

ECEAP Outcomes

2012-13



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Washington State Department of Early Learning



Contents

Introduction to ECEAP	3
ECEAP Funding	4
2012-13 ECEAP Lead Teacher Qualifications.....	4
ECEAP Child Characteristics.....	5
ECEAP Family Income and Education.....	7
Child Health Outcomes	7
Child Development and Learning Outcomes	9
Social-Emotional Development.....	10
Physical Development	11
Language Development	12
Cognitive Development	13
Literacy Development	14
Mathematics	15
Family Engagement	17



Introduction to ECEAP

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is Washington's pre-kindergarten program that prepares 3- and 4-year-old children from low-income families for success in school and in life. Since 1985, ECEAP has focused on the well-being of the whole child by providing comprehensive nutrition, health, education and family support services. ECEAP reaches the children most in need of these foundations for learning. The program is aligned with nationally researched programs that have shown exceptional returns on investment.

ECEAP is effective at:

- ▶ Increasing children's social-emotional, physical and pre-academic skills.
- ▶ Strengthening families and building their capacity to support their children's success.
- ▶ Ensuring that each child receives medical and dental care, and mental health care when needed, so they start school with optimal health.

During the 2012-13 school year, the Department of Early Learning (DEL) administered ECEAP through **40 contracts** with educational service districts, school districts, community colleges, local governments and nonprofits. **ECEAP served 37 of 39 Washington counties at 269 sites.**

In the 2012-13 school year:

- ▶ **ECEAP had 8,391 slots for children.** Over the year, **9,328 children were enrolled** in these slots. The ECEAP turnover rate has decreased in each of the past years. **In 2012-13, at 11 percent, it was the lowest in ECEAP's recorded history.**
- ▶ At its peak for the school year in May 2013, the ECEAP waiting list held 1,186 4-year-olds and 1,281 3-year-olds, totaling **2,467 children whose families desired to place them in ECEAP.** Waiting list collection was standardized statewide during this year; only children entered into the Early Learning Management System (ELMS) database are counted here.
- ▶ Approximately **32,322 children in Washington were eligible for ECEAP and were not served by either ECEAP or the federal Head Start program.** Through Head Start and ECEAP, **we are serving 37 percent of children who are eligible for ECEAP.**
- ▶ **ECEAP received 9 out of 10 quality points** from the **National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)** for our state early learning guidelines, comprehensive family and health services, staff professional development requirements, class sizes, staff-to-child ratios, meals and DEL's monitoring of program quality. The 10th quality point would require ECEAP lead teachers to have a bachelor's degree. DEL currently requires an associate or higher degree with 30 quarter credits of early childhood education.

ECEAP Funding

Total ECEAP funding was **\$57,156,000**, 98 percent of which went directly to communities to benefit children and families.

The total cost per child was **\$6,812**.

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Total allotment	\$47,919,000	\$56,437,000	\$54,878,000	\$54,405,000	\$57,156,000	\$57,156,000
Percent for state admin	3.4%	2.9%	2.17%	1.75%	2.25%	2.25%
Percent to contractors	96.6%	97.1%	97.83%	98.25%	97.75%	97.75%
Cost per child not adjusted for inflation	\$6,767	\$6,865	\$6,815	\$6,780	\$6,812	\$6,812

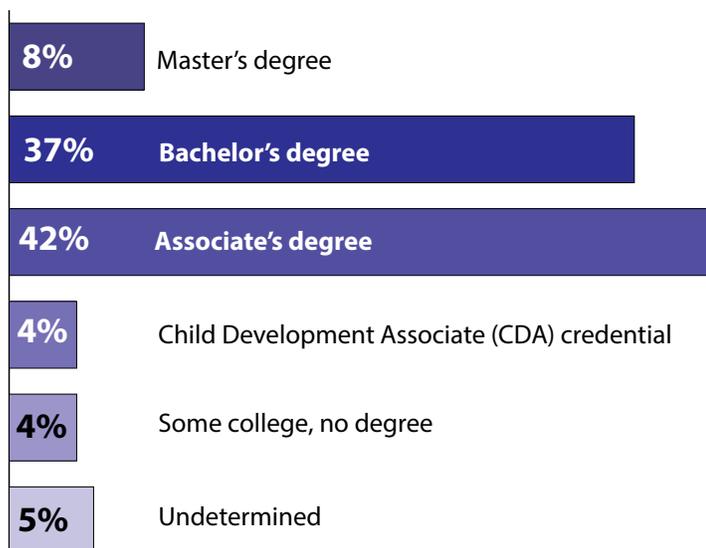
2012-13 ECEAP Lead Teacher Qualifications

