with the Kids Matter framework. They were also asked to answer an open-ended question regarding the types of changes that have occurred. These responses were reviewed and compiled into the themes noted below, along with illustrations of the themes.

## Changes in Relationships, Partnerships or Collaborations

- ◆ *Over one-third (35.5%) of respondents have developed new or different relationships, partnerships or collaborations in ways that help advance early childhood outcomes through their involvement or familiarity with the Kids Matter framework.*  
(See TABLE 9)

- ◆ In regard to types of changes that occurred, the following response themes were noted:

- ◆ **Existing collaborations, partnerships, relationships are developing and implementing policies, projects, funding streams, and plans** aligned with the Kids Matter framework.

*The NW Early Learning Group has adapted the Kids Matter framework for our strategic planning efforts. This has led to a variety of funding opportunities and the development of what is beginning to feel like an actual system.* - Respondent Affiliated with Local Government

*I have re-focused my grant-writing strategy to include alignment with Kids Matter goals and outcomes. I worked with the Collaborative to ensure that the priority legislative items would be in alignment with the goals of KM I keep the KM goals and outcomes at the forefront of the conversation on the Early Learning Council, Technical Advisory Committee.* - Respondent Affiliated with a Nonprofit Organization

- ◆ **New collaborations, partnerships, relationships are being developed** to further the goals of the Kids Matter plan, and

*We have increased our collaboration efforts in our Initiative through outreach efforts to groups who normally have not connected with us. Through this outreach, we were able to pull in some new partners for a grant proposal. We are also trying to connect our members to more and more information about early care and learning.*

- Respondent Affiliated with a Local Child Care Organization

*Have used common goals and outcomes in new local collaborative projects.* - Respondent Affiliated with State Government

- ◆ **Stakeholders are sharing the plan with potential collaborators and partners**, encouraging their involvement in efforts to improve outcomes for young children and their families.

*The success of the early childhood systems work, and Kids Matter, has elevated early childhood issues to a much higher level in state government. Clearly, private entities are very knowledgeable and involved and are new partners. There is more interest at the Governor's level and consequently, more connection with her staff.*

- Respondent Affiliated with State Government

*I communicate with people who are concerned about kids and I therefore gain and transmit ideas and energy to the causes.*

- Respondent Affiliated with a Philanthropic Organization

**TABLE 9: Extent of Change in Relationships, Partnerships or Collaborations, N=223**

<b>Extent of Change</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
A great deal	18	8.1%
Somewhat	61	27.4%
Not at all	144	64.6%

## **Changes in Relationships, Partnerships or Collaborations Cross-Tab Analysis (See TABLE 10)**

Responses to questions about changes in relationships, partnerships or collaborations as a result of the Kids Matter framework were also examined for differences among groups of respondents based on their level of familiarity with Kids Matter, the geographic focus of their work, and their primary affiliation.

- ◆ **Level of Familiarity.** The extent that relationships, partnerships or collaborations changed as a result of Kids Matter differs significantly depending on the respondents' level of familiarity with the framework. *Respondents who are more familiar with Kids Matter reported that they developed new or different relationships and partnerships more frequently than those with little familiarity.* For example, over 85 percent of respondents that are 'very familiar' with Kids Matter noted that they have developed new or different relationships 'somewhat' or 'a great deal' compared to 11.9 percent of those with 'little' familiarity.

- ♦ **Geographic Focus.** The extent that changes in relationships, partnerships, or collaborations are achieved also differs significantly depending on the geographic focus of respondents work. *Interestingly, respondents with a local or regional geographic focus to their work more frequently report that they have ‘not at all’ developed new or different relationships (77.7%) than those respondents with a statewide focus (46.2%), or those that focus on both local and statewide levels (55.8%).*
  
- ♦ **Primary Affiliation.** There are no statistically significant differences among affiliation groups regarding the extent of change in relationships, partnerships or collaborations as a result of Kids Matter.

