

ALLIANCE FOR KIDS

QUARTERLY

REPORT



YEAR 2 | QUARTER 2
Oct. 1–Dec. 31, 2024



STRATEGIC PLAN
2023-26

Alliance for Kids, El Paso County's
Early Childhood Council is housed under the
Foundations program of Joint Initiatives for Youth + Families

THRIVING FAMILIES

GOAL 1

Strengthen families by providing parents with essential support.



FAMILY RESOURCE NAVIGATION

Jl Family Resource Navigators have connected with families over 2,060 times, offering critical support to navigate the Universal Preschool (UPK) system and access local community resources. Additionally, we've noticed a slight rise in families reaching out to learn more about CCCAP (Colorado Child Care Assistance Program), indicating increased awareness and demand for financial assistance options. This work reflects a strong advocacy model where Navigators are not just providing referrals but actively equipping families and partner organizations with the tools they need to succeed.



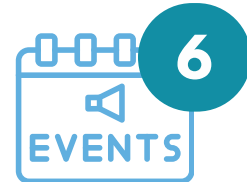
2,060

AVERAGE 2,060 FAMILIES PER MONTH SUPPORTED NAVIGATING CHILD CARE, CCCAP, AND UPK



OUTREACH + FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family Resource Navigators attended **two outreach events** this quarter in efforts to increase access to UPK families. In addition, Jl's UPK team **hosted two events** with community organizations to introduce UPK and provide basic information regarding the family application. Eight community organizations sent 15 representatives from **TRE, TESSA, Schriever AFB, Ft. Carson, Woven Care, and more**. These groups are now able to support families with information regarding the UPK application and who to contact if the family needs additional support. By engaging with families directly and through partners, we are proactively addressing gaps in communication and ensuring families have access to critical early childhood and financial resources.



4 FAMILY-TARGETED OUTREACH EVENTS

2 FAMILY-TARGETED EVENTS HOSTED BY JI'S UPK TEAM

THRIVING FAMILIES

GOAL 2

Increase families' access to resources and information to support them in successfully parenting their children.



RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION

At the four family-targeted outreach events the JI team shared essential resources with the community. During these events, 405 flyers were distributed, covering topics like the **importance of the early years, healthy families, equity, trauma-informed care, and healthy child development**. We also provided 46 flyers specifically focused on **home visiting** programs and **parenting classes** and delivered 342 direct communications focused on **fostering healthy families**.



ECMH CONSULTATION SERVICES

A total of **306 hours of Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant (ECMHC) services** were provided by 2 FTE across four embedded sites, supporting educators in addressing challenging behaviors, fostering emotional well-being, and creating nurturing environments. Additionally, the consultant managed **five open community cases**, and **one additional site received ECMHC services** due to high-needs circumstances. The consultants' efforts have positively **impacted an average of 176 children this quarter**, successfully preventing any expulsions. This achievement is particularly significant, as 12 children in the programs were identified as being at risk of expulsion or suspension in this second quarter.



NO EXPULSIONS



**306 HOURS OF
ECMH SERVICES
IMPACTING UP
TO 176 CHILDREN**



SUPPORTS FOR PARENTS + CAREGIVERS

Jl's **Simple Gift Series Playgroups** continue this quarter, seeing an average of **10 FFN caregivers per month**. These playgroups served **398 children and 282 adults**. Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers participating in the playgroups have shared that the experience is highly beneficial and engaging for themselves and the children they care for. These numbers reflect the program's broad reach, with many individuals engaging in multiple sessions, demonstrating their ongoing value to the community.



**PLAYGROUP SERVED
398 CHILDREN AND
282 ADULTS**

THRIVING FAMILIES



HOME VISITATION PROGRAM

Home visits continued with **9 active FFNs** from the previous quarter, and **2 new FFNs** who joined the program and began receiving home visits. These visits focus on providing personalized guidance and resources tailored to each caregiver's needs. The **FFN specialist conducted 32 home visits** and was able to **graduate 3 FFN's from the Home Visiting program**. All (100%) of FFNs who have completed the post survey report that they agree that home visiting activities allow them to be confident in their engagement with the children they care for and that they will continue using the activities in the future.