Since 1986, ECEAP Performance Standards have required lead teachers to hold an associate's degree or higher, with 30 credits of ECE, or a state teaching certificate with an endorsement in ECE (pre-K through grade 3). However, in some parts of the state, it has been difficult to hire fully qualified staff so some teachers are on a five-year plan to complete this requirement.

[Research links early learning and development to the educational qualifications of teachers \(NiEER policy brief\).](#)

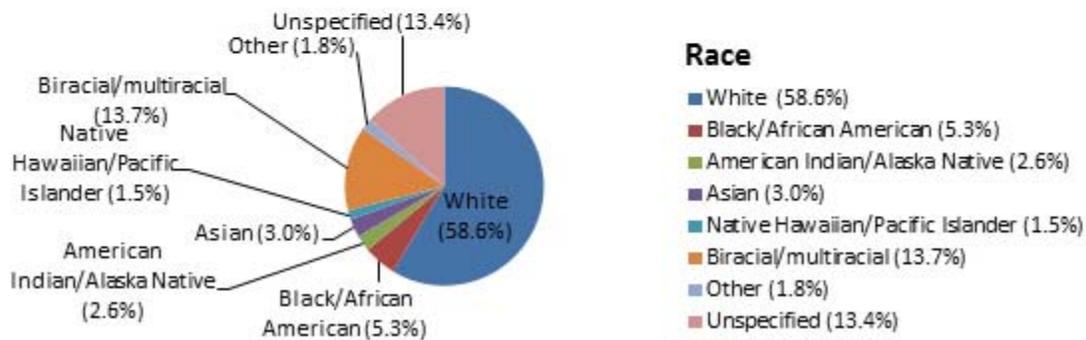
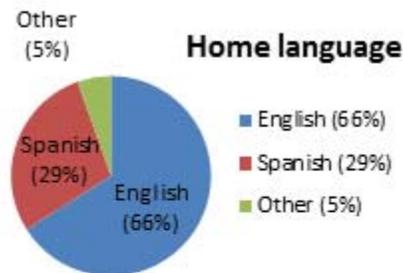
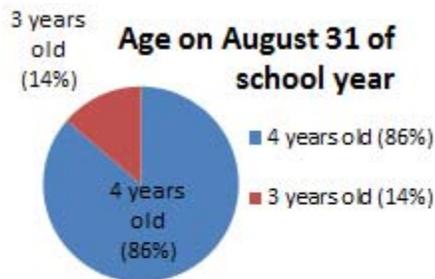
81 percent of lead teachers met the DEL requirement of an associate's degree or higher with 30 or more quarter credits of early childhood education. This has increased from 69 percent in 2007, when DEL intensified monitoring of qualifications.

Lead teachers by degree



ECEAP Child Characteristics

n = 9,328



Other characteristics

Percent of Children	
Hispanic Ethnicity	44%
Single-parent home	43%
Foster care	2%
Homeless	10%
On IEP	
At time of enrollment	6%
On IEP any time this school year	9%

Data from DEL's Early Learning Management System (ELMS)

English language learners' experiences

From ECEAP teachers:

“We had several children who did not speak any English. By the end of the ECEAP year, they speak English well. They know their numbers, colors and letters. And, they can write their names.”

“A number of our children have gone from speaking no English, and being very quiet, to fluent English and truly enjoying school.”

From an ECEAP parent:

“I am a volunteer in my daughter’s preschool. I think that this program is very important to the children, it contributes to their development, the teachers are really good with the kids, they are patient and treat them with love and care. My daughter has learned a lot, she is more independent, she do many things by herself, most of the things she has learned she do the same at home, like wash her hands without help, hang her coat and she sings the songs in English! That is the most important advance that my husband and me are seeing. She is learning more words and speaks in English. Our experience on the program is really good and we want that our daughter and all the kids continue growing their education.”