**TABLE 10: Changes in Relationships, Partnerships or Collaborations  
Cross-Tab Analysis**

Level of Familiarity with Kids Matter ***	Extent of Changes		
	Not at All	Somewhat	A Great Deal
Little	88.1% (96)	10.1% (11)	1.8% (2)
Somewhat	48.9% (44)	45.6% (41)	5.6% (5)
Very	13.6% (3)	36.4% (8)	50.0% (11)
<b>Geographic Focus ***</b>			
Statewide	46.2% (18)	43.6% (17)	10.3% (4)
Local or Regional	77.7% (80)	20.4% (21)	1.9% (2)
Both Statewide and Local	55.8% (43)	29.9% (23)	14.3% (11)
<b>Primary Affiliation</b>			
Educational Organization	61.1% (11)	33.3% (6)	5.6% (1)
Local Government Agency/Commission/Board	67.3% (37)	27.3% (15)	5.5% (3)
Nonprofit Service Provider	75.0% (27)	16.7% (6)	8.3% (3)
Philanthropic Organization	56.7% (17)	26.7% (8)	16.7% (5)
State Government Agency/Commission/Board	54.8% (23)	38.1% (16)	7.1% (3)
Other	67.5% (27)	25.0% (10)	7.5% (3)

\*\*\* Chi-square test, p<.001.

# CONTRIBUTION OF KIDS MATTER TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Respondents were asked to consider the helpfulness and usefulness of Kids Matter in achieving outcomes for young children and their families within their own organization. They were then asked to provide their general thoughts about how Kids Matter could contribute to efforts to improve outcomes for young children and their families. These responses were reviewed and compiled into the themes listed below. Individual stakeholder responses illustrating these themes are also noted below.

## Impact of Kids Matter at an Organizational Level (See TABLE 11)

- ♦ *Seventy-three percent of respondents ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that the Kids Matter framework will help their organizations achieve positive outcomes for young children and their families.*
- ♦ *Almost 68 percent of respondents ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that they can imagine how their organizations can use the Kids Matter framework to achieve positive outcomes for young children and their families.*

**TABLE 11: Helpfulness and Usefulness of Kids Matter within Stakeholder Organizations**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
HELPFULNESS. I believe that the Kids Matter framework and associated efforts will <b>help organizations</b> like mine, and other public and private organizations, work together to achieve positive outcomes for young children and their families. <b>N=186</b>	1.1%	2.2%	23.7%	40.9%	32.3%
USEFULNESS. I can <b>imagine</b> how I and/or my <b>organization can use</b> the Kids Matter framework in my/our efforts to achieve positive outcomes for young children and/or their families. <b>N=182</b>	1.1%	2.7%	28.6%	46.2%	21.4%

## Contribution of Kids Matter to Efforts to Improve Outcomes for Children

Stakeholders provided several examples of ways that Kids Matter contributes to efforts to improve outcomes for young children and their families, including the following:

- ♦ **Increases awareness among various stakeholder groups** including parents, the greater community, and policy makers, about the importance of early childhood systems in improving outcomes for children leading to increased support and funding.

*Broad adoption of the Kids Matter framework will increase organizational, community, family, and public awareness (not necessarily in that order) of the early childhood 'window' - a critical developmental time in which we must provide opportunities for healthy growth.* - Respondent Affiliated with State Government

*Advocacy for policy support and shift in public will to support early learning.*  
- Respondent with Community Member Affiliation

- ♦ **Provides a comprehensive framework**, including research-based strategies, which can be used for planning, resource development, and implementation, at the community, local and state levels.

*By providing overarching planning and program goals; a framework in which many types of early childhood programming can fit in; educates all disciplines about their role in a holistic early childhood framework.* - Respondent Affiliated with a Nonprofit Organization

*It's wonderful to have something that various organizations, both public and private, at all levels can use as a common framework for communicating and developing their efforts.* - Respondent Affiliated with Local Government

- ♦ **Encourages agency and resource collaboration and coordination**, reducing fragmentation of services and inefficiencies resulting from duplicated efforts.

*I believe it is very important to collaborate on all levels to maximize resources and efforts. In a small community it is imperative to share resources and combine efforts. I see the importance of continuing to build bridges across funding sources and linking priorities to avoid duplication and maximize results for children and families. Providing the structured framework and disseminating it to all partners and stakeholders will make the collaborative process easier.* - Respondent Affiliated with Local Government

*There seems to be strong momentum to engage all the players and commitment to the overall strategies and goal. The need is clearly documented and the different players are ready to work together and leverage resources to make progress towards the goal. I think that the individuals and organizations that have contributed to the creation of this plan need to continue to build support, continue to connect the different partners and engage them in the work.*

- Respondent Affiliated with a Philanthropic Organization

- ♦ **Provides common outcomes and goals** that will allow for strong evaluation and improved accountability.