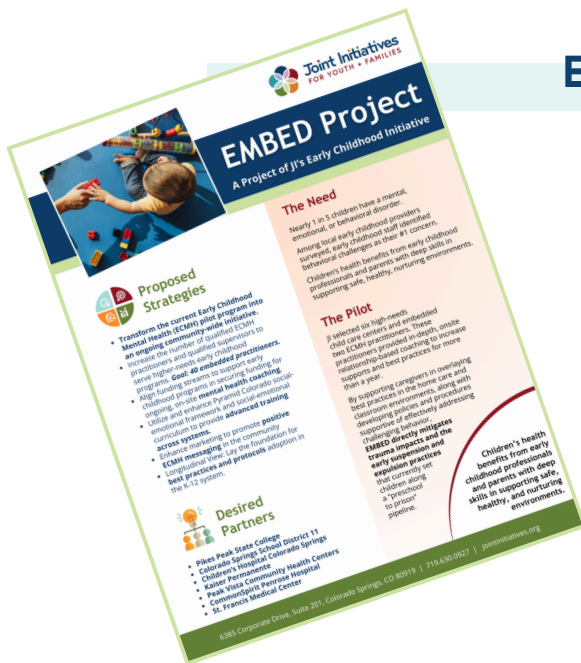
GOAL 2

Increase families' access to resources and information to support them in successfully parenting their children.



32 VISITS AND 11 FFNS ENGAGED IN THE HOME VISITING PROGRAM

EMBED MODEL IMPLEMENTATION



The Family Friendly City Summit resulted in the formation of a committee led by community members dedicated to **advancing and increasing the implementation of the EMBED model**. This model aims to address the growing need for support as challenging behaviors continue to rise in our early childhood programs.

Needs

We continue to see a need for affordable childcare options for families. In addition, CCCAP waitlists are long, and our county has been put under a CCCAP Freeze. The CCCAP freeze has presented ongoing challenges for families who rely on financial support for child care, particularly those who do not qualify for Universal Preschool. This highlights the continued need for expanded assistance options to ensure families can access affordable care.

THRIVING CHILDREN



FAMILY FRIENDLY CITY SUMMIT

Following the **Family Friendly City Summit**, a comprehensive report was created and shared with the community, outlining key takeaways and actionable steps.

The refined goals were developed during a follow-up meeting, and committees are now being established to focus on identified areas, including Legislation and Policy Advocacy, Mental Health, Communications and Engagement, and Public Awareness.

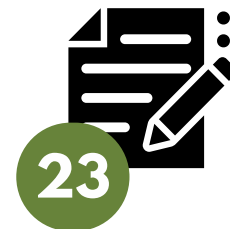
GOAL 3

Increase access to a coordinated mixed-delivery model of affordable quality early childhood education.



GRANT FOR CCCAP PROVIDERS

Through partnership with the **Department of Human Services, (DHS)**, JI was able to open a grant application for CCCAP providers who are either have recently opened a new program or are interested in increasing their quality. The **total amount to be distributed is \$20,000 and we have received 23 applications.** This grant will allow programs to request funds that will either **support increase in quality ratings** or support programs who have newly opened with some **initial costs.**



23 GRANT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED



EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY INITIATIVES

Currently, **38 programs are queued for rating**, and we maintain **55 active Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)**, alongside three coaching cohort sessions conducted.

QI Coaches provided **129 hours of direct GAE coaching** to programs with active MOUs and **14 hours of ECQI coaching** for CCCAP programs who do not have an active Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) MOU but are in need of coaching supports. JI is able to provide those programs with coaching through its partnership with DHS. QI Coaches are providing individualized support to each program, meeting them where they are, and figuring what they need to become high-quality programs or maintain their current level.



38 PROVIDERS ARE IN QUEUE FOR RATING



129 GAE COACHING HRS. 14 ECQI COACHING HRS.



3 COACHING COHORTS



EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY INITIATIVES

- To support access, JI's subcontractor worked with **12 providers, offering guidance on blending and braiding funding strategies, with a particular focus on CCAP and UPK.** Additionally, **19 providers received assistance with tuition discussions**, with four of these overlapping into blending and braiding support.
- The **Emerging + Expanding Grant** continues to prioritize programs who can complete their spending soon. Due to state transitioning database systems, JI was not able to pay out any programs this quarter. There are funds totaling **\$279,081.26 remaining to be distributed** in El Paso County.



12 PROVIDERS ENGAGED IN BUSINESS CONSULTATION AND 19 ASSISTED WITH TUITION DISCUSSIONS



55 ADDITIONAL INFANT/TODDLER SLOTS



MORE HIGHLIGHTS

- 5 PRE-LICENSING ATTENDEES**
- 8 NEWLY LICENSED PROGRAMS**
- 5 NEW PROGRAMS WITH CCCAP FISCAL AGREEMENTS**
- 100 LEVEL 2 PROGRAMS**
- 78 LEVEL 3-5 PROGRAMS**
- 70 PROGRAMS WITH MOUS MAINTAINING LEVEL 3-4 RATING**

Needs

Funding to support high quality coaching is limited and non-CCCAP program funding has been depleted. Family Child Care Homes are reporting that enrollment has noticeably decreased.