ECEAP Family Income and Education

		Percent of families
Family income <i>In 2012, federal poverty level (FPL) was \$23,050 annually for a family of four. Families at or below 110% FPL are eligible for ECEAP based on income alone.</i> <i>*110% FPL for a family of four was \$25,355 in 2012.</i>	50% of FPL* and under	42%
	50.1-80% of FPL	23%
	80.1-110% of FPL	27%
Parents' education level	6th grade or less	6%
	7th – 12th grade, no diploma/GED	12%
*FPL = Federal Poverty Level		

Child Health Outcomes

		Percent of children upon enrollment	Percent of children upon ECEAP exit
n = 8,459 children who were in ECEAP 120 days or longer			
Medical care	No medical home	8%	2%
	No medical coverage	4%	1%
	Behind schedule on immunizations	18%	3%
	Behind schedule for well-child exam	32%	7%
	Received medical treatment as a result of exams while in ECEAP	N/A	1% 84 children
	Received an individualized ECEAP health plan for chronic illness	N/A	6% 640 children
Dental care	No dental home	16%	6%
	No dental coverage	6%	1%
	Behind schedule for dental screenings	44%	6%
	Received dental treatment as a result of exams while in ECEAP	N/A	8% 653 children
Mental health	ECEAP mental health professional consulted with parent or staff regarding the child's behavior or mental health.	N/A	8% 673 children
Vision care	Received vision care as a result of ECEAP screening	N/A	2% 175 children
Hearing care	Received follow-up care as a result of hearing screening	N/A	1% (51 children)

Medical home

A medical home is a health care provider or clinic where the child receives ongoing, coordinated sick and preventive care. A medical home increases timely and appropriate use of pediatric services and avoids use of the emergency room for routine care. ECEAP staff worked closely with families to establish a medical home for the 8 percent of children who did not have one.

Medical coverage

In 2012-13, 4 percent of ECEAP children had no medical coverage when they enrolled. Children with public or private health insurance are more likely than children without insurance to have a regular and accessible source of health care. ECEAP staff worked with families over the year to ensure their children had medical coverage. By the end of the year, 99 percent of children had medical coverage.

Well-child exams

At the time of enrollment only 68 percent of ECEAP children were up to date on their annual well-child medical exams. By the end of the year, 93 percent were on schedule. These exams revealed health issues for 84 ECEAP children, who then received treatment.

Vision screening makes a difference

In 2012-13, ECEAP conducted vision screening for all ECEAP children. As a result, 175 children were referred to and received vision care, staff report:

- *“One parent had a hard time making the necessary appointments for vision. With much encouragement and assistance, I was able to help her get past the barriers that hindered her. Her daughter was so happy to receive her new glasses and see clearly. It was a huge relief to her mom!”*
- *“We have three children who now have eyeglasses, whose vision problems were undiagnosed before they came to ECEAP!”*
- *“We helped four of our families with glasses for their children through vision screening.”*

Dental care

Regular dental visits provide an opportunity for prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of oral and craniofacial diseases and conditions. When they enrolled in Fall 2012, only 56 percent of ECEAP children were up to date with dental screenings. By the end of the school year, ECEAP interventions ensured that 94 percent of enrolled children had dental screenings and necessary follow-up treatment. Dental cavities are the single most common disease of childhood.

ECEAP builds community dental partnerships

In a rural county in Washington, families have very limited access to dental services. However, ECEAP has made an impact. Staff worked with a new community partner who provided classroom instruction on dental hygiene. This partner even conducted the dental screenings and fluoride treatments for children in the ECEAP class. Then, ECEAP coordinated with a local dentist for services for children identified as needing further treatment.

Child Development and Learning Outcomes

Children enrolled in ECEAP are assessed three times during the school year to track their social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and their early literacy and math skills. English language acquisition is also tracked for children who speak a different home language. For 2012-13, DEL collected assessment results for more than 4,300 ECEAP children who had ratings in both fall and spring of the school year.

Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, all ECEAP contractors use Teaching Strategies GOLD® to assess children. GOLD® is a valid, reliable assessment system seamless assessment for children from birth through the kindergarten year, which is also used as part of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS). In July 2013, Teaching Strategies announced that GOLD® will soon extend through third grade and incorporate the Common Core State Standards for K-3.