*Same language. Same goals and objectives. Same measurable outcomes across the state.* - Respondent with Community Member Affiliation

*Kids Matter will offer a valuable point of reflection for future work to ensure that it addresses the common goals and objectives of our state system. It will be used as a point of reference in designing evaluations around the outcomes listed.* - Respondent Affiliated with a Institution of Higher Education

## **Helpfulness and Usefulness of Kids Matter Cross-Tab Analysis** (See TABLE 12)

Responses to questions about the perceived helpfulness and usefulness of Kids Matter within stakeholder organizations were also examined for differences among groups of respondents based on their level of familiarity with Kids Matter, the geographic focus of their work, and their primary affiliation.

- ♦ **Level of Familiarity.** The perceived helpfulness and usefulness of Kids Matter differed significantly by level of respondent familiarity with the framework. *Respondents with greater familiarity are more likely to agree both that Kids Matter can help their organization (95.8%), and that their organization can use Kids Matter to achieve positive outcomes for children and their families (91.7%), more than those with less familiarity.*
- ♦ **Geographic Focus.** *Respondents with a statewide focus to their work agreed more frequently than other groups that the Kids Matter Plan can help their organization achieve positive outcomes for children (81.6%), as well as that their organization can use the Kids Matter Plan (77.1%).* Levels of agreement by geographic focus of work differed significantly only in regard to the perceived usefulness of Kids Matter.
- ♦ **Primary Affiliation.** *More than 60 percent of respondents in all affiliation groups but education ‘agree(d)’ or ‘strongly agree(d)’ that Kids Matter will be useful and helpful within their organization.* It should be noted that the proportion of respondents in the education sub-group is small. Again, levels of agreement by affiliation differed significantly only in regard to the perceived usefulness of Kids Matter.

**TABLE 12: Helpfulness and Usefulness of Kids Matter Cross-Tab Analysis**

<b>Level of Familiarity with Kids Matter</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/Agree that Kids Matter is HELPFUL ***</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/Agree that Kids Matter is USEFUL ***</b>
Little	57.9% (40)	45.6% (31)
Somewhat	78.1% (71)	77.3% (68)
Very	95.8% (24)	91.7% (22)
<b>Geographic Focus</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/Agree that Kids Matter is HELPFUL</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/Agree that Kids Matter is USEFUL **</b>
Statewide	81.6% (31)	77.1% (27)
Local or Regional	71.3% (57)	62.9% (51)
Both Statewide and Local	70.8% (46)	67.2% (43)
<b>Primary Affiliation</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/Agree that Kids Matter is HELPFUL</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/Agree that Kids Matter is USEFUL *</b>
Educational Organization	58.3% (7)	38.5% (5)
Local Government Agency/Commission/Board	65.9% (29)	63.1% (29)
Nonprofit Service Provider	78.2% (25)	66.6% (20)
Philanthropic Organization	86.4% (19)	76.2% (16)
State Government Agency/Commission/Board	78.6% (33)	82.9% (34)
Other	68.8% (22)	63.3% (19)

\* Chi-square test, p<.05.

\*\* Chi-square test, p<.01.

\*\*\* Chi-square test, p<.001.

# CURRENT UTILIZATION OF KIDS MATTER

In addition to considering the perceived helpfulness and usefulness of the framework, respondents were also asked if they are currently using Kids Matter. Stakeholders that are currently using the framework were asked to describe their use. These responses were reviewed and coded into the themes listed in **TABLE 14**. Individual stakeholder responses illustrating these themes are also noted below.

♦ ***Over one-fourth of respondents (28.6%) are currently using the Kids Matter plan. (See TABLE 13)***

♦ Respondents noted that they are using Kids Matter in the following ways (See **TABLE 14**):

♦ **Internal strategic planning, resource allocation, and the development of strategies for service delivery (59.3%).**

*We are in the process of using the Kids Matter framework to evaluate our current organizational goals and to identify ways in which we can sync up the organizational goals with this very well thought out framework...as an Early Head Start program, our current organizational framework and the Kids Matter framework work very well together.* - Respondent Affiliated with State Government

*We have used the framework to come to agreement as a region on child outcomes that are articulated in Kids Matter. We are using the framework to develop county plans for early childhood systems.* - Respondent Affiliated with Local Government

♦ **Tool to increase awareness and understanding of early childhood systems and issues among stakeholder groups (37.3%), and**

*Read by committee members to expand view of 'early care.'* - Respondent Affiliated with a Philanthropic Organization

*We have used the Executive Summary in discussion and learning as a staff and will further discussion on the state level, as well as be more informed to help local communities in their efforts around early childhood systems.* - Respondent Affiliated with State Government

- ◆ A wide variety of other types of uses were also noted, including: develop and carry out outcome-based evaluation (15.3%), supporting existing partnerships and collaborations and encouraging the creation of new relationships (13.6%), and for grant writing and other funding requests (10.2%).