THRIVING COMMUNITY

GOAL 4

Facilitate the implementation of Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) and promote UPK and early childhood education to the business community.



UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL (UPK)

- Efforts to bring new providers into the UPK system resulted in **guidance for 15 potential providers**, eight of whom have signed on so far. To further support providers, a **roundtable training on enhancing UPK profiles** was hosted, with 12 family child care teachers and one center-based provider attending.
- This quarter, **213 programs** are offering **6,407 seats**, reflecting a 2.3% increase in available seats. Of these, **77 programs** are located within the **15 school districts** in our catchment area. The breakdown includes **46 family child care homes (FCCH)** and **90 center-based programs**, highlighting the JI team's commitment to diversifying Universal Preschool (UPK) providers and supporting a robust mixed delivery system.
- A total of **4,618 4-year-olds (90% of applicants)** were matched with a provider at the end of this quarter. There are **1,787 UPK seats available**, **929 of those being general education seats**.
- The UPK team is supporting providers and families for Universal Preschool's **third year**. **So far, 214 providers have submitted forms, and 1,110 family applications have been received**—10.5% of all applications statewide. This highlights a slight increase in provider engagement, and we continue to see interest growing for our community.



213 PROVIDERS

- **77** school district-based (15 school districts total, all districts in El Paso County are participating)
- **46** Family child care teachers
- **90** Center-based programs

YEAR 2



6,407 UPK SEATS

4,927 General Seats



1,787 AVAILABLE

Registered Seats
929 General Seats



4,618 MATCHED

4-year-olds (90% of applicants)

YEAR 3



214 PROVIDERS

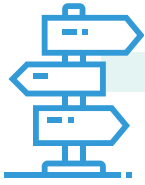


1,110 APPLICANTS

THRIVING WORKFORCE

GOAL 5

Support recruitment, qualification, and retention of professionals within the Early Childhood Education field.



CAREER NAVIGATION + TRAINING

Career navigation services were provided to **186 professionals**, a 10% increase from last quarter, totaling 309 hours of support.

Five professionals new to the field, highlighting our ongoing efforts to expand the workforce. These numbers underscore the need for additional career navigators to effectively meet the needs of professionals entering the field. By offering individualized support to each professional, the program continues to play a crucial role in supporting career growth and enhancing the overall quality of early childhood education.



10% INCREASE IN PROFESSIONALS SERVED



309

309 CAREER NAVIGATION HOURS PROVIDED TO 186 PROFESSIONALS



125

125 PROFESSIONALS TRAINED (72.5 HOURS)

10

Jl hosted a total of **10 professional development training courses (72.5 hours)** to 125 professionals in a continued approach to support the development trained early childhood professionals, ultimately benefiting the children and families they serve.



Needs

Additional Career Navigators are needed as the program increases in popularity. PPSC has informed us that funding for the Career Advance program, which provides free ECE courses to students, will run out in Spring 2025. Many students/employees are reporting burnout and are not able to finish goals set with Career Navigation and the demands of the Advancing Early Childhood Educators Program expectations.



ADVANCING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS PROGRAM

The Advancing Educators Program has had **17 students successfully completed Track 1** with all A's, a testament to their dedication and the support provided by the Career Navigator. Additionally, **two students completed Track 2**, earning A's in all four of their classes. Currently, 19 students are actively enrolled in Track 2 this semester, including all Track 1 students who are now engaging in Track 2, reflecting continued interest and seamless progression within the program. New enrollments included 2 students starting Track 2 and 1 student beginning Track 1. The program's ability to foster seamless progression is evident, as **all 17 Track 1 graduates have committed to participation into Track 2**. This continued interest highlights the program's relevance in engaging students new to the work force.



17

**17 STUDENTS
SUCCESSFULLY
COMPLETED TRACK 1
WITH ALL A'S**



2

**2 STUDENTS
SUCCESSFULLY
COMPLETED TRACK 2
WITH ALL A'S**



OUTREACH + ECE AWARENESS

Jl's Partner Recruiter visited **8 high school classrooms** and attended **two career day/job fairs**, reaching **473 students** across multiple districts, providing information to students about careers in Early Childhood Education. The Partner Recruiter has been able to **engage with two new school districts** (RE-2 Florence Jr./Sr. High School and D38 Palmer Ridge High School) and scheduled career fairs with both in January 2025. These efforts help build awareness of early childhood development among future parents and inspire interest in early childhood careers, strengthening the future workforce and supporting informed parenting.



2

**2 NEW SCHOOL
DISTRICTS ENGAGED**



10

**PARTNER RECRUITER VISITED
10 HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOMS,
REACHING 473 STUDENTS**