GOLD® meets the assessment standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of State Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. Teachers observe children in the context of everyday activities and natural settings over time, record their observations and use them to rate 36 objectives for each child, plus two more for English language learners. Children are compared to widely-held expectations for knowledge, skills and behaviors, using different expectations for 3- and 4-year-olds. Teachers use the data to plan curricula and individualize instructional supports and child guidance. DEL uses the data to determine areas of focus and statewide training.

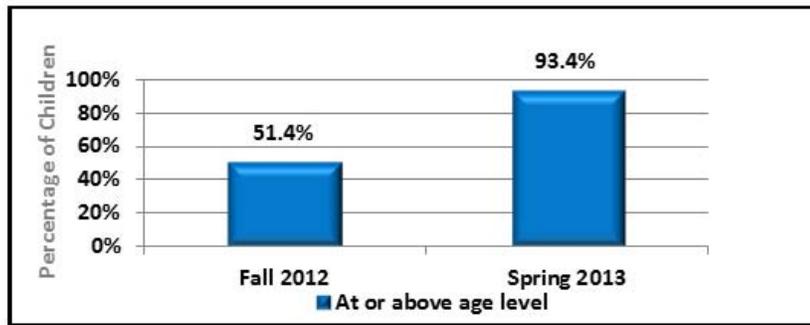
Summary of Development and Learning Gains:

During the 2012-13 school year, ECEAP children assessed with GOLD® made progress in all domains. The following percentages of children moved from below age level to at or above age level during their time in ECEAP.

Social-emotional development	42%
Physical development	34%
Language development	38%
Cognitive development	40%
Literacy development	44%
Mathematics	56%

Social-Emotional Development

N = 4,324



There is a strong connection between children’s early relationships and behaviors and their later development and learning. For this reason, assessing children’s social-emotional development accurately and supporting their growth and competence in this area is especially important. Teaching Strategies GOLD® includes three social–emotional objectives:

Regulates own emotions and behaviors

Self-regulation is ranked as the most important characteristic necessary for school readiness by kindergarten teachers. Children who positively regulate their emotions and behaviors do better in school and have an easier time getting along with peers. Children with poor emotional regulation skills are not likely to get along well with teachers and peers.

Establishes and sustains positive relationships

Children’s ability to form positive relationships with adults is important to their social–emotional development and academic success. Warm, supportive teacher-child relationships are related to children’s self-direction and positive attitudes toward school. Children’s ability to build positive relationships with peers affects their social competence, school adjustment, and academic success.

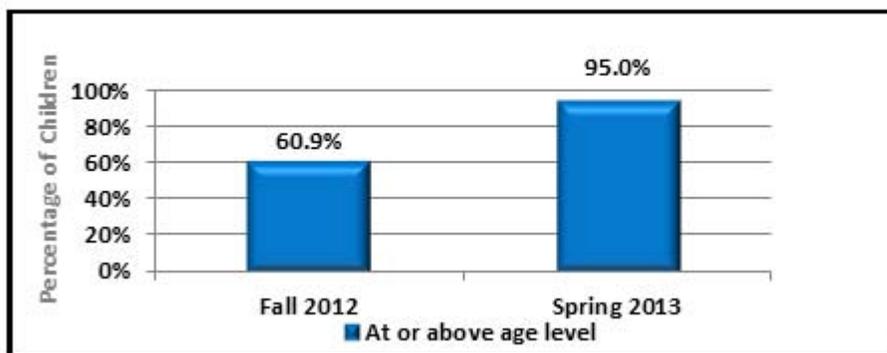
Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations

The foundational skills for being a productive member of social and learning groups are established during the early childhood years, and they are important for early school success. Positive group participation includes work-related skills like listening, following directions, behaving appropriately, staying on task and organizing work materials; poor work-related skills in kindergarten are related to behavioral difficulties and lower academic achievement in the early primary grades.

From [Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System](#)

Physical Development

N = 4,497



Physical development includes children’s gross-motor (large muscle) and fine-motor (small muscle) skills. Physical development affects other areas of development. In fact, brain research points to the connection between early, positive movement experiences and brain development. Physical development is also linked to children’s emotional development and school performance. The physical development objectives are:

Demonstrates traveling skills

Traveling involves moving the body through space. The early years are critical for the development of the large muscles needed for traveling. When children with disabilities achieve greater independent mobility, they show improved social and language development.