*To focus the outcome assessment efforts of multiple organizations.*

- Respondent Affiliated with a Philanthropic Organization

*To do a community assessment and to redefine priorities. As a common language and approach to work together regionally.*

- Respondent Affiliated with Local Government

*Used the framework in writing a successful early literacy grant just now being implemented.* - Respondent Affiliated with State Government

**TABLE 13: Current Utilization of Kids Matter, N=231**

	N	Percent
Yes	66	28.6%
No	108	46.8%
I don't know	57	24.7%

**TABLE 14: Methods of Utilization, N=59**

Types of Use <sup>a</sup>	N	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Internal strategic planning, resource allocation, and development of strategies for service delivery	35	59.3%
Tool to increase awareness and understanding among stakeholder groups	22	37.3%
Develop and carry out outcome-based evaluation	9	15.3%
Supporting existing partnerships and collaborations, and encourage the creation of new relationships through shared vision of the framework	8	13.6%
Grant-writing and other funding requests	6	10.2%

<sup>a</sup> These categories were developed by reviewing responses to an open-ended question. Individual responses were then coded allowing for the calculation of frequencies.

<sup>b</sup> Percents total more than 100 percent as respondents could provide more than one answer.

## Current Utilization Cross-Tab Analysis (See TABLE 15)

Responses to questions about current utilization were also examined for differences among groups of respondents based on their level of familiarity with Kids Matter, the geographic focus of their work, and their primary affiliation. We found statistically significant differences in use for all three of these variables.

- ♦ **Level of Familiarity.** Respondents with more familiarity with Kids Matter are more apt to be current users of the plan. *Ninety-two percent of respondents that said they were ‘very familiar’ with Kids Matter also reported themselves as being current users.*
- ♦ **Geographic Focus.** *Respondents whose work has a statewide focus are using Kids Matter more frequently (50.0%) than groups with other geographic foci.*
- ♦ **Primary Affiliation.** In regard to primary affiliation groups, respondents from state government agencies, commissions and boards (53.2%) and philanthropic organizations (41.4%) are the most frequent users of Kids Matter.

**TABLE 15: Current Utilization Cross-Tab Analysis**

<b>Level of Familiarity with Kids Matter</b> ***	<b>Using Kids Matter</b>
Little	3.6% (4)
Somewhat	41.9% (39)
Very	91.7% (22)
<b>Geographic Focus</b> **	
Statewide	50.0% (20)
Local or Regional	16.8% (18)
Both Statewide and Local	33.8% (27)
<b>Primary Affiliation</b> ***	
Educational Organization	11.1% (4)
Local Government Agency/Commission/Board	53.2% (25)
Nonprofit Service Provider	22.2% (4)
Philanthropic Organization	24.1% (14)
State Government Agency/Commission/Board	41.4% (12)
Other	17.1% (7)

\*\* Chi-square test, p<.01.

\*\*\* Chi-square test, p<.001.

# WHAT IS NEEDED TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION (SEE TABLE 16)

Stakeholders were asked to provide their perspective about what would help their organization use the Kids Matter framework. These responses were reviewed and compiled into the following themes. Stakeholder responses illustrating these themes are also noted below.

- ♦ Almost half of respondents would like **more in-depth information about Kids Matter** and how it connects with their organization and work (49.0%).

*To learn more about Kids Matter framework. Then to have a workshop for interested individuals to discuss how their organization could effectively utilize the Kids Matter framework. - Respondent Affiliated with a Faith-Based Organization*

*We would be interested in attending presentations and or trainings in the Kids Matter framework. I would also need to do some framework mapping to see how well it aligns to the standards that guide us. - Respondent Affiliated with an Educational Institution*

*To have it described and defined. Somehow I have missed some very important information as I am not familiar with this program at all! - Respondent Affiliated with Local Government*

- ♦ Respondents would also like **training and information about implementing the plan** (22.9%), including practical applications of the framework and examples of current use.

*More tools to identify ways to use the framework, and examples for people at state, regional and local levels Templates for how programs can review Kids Matter and determine where there is alignment. - Respondent Affiliated with State Government*

*Additional information, clear guidelines and suggestions for 'next steps,' contact people for questions and explanations. - Respondent Affiliated with a Nonprofit Organization*

*Hear, see, and practice doing what others are already doing with the framework. I need the HOW of implementation. - Respondent Affiliated with Tribal Government*

- ◆ Other areas of assistance mentioned included: various communication materials about Kids Matter (14.4%); resources such as funding, staffing and time to support implementation of the framework (10.5%); and, support in developing new and existing collaborations and partnerships (8.5%).

*Clear information on status and goals - written so that short pieces can be shared easily as in a newsletter or update so that the underlying principals can be reinforced consistently. Information can be a powerful motivator and can make a difference in buy-in and direction.* - Respondent Affiliated with State Government

*Funding to do the things we want to do.* - Respondent Affiliated with a Health-Related Organization

*System-building meetings with early learning partners.* - Respondent Affiliated with Local Government

**TABLE 16: Requested Types of Assistance in Using Kids Matter, N=153**

<b>Types of Assistance<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent<sup>b</sup></b>
<b>More information about Kids Matter</b> (e.g., what it is, objectives, connections to individual organizations and work)	75	49.0%
<b>Information and training about how to implement Kids Matter</b> (e.g., examples from current users, practical applications)	35	22.9%
<b>Communication materials</b> (e.g., summary documents, press releases, short updates on progress)	22	14.4%
<b>Resources to support implementation</b> (e.g., funding, staff)	16	10.5%
<b>Support in developing new and existing collaborations and partnerships</b>	13	8.5%
<b>Other</b>	12	7.8%

<sup>a</sup> These categories were developed by reviewing responses to an open-ended question. Individual responses were then coded allowing for the calculation of frequencies.

<sup>b</sup> Percents total more than 100 percent as respondents could provide more than one answer.

# CONCLUSION

This survey indicates that there is remarkable widespread awareness of the Kids Matter framework. A great deal of stakeholders have specific familiarity with the content of this framework and a large number of stakeholders also noted a desire to further their understanding of it. The characteristics of the plan which were identified as having the greatest importance to early childhood partners are its function as an integrated and overarching framework and its comprehensive systems focus. The majority of respondents expressed optimism that a plan of this nature can be instrumental for advancing outcomes for children. Not surprisingly, fewer respondents are currently engaged in implementing this plan. Those stakeholders that have adopted the plan identified specific applications, including use in grant proposals, connections to planning processes, and development of new partnerships. These stakeholders are more likely to have a statewide, than local or regional focus. Importantly, stakeholders at all levels, statewide and regional or local—expressed substantial interest in learning more about Kids Matter, finding ways to connect to this plan and obtaining resources to support the implementation of this plan.

## **APPENDIX A**

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### ***KIDS MATTER STAKEHOLDER SURVEY***

## Kids Matter Stakeholder Survey<sup>2</sup>

This survey is about the Kids Matter Strategic Plan: Improving Outcomes for Children in Washington State. The purpose of this survey is to learn what early childhood stakeholders know about the Kids Matter framework for building an early childhood system in Washington State. We recognize that the Kids Matter framework can be used in many ways, including building on existing work and refining current work to advance this common framework.

Organizational Research Services (ORS), an independent outcome-based planning and evaluation consulting firm, has been providing planning and evaluation services to support the development of the Kids Matter framework and will be managing this survey process.

You have been selected to receive this survey because your efforts as a stakeholder in early childhood systems relate to the Kids Matter Plan. You also may have been involved in the actual planning and development of the Kids Matter Plan itself. (The Kids Matter framework is a result of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant, The Build Initiative, Foundation for Early Learning and Head Start-State Collaboration Office planning efforts.) Your perspective is very valuable in providing baseline data about awareness and utilization of the Kids Matter framework.

These data will be very important for informing the implementation of the Kids Matter framework and will help guide discussion, planning and actions that advance the work of early childhood systems building in Washington State. We expect to repeat this survey annually.