Demonstrates balancing skills

Turning, stretching, stopping, rolling, jumping, swinging, and dodging require balance. Children’s ability to balance affects their performance of gross-motor tasks.

Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills

The early years are important for the development of fundamental gross-motor manipulative skills including throwing, catching, and kicking. When children are given discreet directions (e.g., “Watch the ball. Reach with your hands.”), they learn to focus on the skill so they can perform it more efficiently.

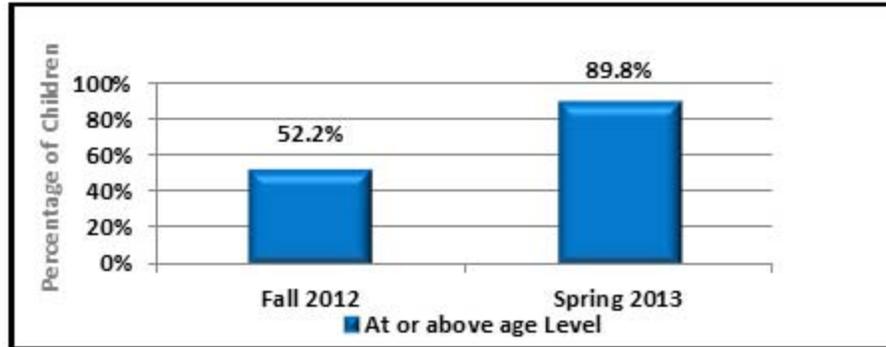
Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination

Fine-motor skills involve grasping and releasing objects using fingers and hands and coordinating movements with the eyes. These skills are important in the performance of daily routines and many school-related tasks. When teachers provide structure and guidance, children can increase their fine-motor skills.

From [Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System](#)

Language Development

N = 4,479



Strong language skills are essential for children’s success in school and life. Oral language—including grammar, the ability to define words and listening comprehension—helps provide the foundation and is an ongoing support for literacy. The oral language objectives are:

Listens to and understands increasingly complex language

To comprehend language, children must focus their attention and listen with a purpose. They must accurately and quickly recognize and understand what they hear. Receptive language (including listening to, recognizing and understanding the communication of others) starts to develop before expressive language, but they are closely connected.

Uses language to express thoughts and needs

Oral language is important to children’s literacy development. Children’s first writing experiences are usually based on what they learned through narrative talk, and their literacy development also is influenced by their ability to define words and their knowledge of grammar.

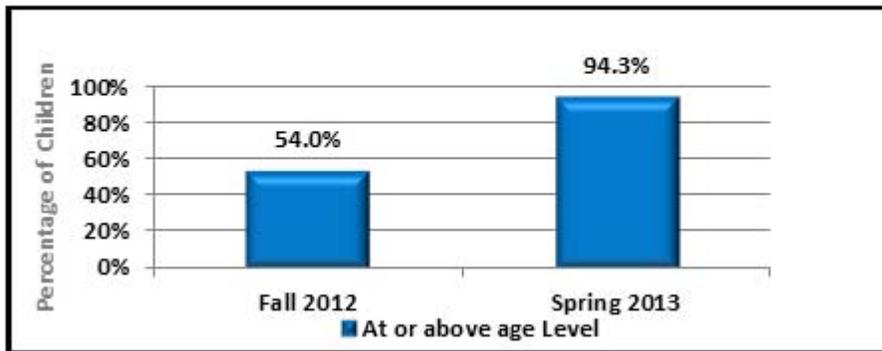
Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills

Children benefit from conversations that include varied vocabulary and that challenge their thinking. Such conversations contribute to early reading success. In addition, conversations are important to children’s cognitive and social-emotional learning.

From [Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System](#)

Cognitive Development

N = 4,423



Cognitive development, also called intellectual development, is influenced by various factors including biological makeup, the environment, and how the child approaches learning tasks (e.g., attention, persistence, curiosity, and flexibility). A child's background knowledge, or knowledge base, also affects the way a child thinks. This background knowledge influences the child's information processing, memory, classification, problem solving, language acquisition, and reading and mathematics learning. The cognitive development objectives are:

Demonstrates positive approaches to learning

Children who have positive approaches to learning are more likely to succeed academically and to have more positive interactions with peers. The abilities to resist distractions, remain positively engaged, and persist at learning tasks are related positively to children's academic achievement, cognitive development, and peer interactions. In addition, cognitive flexibility is important for children's academic achievement, and flexible thinking is critical to children's development of sorting and categorization skills, understanding of concepts, problem-solving skills, reasoning skills, divergent thinking, and inventiveness.

Remembers and connects experiences

As children develop their abilities to attend and to use memory strategies, their learning is enhanced. Adult scaffolding, or support, helps children attend and use memory strategies such as categorizing.

Uses classification skills

The ability to classify is important for learning and remembering. Exploration of objects, expanding knowledge of the world, and increased language skills contribute to children's ability to classify.

Uses symbols and images to represent something not present

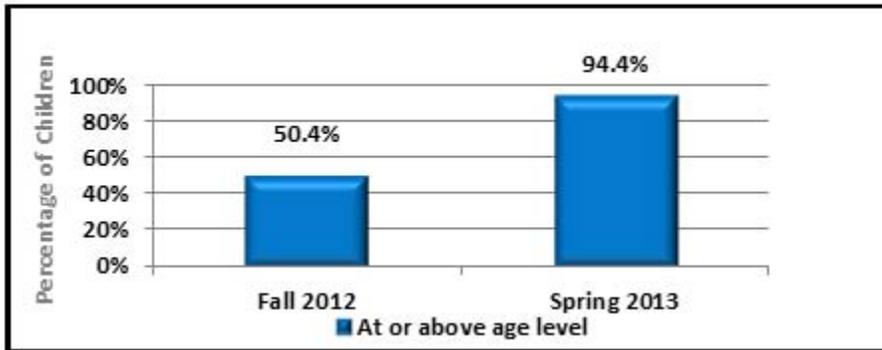
Thinking symbolically is necessary for language development, problem solving, reading, writing, mathematical thinking, and participating fully in society. Before children can effectively use symbols such as letters, numbers, or maps, they must understand implicitly that symbols represent other things. Dramatic play, sometimes called symbolic play, is an

important vehicle for development and learning. Dramatic play contributes to children's development of abstract thinking and imagination and supports their school adjustment, memory, language, and self-regulation abilities.

From [Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System](#)

Literacy Development

N = 2100



The early years are critical for literacy development. The level to which a child progresses in reading and writing is one of the best predictors of whether the child will function competently in school and in life. Effective instruction in the early years can have a large impact on children's literacy development. The assessment system has these literacy objectives:

Demonstrates phonological awareness

Phonological sensitivity is a strong predictor of later reading, writing, and spelling ability. Instruction that strengthens children's phonological awareness has been shown to contribute to later reading success.

Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet

Young children's alphabet knowledge, especially their ability to rapidly name letters and numerals in random order, is a strong predictor of later reading, writing, and spelling ability. Children's knowledge of the alphabet is also closely related to their comprehension skills by the end of second grade.

Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses

Young children's concepts about print are a good predictor of later reading, writing, and spelling ability. In addition, understanding that print is meaningful is one of the first steps children take in learning to read and write.

Comprehends and responds to books and other texts

Comprehension of oral language and simple texts is essential to future reading success; children learn to process what they hear and read. Children who engage in frequent activities with books have larger vocabularies. These children learn to read better than children who have few book experiences.

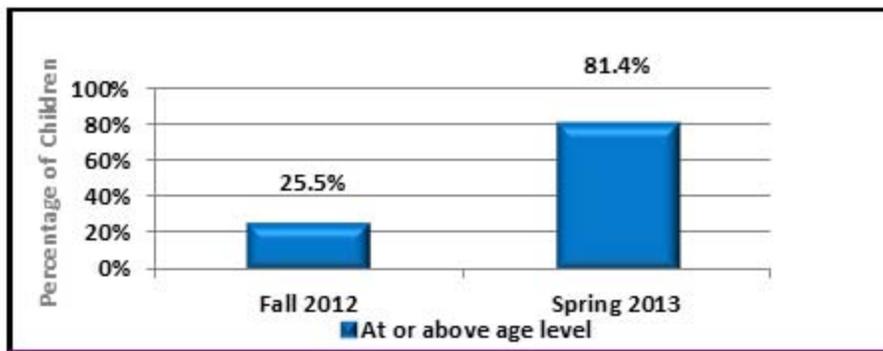
Demonstrates emergent writing skills

Writing letters or name writing is a predictor of later literacy. By exploring writing, children learn about letters, sounds, and the meaning of text. Understanding the mechanics of the writing system (letter naming and letter-sound correspondence) has a moderate correlation with reading in the primary grades.