Be assured that your responses will be kept confidential and that all responses will be reported in the aggregate with individual identifiers removed. Please be candid - there are no right or wrong answers! Aggregate results from the survey will be posted on the Foundation for Early Learning's Kids Matter website (<http://www.earlylearning.org/kidsmatter.html>).

The survey will take between 5 and 10 minutes to complete. Respondents who complete the survey by January 16, 2006 will be entered into a drawing to receive one of three \$10 Starbucks gift cards.

Thank you for your time and input.

**1. Select the response that best matches your work and that of your organization. Please select only one response.**

- Statewide focus: My/our work focuses on policies, services or efforts for the entire state
- Local or regional focus
- BOTH statewide and local

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<sup>2</sup> Please note: actual formatting of survey is not reflected in this document as it was administered online.

**2. Indicate your PRIMARY AFFILIATION. Please select only one response.**

- Advocacy Organization
- Community Member
- Faith-Based Organization
- Federal Government Agency/Commission/Board
- Local Government Agency/Commission/Board
- Nonprofit Service provider
- Philanthropic Organization
- State Government Agency/Commission/Board
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Check all of the groups or processes with which you are involved (e.g., member, attend meetings regularly, frequent participant in group activities). Please check all that apply.**

- Born Learning Campaign
- Born Learning Campaign Coordinating Committee
- Early Care and Education Coalition
- Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant (ECCS) Planning Team and Work Group Leads
- Early Childhood Education & Assistance Programs (ECEAP)
- Early Childhood Learning Affinity Group – Philanthropy Northwest
- Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregiving Leaders Team
- Family Policy Council/Public Health & Safety Networks
- Foundation for Early Learning Advisory Council
- Head Start/Early Head Start Programs
- Healthy Child Care Washington (HCCW)
- Healthy Mothers, Health Babies (HMHB)
- Joint Advisory Council (The Build Initiative, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant (ECCS), Head Start-State Collaboration Office and Foundation for Early Learning)
- Kids Get Care
- Medical Home Project
- Northwest Early Learning Group
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Partnerships for Supporting Children’s Mental Health
- Public Health Nursing Directors (PHND)
- Social Venture Partners Advocacy and Policy Committees
- The Collaborative
- Washington Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics (WCAAP)
- Washington Learns: Early Learning Council
- Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network
- Washington State Educational Service Districts
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Before receiving the email for this survey, had you heard of the Kids Matter Plan?**

- YES
- NO
- Not Sure

**5. How did you hear about the Kids Matter framework (e.g., discussed at particular meeting, participated in Kids Matter planning, etc.)? Please be specific.**

**6. What is your level of familiarity with the Kids Matter Plan?**

- Little or no familiarity
- Somewhat familiar
- Very familiar

**7. From your perspective, what are one or two of the most important hallmarks of the Kids Matter framework?**

**A.**

**B.**

**8. Through your familiarity and/or involvement with the Kids Matter framework, TO WHAT EXTENT have you developed new or different relationships, partnerships or collaborations in ways that help advance early childhood outcomes (e.g., Joint Advisory Council, collaborative grant writing, collaborative funding)?**

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- A great deal

**9. Please describe any changes in collaboration.**

**10. In your opinion, how can the Kids Matter framework best contribute to efforts to improve outcomes for young children and their families? Please describe briefly.**

Please answer the following questions considering your primary affiliation. If you have multiple affiliations that are equal, please select one to consider while answering.

11. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I Don't Know
I believe that the Kids Matter framework and associated efforts will help organizations like mine, and other public and private organizations work together to achieve positive outcomes for young children and their families.						
I can imagine how I and/or my organization can use the Kids Matter framework in my/our efforts to achieve positive outcomes for young children and/or their families.						

12. Are you and/or your organization currently using the Kids Matter Plan in any way to help you in your work?

- YES
- NO
- I Don't Know

13. Briefly describe one or two examples of how you have used/are using the Kids Matter Plan.

FOR EXAMPLE: Have you used the Kids Matter framework to develop a common understanding among your stakeholders? Have you used the framework for planning? Have you used the framework to develop strategies? Have you used the framework to develop outcomes? Have you used it for developing grant-writing? What other ways have you used the framework to advance your work?

14. What would help you and/or your organization in using the Kids Matter framework?

**Thank you for your time. Your responses will be helpful to the many partners working to support young children and their families.**