From [Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System](#)

Mathematics

N = 4202



Research has made a clear link between early math skills and later school reading and math achievement. Children’s mathematical knowledge at kindergarten entry is considered predictive of future mathematics success throughout their years in school. Evidence shows that high-quality early childhood education programs can make a difference in children’s mathematical learning. These mathematics objectives are:

Uses number concepts and operations

Children’s understanding of counting, number symbols, and number operations are fundamental to their success with more complex mathematics. Through both everyday experiences and planned learning experiences, children begin to construct understandings of number concepts and operations.

Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes

Understanding spatial relationships and shapes helps children build the foundation for understanding geometry. Children who have a strong spatial sense do better in mathematics.

Compares and measures

Children’s initial ideas about size, quantity, and seriation involve comparisons related to their play materials and books. They experiment with measurement by lining up and comparing objects. They begin to connect number to length as they use nonstandard measurement tools, e.g., links, blocks, rods. In addition, children can benefit from exploring and using tools with uniform units (e.g., rulers and centimeter cubes) as their measurement ideas and skills are developing.

Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Children begin to identify patterns in their environment at an early age. Guiding children to understand patterns is a foundational skill in mathematics. Learning experiences that focus on patterns facilitate children's generalizations about number combinations, counting strategies, and problem solving.

From [Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System](#)

An ECEAP Graduate Remembers...

DEL received this story about a teenager volunteering in an ECEAP classroom, who was also enrolled in ECEAP for two years as a young child. The local ECEAP staff had lost contact with him at age 7 and recently learned that he has been in several foster homes over the years. His mom showed up at his most recent court hearing intoxicated, just as he thought he could return home. He was sent to yet another foster home, angry with the world.

He began volunteering at ECEAP in Spring 2013. He spent every weekend in July 2013 handing out fliers and talking about what preschool did for him and why it's important, without staff prompts.

The program staff started getting to know his foster parents. They say his behavior changed when he stepped foot in his old ECEAP classroom, and they've decided to keep him through college now. He was overheard telling a current ECEAP child who is in foster care "(ECEAP) is the only family I have ever known. That's why I came back here. I learned everything I know from here." The child said he memorized the building number, so he can come back when he gets big too.

Staff who remembering working with this child say they focused on accepting him and his family where they were and starting from there. They provided intensive support to help stabilize their lives.

Family Engagement

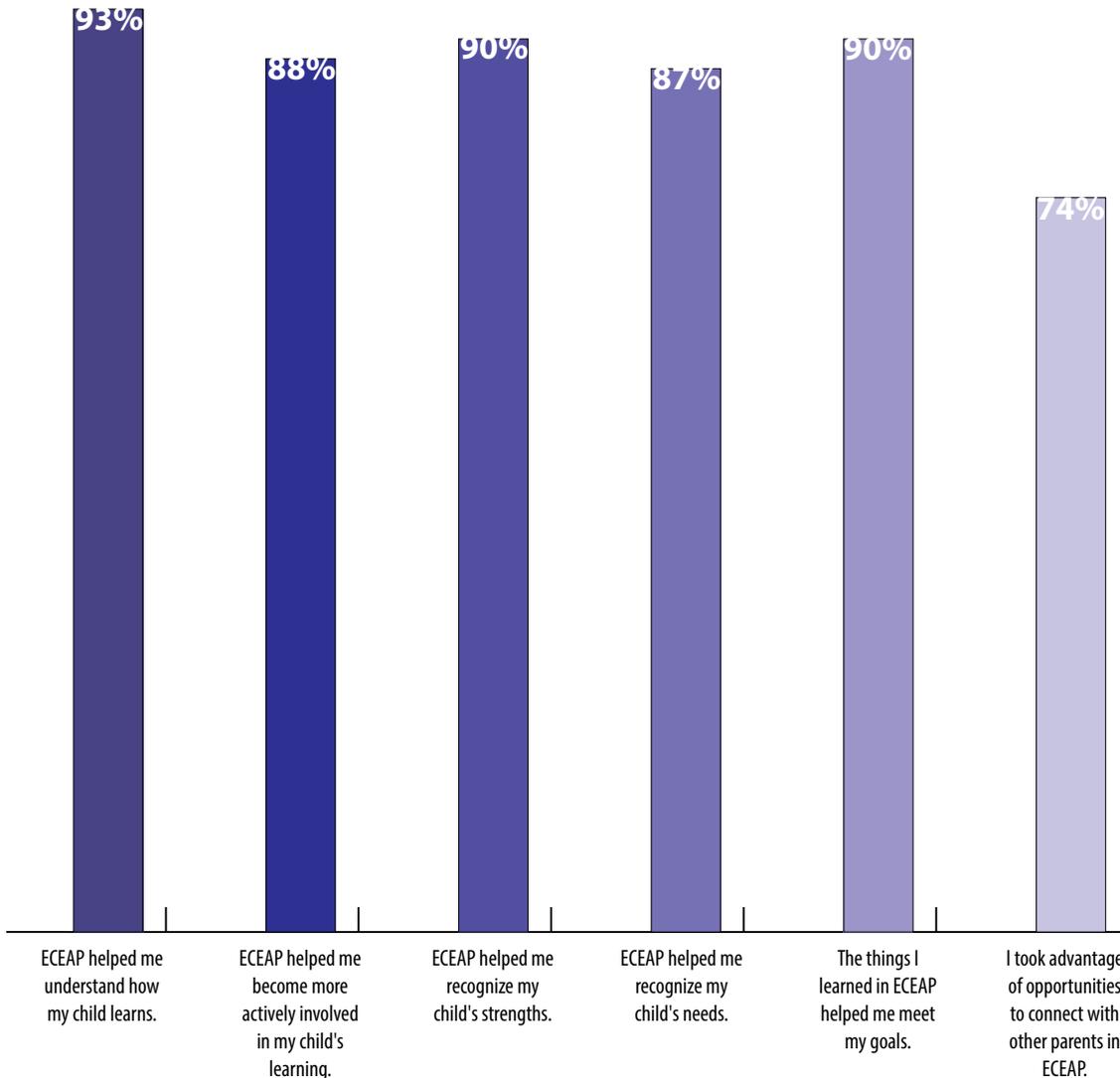
ECEAP provides early learning experiences to children and also engages and supports their families. ECEAP staff use the nationally-recognized Family Support Principles when working with families, focusing on parent and family strengths.

Families are invited to volunteer in the classroom, attend parent education sessions, participate in parent-teacher conferences, work with a family support specialist on family goals and develop leadership skills.

ECEAP helps families build social networks and a sense of community. These connections strengthen families and helps them be more resilient during difficult times. ECEAP increases parent's knowledge, skills, abilities and resources, which builds their capacity to support their children in kindergarten and beyond.

A 2012-13 survey of 11 percent of ECEAP families in Snohomish County documented how the program benefits families.

Parent responses: "agree" or "strongly agree"



Voices of parents from Snohomish County ECEAP:

- *“I have seen my child’s hunger for learning grow tremendously. “*
- *“ECEAP has given us the ability to create goals and make better choices for our son and our family.”*
- *“The staff have gone above and beyond to help me and my son; they have given me the tools to help me become a better single father.”*
- *“The staff is so caring—it feels like they have become part of our family.”*
- *“ECEAP gave me skills and knowledge you can’t find in books—I have gained tips on healthy eating, passionate parenting, and learned how to encourage my child.”*
- *“At the beginning of the school year, my life was in a shambles. ECEAP has helped me with resources in the community and staff are always willing to listen.”*

Family self-sufficiency—A note from an ECEAP parent

“I wanted to take the time and let you all know that I was accepted into the fall nursing program at the community college! I am so excited to start this new journey and wanted to thank each of you for your support, encouragement, and faith. With the help from each of you and being the parent rep for ECEAP, I became even more determined to reach my goal! I know that this is the path I am supposed to be on and can’t wait to have a career that I will enjoy! I start school this Monday and I am overwhelmed with emotions!

“Your ECEAP program has helped me and (my child) beyond words, and I am so thankful for all it has brought us! So again, thank you all so much for your time and encouragement! It has been a long journey for me, and I am so happy things are finally turning around!”